

What Today's Supreme Court Ruling Could Mean For Schools

The U.S. Supreme Court today ruled that citizens have a constitutional right to same-sex marriages. It goes without saying that the decision will have a broad-reaching societal impact, and could very well impact schools.

How?

As the *New York Times* [reported](#) on Wednesday, “The religious schools are concerned that if they continue to ban gay relationships, the Internal Revenue Service could take away their tax-exempt status as a violation of a ‘fundamental national public policy’ under the reasoning of [a 1983 Supreme Court decision](#) that allowed the agency to revoke the tax-exempt status of schools that banned interracial relationships.”

Losing their tax-exempt status would likely deal a fatal blow to many private, religious schools that are already struggling with retaining students in today's economy. If they should keep provisions against same-sex relationships in their teacher and student codes, their donors would no longer be able to deduct contributions, and they would now have to pay large property tax bills.

According to the *Times* article, “Legal scholars said the scenario of schools' and charities' losing their tax-exempt status over their policies on these issues was unlikely – especially in the short term. But they did not rule it out, based on previous civil rights cases and an exchange during [Supreme Court arguments](#) in April on whether the Constitution guarantees same-sex couples the right to marry.”

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