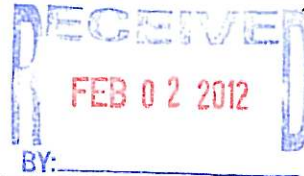


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January 31, 2012

Stephanie Schmitt  
Freedom From Religion Foundation  
P.O. Box 750  
Madison, Wisconsin 53701

Re: Athens Independent School District

Dear Ms. Schmitt:

I am in receipt of your correspondence dated January 27, 2012 concerning field trips taken by the district's kindergarten and first grade students to a pumpkin patch located on property owned by Living for the Brand Cowboy Church.

It was never the intent of the school district to convey a message or endorsement of any religious views held by the church. To this end, it appears as if any such endorsement was done without knowledge or approval of the school district. The purpose of the field trip was secular in nature, that being the opportunity of allowing the students to experience the excitement of the pumpkin patch during the Halloween holiday season.

The school district is confident that any Establishment Clause/Free-Exercise concerns have been addressed.

Please contact me should you have any questions or comments regarding the above-referenced matters.

Best regards,

Blake E. Armstrong

BEA:kk

cc: Dr. Steeber, Athens ISD