



COPELAND THOMPSON JEEP
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

DOUGLAS A. COPELAND

LICENSED IN MISSOURI &
ILLINOIS

copeland@copelandthompson.com

January 30, 2024

Attorney General Andrew Bailey

207 N. High Street

P.O. Box 899

Jefferson City, MO 65102

Sent via email to: andrew.bailey@governor.mo.gov

Re: The Webster Groves School District

Dear Attorney General Bailey:

Please be advised that I serve as general counsel to the Webster Groves School District. As such, I have been referred your letter of January 29, 2024, relative to allegations regarding the District's human sexuality curriculum. Please be advised that the reports you indicate you have received are inaccurate. While I appreciate your recitation of the law surrounding the District's responsibilities in this area, I can assure you that the District is well aware of what is required by law, and conducts itself accordingly.

Let me begin by sharing with you samples of letters sent to each parent of each elementary school student each year relative to human growth and development information that will be shared in the classroom. You will find separate letters to parents of kindergarteners, first graders, second graders, third graders, fourth graders and fifth graders. You will also find similar letters to the parents of middle school students – grades 6, 7 and 8. As you can see, each of these letters not only describes what will be discussed in the lessons, but also notify parents of their right to opt-out of any or all the lessons and how and when to do so. Finally, you will find a similar notice that goes to parents of all high school students participating in the health course at the time. In addition to being sent to parents each year, links to each of these notification and opt-out letters can be found on the Human Growth and Development page of the District's website, a copy of which you will find enclosed.

I thought you might also find it helpful to see a sample of the annual letter that goes out to parents of 6-12 grade students relative to the sexual abuse training program required to be provided by statute. You will note that information about opting-out of this program is included in this letter as well. I would also share with you samples of email blasts sent out to parents relative to human growth and development lessons, in these two cases to fourth and eighth grade parents, that also provide information on opting-out of the lessons.

If that were not sufficient for any family, the District also publishes on its website the District's entire health curriculum for grades K-5, 6-8, and 9-12. I have included copies of what is published on the website. Finally, I am sharing with you the District's Policy IGAEB: Sexual Health Instruction, which recognizes a parent's role in sexuality education, and the ability to opt-out of any part of any District curriculum on human sexuality.

As to the allegation that the District showed a video that instructed students to follow a link to a third-party website affiliated with Planned Parenthood, the District administration is not aware of any such video, and would ask that you provide specific information regarding that allegation so that the District might investigate further and respond.

As I trust you will see, the District has in no way "directed assaulted" parents' rights. However, the District is always interested in ways to improve communications with parents and rectify any real or perceived issues that a parent might have. Therefore, please accept this as a request under the Missouri Sunshine Law, Sections 610.010-610.028 RSMo, for copies of the reports you indicate you have received and mentioned in your above-referenced letter, or any documents pertaining to such reports. That will assist the District in becoming more particularly aware of any issues that might exist. Your prompt attention to this request would be greatly appreciated. Please advise if you would prefer this request to be made so some other person in your office.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Douglas A. Copeland". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Douglas" being more prominent and the last name "Copeland" following in a similar style. The signature is positioned above the printed name.

Douglas A. Copeland

Enclosures

cc- Dr. John Simpson