

# Religious t-Shirt Wearing Nova Scotia Student Leaves School on First Day Back

By Derek Abma, Postmedia News  
May 7, 2012



Nova Scotia student William Swinimer was suspended from school for wearing a T-shirt that says, 'Life is Wasted Without Jesus.'  
Photograph by: Submitted Photo, Postmedia News

A Nova Scotia teenager who was suspended from school for wearing a religious message on a t-shirt, which some students took offence to, might stay away from the school for the rest of the year, despite a reversal in policy over the shirt.

William Swinimer, 19, was suspended for five days last week for wearing a t-shirt that read: "Life is wasted without Jesus."

However, the South Shore Regional School Board, which operates Forest Heights Community School in Chester Basin, N.S., west of Halifax, on Friday decided the Grade 12 student should have the right to wear the shirt at school.

Varrick Day, the pastor at Jesus the Good Shepard Church in Bridgewater, N.S., which Swinimer attends, said the student showed up at school Monday — wearing the t-shirt in question — but then went back home because of meetings scheduled that day involving all staff and students that were to deal with the issue how students can express their beliefs in ways that are respectful of others.

"William and his dad were like, 'This is going to be like Daniel and the Lion's Den,' Day said. "Everybody's going to be looking at him like 'you're the problem, you're the reason (for the trouble)."

Day said Swinimer is unlikely to return the school, and instead is looking into options for home-schooling or working through a provincially appointed tutor.

The pastor said he's in favour of talks between school officials, Swinimer and his parents to come to an agreement on what's acceptable. However, he said it was unfair to involve all the students...

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