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A new book published by Americans United for Separation of Church and State [offers](#) [4] educators and families detailed information about the law governing religion and the public schools — and the topic of teaching evolution is not neglected. Chapter 4 of *Religion in the Public Schools: A Road Map for Avoiding Lawsuits and Respecting Parents' Legal Rights*, by Anne Marie Lofaso, a professor of law at West Virginia University, [contains](#) [5] (PDF) a detailed review of the legal issues surrounding the teaching of evolution. Its central points:

- Schools can neither outlaw the teaching of evolution nor give "equal time" for discussion of evolution and "creation science"
- The theory of evolution meets the definition of science
- It is long settled that public schools cannot forbid the teaching of evolution as part of their high school science curriculum
- It is equally well settled that public schools cannot compel the teaching of creationism alongside evolution as part of the high school science curriculum
- Public schools may not teach "intelligent design" alongside evolution as part of the high school science curriculum
- Nor may public school teachers claim an "academic freedom" right to teach about "intelligent design"
- Public schools may limit the extent to which students raise religious evidence against evolution in science class discussion in the same manner by which those schools limit other class discussions
- Creationism and intelligent design cannot be taught in public schools, but objective, academic discussion about religion, such as its role in history, is permissible in some contexts as long as the approach is educational and not devotional

"*Religion in the Public Schools* effectively explains the ins and outs of how religion should be handled in

the school setting. A must-read for parents and educators alike!" writes someone who should know — Tammy Kitzmiller, the lead plaintiff in the 2005 case establishing the unconstitutionality of teaching "intelligent design" creationism in the public schools. Barbara Forrest, a member of NCSE's board of directors, adds, "This book should be on the desk of every public school teacher, principal, and school board member."

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