



THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202

April 10, 2003

Mr. Abraham H. Foxman  
National Director  
Anti-Defamation League  
823 United Nations Plaza  
New York, New York 10017

Dear Mr. Foxman:

I want to take this opportunity to make clear my view of the role of faith and values in education. I have a life-long record of service to our public schools and have devoted my career to making public schools better for all of our nation's children. And, of course, I understand completely and respect the separation of church and state.

I am a man of Christian faith. My faith has given me great strength in my life and has enabled me to achieve much in a world that for me and many of my generation, began with low expectations for achievement. Those values of my faith are shared by many other faiths and they have added a meaningful dimension to my education. My comments were intended to convey that reflection. My personal faith is in no way an indication of disrespect for other faiths.

In all of my roles in education – from the university level to the very diverse inner-city school system of Houston, Texas – I have always encouraged respect for all individuals from all faiths, all beliefs, and all walks of life.

Nothing I said, and nothing I have ever done in my career of public service, suggests a desire or a willingness to impose my values on others. As a son of the once-segregated South, I know a little something about intolerance. Intolerance in all its forms is abhorrent to me and to the values of this great country.

I look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rod Paige".

Rod Paige