



**THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR LAW & POLICY NEWS RELEASE**  
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**NCLP Will Not Pursue Appeal Challenging Encinitas’ Ashtanga Yoga Program  
(*Sedlock v. Baird*).**

**SAN DIEGO, CA** — The legal team, led by attorney Dean Broyles of the National Center for Law & Policy, has decided not to pursue the *Sedlock v. Baird* yoga litigation further after losing the appeal in April. Attorneys for the Sedlocks successfully convinced both the trial court and the appellate justices that yoga, including Ashtanga yoga is religious. However, the Encinitas Union School District (EUSD) prevailed in their argument that they had changed or removed enough of the religious elements from their yoga program, so that the physical education classes were purportedly not unlawfully promoting religion in the public schools.

“This was a very tough call to make under the circumstances,” stated NCLP president Dean Broyles. “We knew from the beginning this case would be an uphill battle because yoga is so popular and so many people believe the pervasive myth that yoga’s ‘physical’ practice can be neatly separated from the metaphysical or religious elements of Hinduism. On the positive side, the lawsuit forced EUSD to significantly change its written yoga curriculum and some of its classroom teaching. However, as even the appellate court acknowledged, the children are still being led through the *Surya Namaskara*, which is a Hindu liturgy worshipping the sun god *Surya*.”

“This ruling was an aberration from well-established legal precedents. No other court in the past 50 years has allowed schools to lead children in ritual religious practices, like devotional Bible reading, prayer, or meditation,” declared Broyles. “EUSD’s devotional sun worship, including bowing, praying hands, and lifting one’s hands in worship to the sun is objectively religious and should not be treated any more favorably than Bible reading or prayer, even if EUSD is not teaching the children the supporting theology behind the Hindu rituals. EUSD’s position is deceptive. The social science research clearly demonstrates that yoga’s purported mere ‘stretching’ and ‘breathing’ components, called *asanas* and *pranayama* in *Sanskrit*, are, by themselves, spiritually transformative.”

“I am very proud of the *Sedlock* family and for my outstanding legal team for being willing to stand up for the truth and religious freedom in the midst of the trying fires of a very difficult and unpopular case,” continued Broyles. “The personal attacks endured by the family and the legal team were pretty outrageous at times. But we consistently told the truth and fought the good fight. As a result, we have seen more and more parents opt their children out of the yoga classes after learning the truth. Unfortunately, because of the superintendent and board’s continued obstinacy after parents raised legitimate religious concerns, many good families have left the district.”

“This is not the end of our broader principled campaign to tell the truth about yoga. We will continue to look for opportunities to educate parents and fully expect to be engaged in future efforts to stop the deceptive religious indoctrination of our children by the state,” said Broyles. The concerned parents in Encinitas have launched an informative website: <http://truthaboutyoga.com/>

**The above quotes may be attributed to Dean Broyles, President and Chief Counsel of the National Center for Law & Policy, attorney for petitioners and appellants, the Sedlock family.**

Please address all media inquiries to The National Center for Law & Policy. The National Center for Law & Policy is a non-profit 501(c)(3) legal defense organization dedicated to the protection and promotion of religious freedom, parental rights, and other civil liberties. To review our earlier press releases, court documents, or trial transcripts, please visit our website at [www.nclplaw.org](http://www.nclplaw.org).

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