

More Americans Support Prayer Than Kneeling

A majority of Americans support prayer during public high school sporting events, compared with roughly a third who approve of professional athletes kneeling during the national anthem, according to a new survey.

The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll found more than six in ten think a coach leading a team in prayer, a player leading a team in prayer, or a coach praying on the field without asking the team to join in should all be allowed at public high school sporting events.

The findings come months after the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling to allow a public high school football coach in Washington state to pray on the field after he was suspended for refusing to halt the practice.

A majority of those surveyed did not believe the ruling would result in other public-school officials praying with students during school hours, while just under a third (30 percent) believe that religion holds too much influence on school curriculum.

It turns out, when it comes to sports, nearly one in five Americans pray about the outcomes of high school, college, or professional games. A third of parents of a school-aged child, meanwhile, pray about the outcome of their child's sporting events.

But while the survey found few adults disapprove of professional athletes praying on the field or expressing their faith publicly, respondents held less favorable opinions toward professional sports players kneeling during the national anthem, with 30 percent approving of that form of protest and 37 percent disapproving.

When it comes to playing the national anthem and “God Bless America” at pro sporting events, more people are in favor of both.

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