



# Danville Christian Academy v. Beshear, 141 S. Ct. 527 (2020)

Topics Covered: COVID-19, Public Health

## Outcome: Neutral

### Issue

The issue in this case was whether an executive order by Kentucky Governor Andrew Beshear that forces the closure of all public and private schools in the state in light of the COVID-19 pandemic violates the Constitution's free exercise clause.

### AMA Interest

The AMA believes that quarantine and isolation interventions should be scientifically based.

### Case Summary

On November 18, 2020, Governor Beshear issued an executive order that required all elementary, middle, and high schools, both public and private, to cease in-person instruction and transition to virtual learning.

Danville Christian Academy filed a lawsuit against Governor Beshear, challenging his restrictions on religious education as a violation of their First Amendment rights. The federal district court ruled in favor of Danville Christian, and Governor Beshear appealed to the Sixth Circuit, which permitted enforcement of the order.

On November 30, 2020, Danville Christian Academy filed an emergency application with the Supreme Court asking it to allow religious schools to continue with in-person learning. Several weeks later, on December 17, the Court rejected the request, finding that schools would all be closing for the winter holiday. The Court noted that the parties could return for further relief if there was a new order in 2021.

### AMA Involvement

The AMA and the Louisville Metro Department of Public Health & Wellness filed an *amicus* brief in support of the Governor of Kentucky and in opposition to the plaintiffs' emergency application.

United States Supreme Court Brief