

The following documents are from attachments to the H.R. On Call report.

**Short, Steve**

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**From:** Jim Stockdale [jim [REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 21, 2008 1:34 PM  
**To:** Short, Steve  
**Subject:** RE: Preaching from the Bible at the middle school

Steve,

Attached is a copy of the statement I would make to the investigation team. You may copy/forward/share it with the team. If they have further questions, feel free to contact me.

Jim

When this matter became public and removing the Bible from Mr. Freshwater's classroom appeared to be the sole issue, I knew differently. Over the next few days, the question of whether or not John was proselytizing in his classroom was raised. I know for a fact that he was preaching.

But what disturbed me more than his preaching was the potential damage it could have on some students.

I don't recall the date that I subbed in his classroom but that could be discovered from substitute records. Although I had worked at the middle school as an intervention specialist for three years, I had never been in John's classroom. On the day in question, I was subbing for Mrs. Mahan, an inclusion teacher and was in John's room for one class period. The first impression I got was of the Bible verses that were posted on the walls of the room.

The lesson of the day had been on the creation of the universe. John talked about how the textbook could be wrong. He said, "Let me give you an example of how science can be wrong." He then went on to say that an article in Time magazine a few years back stated that scientists had found a genetic link to homosexuality. "In that case science is wrong because the Bible states that homosexuality is a sin" and so anyone who is gay chooses to be gay and therefore a sinner.

My reaction was one of disbelief that he was saying these things to eighth graders. I thought of how those two or three students in that classroom who might be struggling with their sexual identities would be feeling, hearing that they were sinners from a teacher. I know I would have felt judged and condemned. Also because of the way it was presented, it definitely would have allowed justification for homophobia. This concerned me knowing that the highest rate of teenage suicide is among those who are gay forced to be in a non-supportive environment. As a teacher I was witness almost on a daily basis to students' homophobia and the cruelty they cast upon anyone whom they perceived to be gay.

I probably should have reported this at the time, but as I processed what I had witnessed, I reminded myself that Tim Kieb, the assistant principal at the time, also had references to the Bible posted in his office. I was well aware of Tim's wearing his religion on his shirtsleeve and his close

relationship with John. I also realized that administrators had to be aware of John's classroom walls being posted with Bible verses. And I need to add that the superintendent at the time had a history of dismissing me in every conversation I had ever had with him.

I was surprised at how comfortable John was talking about the Bible stating that homosexuality is a sin, and that anyone who is gay makes a conscious choice to be so. He was totally comfortable with not only declaring that to 13 and 14- year-olds, but in my presence as well. He had no problem declaring that not only can science be wrong by the example he gave, but heavily implied that the students' textbook was wrong as well on how the universe was created.

In all honesty I do not recall how or if he incorporated the lesson from the text into his teaching that day. I was too appalled at what he had presented.

I was recently a witness to a situation in which John was taunting a former student of his. I had stopped at the middle school after school to see one my teacher friends and her daughter was there as well. John passed us in the hallway and upon seeing her he said something that made her very uncomfortable. Not being a part of the dialogue, I did not understand what he was saying to her at first. What I do remember is that he kept insisting that she had to watch a movie which he named, and it was then obvious to me that he was trying to convince her that she was wrong and he was right. At that point I recalled that she had had a difficult year in John's science class because she questioned his lessons as he related them to the Bible instead of the textbook.