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MARJORIE R. ESMAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

February 5, 2010

by fax - (225) 695-3997
Mr. Steve Vampran
Principal
Maurepas High School
Hwy 22
Maurepas, LA 70449

Dear Mr. Vampran:

This office has learned that one of your students, who has lived in Indianapolis, was told that he could not wear his Indianapolis Colts jersey during school when other students were allowed to wear jerseys for the New Orleans Saints. This letter is to advise you that schools may not discriminate based on the content of the messages that students wear on their clothing, and to urge you to respect the opinions of all students in your school as required by law.

The law is clear that students do not shed their rights to free speech at the schoolhouse gate. Whether or not you approve of a student supporting the Indianapolis Colts, if a school opens itself up for students to wear shirts in support of one team, it must recognize the right of other students to support the opposing team.

I understand that the student who wore the Colts shirt was sent home because his shirt supported the team opposing the Saints in the upcoming Super Bowl. I request that you restore his record to erase any mention of disciplinary action that may have been taken because of his exercise of his free speech rights, and that you assure him and his family that he will in no way be further punished or jeopardized because of his support for a football team that is not the team of your preference.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,

Marjorie R. Esman