

April 21, 2011

**SENT VIA FAX & U.S. MAIL**  
**(864) 984-8121**

Billy R. Strickland  
Superintendent  
Laurens County School District 55  
1029 W Main St  
Laurens, SC 29360

Re: Prayer at Laurens District High School Graduation

Dear Superintendent Strickland:

I am writing on behalf of the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) to follow up on a letter we sent on April 14, 2011. It is our information and understanding that the senior class did hold a scheduled meeting on Tuesday, April 19, 2011, regarding graduation. Our complainant informs us there was no vote taken on whether to have prayer. Our complainant further informs us, however, that a packet was distributed to all seniors. One of the pages included "Tips for Graduation." This handout, which is enclosed for your review, ends with the line, "Graduation is not over until the prayer and recessional..."

While we are pleased that the issue of prayer was not brought to a vote by the student body, the packet distributed to all students seems to indicate that a prayer will still be part of the graduation ceremonies. We request an immediate response in writing ensuring that prayer will not be scheduled as part of this year or any future graduations. If this matter has been referred to your attorney, please advise him/her to contact us promptly. Our district complainant awaits action.

Sincerely,

Rebecca S. Markert  
Staff Attorney

Enclosure

cc: Wayne McIntosh, Principal