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MONTANA THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT
YELLOWSTONE COUNTY

RENEE GRIFFITH, PLAINTIFF, v. BUTTE SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1, CHARLES UGGETTI AND JOHN METZ, DEFENDANTS.	CAUSE NO. JUDGE: COMPLAINT
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Comes now the Plaintiff, Renee Griffith, and for her complaint alleges as follows:

1. That Plaintiff was a student at Butte High School in the Spring of 2008.
2. That Plaintiff attended Butte High School District No. 1.
3. That the principal of the Butte High School was John Metz.
4. That the superintendent for School District No. 1, was Charles Uggetti.
5. That the Plaintiff was a school valedictorian for her class of 2008, and thereby had the right to speak at her graduation ceremony.
6. That in her proposed speech she used the phrases: "I didn't let fear keep me from sharing Christ and His joy with those around me," and "I learned not to be known for my grades or for what I did during school, but for being committed to my faith and morals and being someone who live with a purpose from God with a passionate love fore Him."
7. That both Uggetti and Metz, individually and as a representative of the

Butte School District required that she delete the words “Christ” and “God” and change them to read: “sharing 'my faith'...” and “lived with a purpose, 'a purpose derived from my faith and based on a love of mankind.” (See Exhibit A attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.)

8. That Uggetti and Metz, individually and as representatives of Butte School District 1 advised the Plaintiff that she would not be permitted to speak at her graduation unless she changed her speech to delete the reference to Christ and God, and used their phrases instead.
9. That the Plaintiff maintained her right to use the words of her choice and was then forbidden to speak at the graduation ceremony.
10. The actions of Uggetti and Metz, individually and as representatives of Butte School District 1, were not reasonable in light of the purposes of the graduation ceremony and were contrary to the School District regulations.
11. The actions of Uggetti and Metz, individually, and as representatives of Butte School District 1, were intended to force their own religious beliefs upon the Plaintiff.
12. That the Plaintiff has been required to retain counsel to represent her in this matter.

COUNT I

The actions of the defendants were violative of the Montana Human Rights Act, 49-2-101 MCA et seq.

COUNT II

The actions of the defendants were violative of the Governmental Code of Fair Practices 49-3-101 MCA et seq.

COUNT III

The actions of the defendants were violative of Article II, Section 5 of the Constitution of the State of Montana.

COUNT IV

The actions of the defendants were violative of Article II, Section 7 of the

Constitution of the State of Montana.

COUNT V

The actions of the defendants were violative of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and the Plaintiff is thereby entitled to relief under 42 USC Section 1983.

COUNT V I

The actions of the defendants were violative of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, both the Establishment Clause and the Equal Protection Clause, and the the Plaintiff is thereby entitled to relief under 42 USC Section 1983.

Wherefore, the Plaintiff, Renee Griffith, prays for judgment against the

Defendants as follows:

1. That judgment be entered finding that the Defendants violated Plaintiff's rights under the Montana Human Rights Act, 49-2-101 MCA et seq., the Governmental Code of Fair Practices 49-3-101 MCA et seq., Article II, Section 5 of the Constitution of the State of Montana, Article II, Section 7 of the Constitution of the State of Montana, and First and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution of the United States;
2. That this Court award Plaintiff nominal and compensatory damages and the Defendants, jointly and severally in an amount to be determined at trial;
3. That this Court order the Defendants, jointly and severally, to pay attorney's fees pursuant incurred by the Plaintiff;
4. For such other and further relief as this Court deems just and proper.

Dated this 16th day of April 2009.

William J. O'Connor II
Attorney for Plaintiff