

# BRIDGEBUILDERS

*“Your efforts to help school districts and communities find common ground on issues concerning religion in the public schools is of vital importance to the future of public education—and our nation.”*

Charles Haynes, Ph.D.,  
The Freedom Forum First  
Amendment Center

*“The public schools belong to all Americans. As guardians of our constitutional principles, teachers and administrators have a special obligation to protect the religious liberty rights of students of all faiths and none, and to ensure that religion and religious conviction are treated with fairness and respect.”*

Faith Matters:  
Religion in American Public Life  
The American Assembly at  
Columbia University

*“Some board members were sure that we would find no resolution to the conflict. They expected all-out confrontation. You proved them wrong. Your uncommon mix of information, interaction skills and level-head was just what this community required. We now count several former protesters among our most eager supporters.”*

Gary Knox, Superintendent  
Yuma, AZ

*Communities across the U.S. are discovering that Common Ground Thinking provides a proven civic framework to rebuild mutual respect and cooperation in the face of some of our deepest religious and cultural differences.*

## Training in Common Ground Thinking

BRIDGEBUILDERS offers two highly interactive and engaging workshops that have proven successful in helping educators, parents and community members understand, appreciate and implement Common Ground Thinking. They have been utilized at board and staff retreats, for professional development and in parent forums to offer school districts a fair and truly multicultural approach to such divisive issues as sexuality, school safety, religious expression and curriculum content.

- **Common Ground Thinking** offers an appreciation of First Amendment civic principles that builds mutual respect across deep differences and help divided communities find common ground solutions that are fair for all. (6 hours)
- **Civil Rights and Civil Wrongs in Public Education** is designed to help school staff and parents understand and appreciate religious liberty laws that affect public education. (3 hours)

## Mediation and Facilitation Services

BRIDGEBUILDERS offers mediation and consulting services to school districts already caught in the midst of conflict, or approaching an issue that has the potential to significantly divide the community. In a few hours' time we have helped deeply divided communities to find consensus solutions by rethinking their concerns in a Common Ground framework, and to establish strategies to work together more cooperatively in the future.

## Meet Wayne Jacobsen

President of BRIDGEBUILDERS

As a facilitator, presenter and mediator Wayne Jacobsen has become a nationally-recognized specialist in disarming cultural and religious conflicts. His workshops and mediation services have been used at state and national education conventions, universities as well as local school districts. He has also testified on these issues before the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and worked with Columbia University's American Assembly on *Religion in American Public Life* and recently helped facilitate and draft *Sexual Orientation and Public Schools* with the First Amendment Center. His articles have appeared in *Educational Leadership*, *The School Administrator* and *Religion in Education* and he authored the Fastback, *Disarming Conflict Through Common Ground Thinking* for the Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation.

