

# FREEDOM FROM RELIGION *foundation*

P.O. BOX 750 · MADISON, WI 53701 · (608) 256-8900 · WWW.FFRF.ORG

December 21, 2011

## SENT VIA FAX & ELECTRONIC MAIL

John R. Triplett  
Triplett Law Office  
PO Box 2128  
Inez KY 41224

Re: Prayer at Sheldon Clark High School Basketball Games

Dear Attorney Triplett:

This fall our national organization, which works to protect the constitutional principle of separation between state and church, contacted the Superintendent of Martin County Schools regarding prayer at high school athletic events. In particular, our letter addressed the unconstitutional practice of prayer before football and basketball games at Sheldon Clark High School (SCHS). On September 21, 2011, you informed us that the illegal practices would cease.

We were dismayed to learn that with the start of the SCHS basketball season, the prayers have returned. Our complainant informs us that the prayers are delivered over the public address system and are audible throughout the entire gymnasium. We are aware of prayers occurring before two home games (at least) this season, namely the games on December 8 and December 12.

We remind you that it is illegal for a public school to organize, sponsor, and lead prayers at public high school athletic events. These prayers are unconstitutional even when they are student-initiated.

Once again, we ask that the school district take immediate action to stop prayers at any and all athletic events, including but not limited to basketball games. We ask that you inform us promptly in writing of the steps the Martin County School District takes to remedy this recurring serious and flagrant violation of the First Amendment.

Sincerely,



Rebecca S. Markert  
Staff Attorney

cc: Mark Blackburn, Superintendent, Martin County Schools  
Robbie Fletcher, Principal, Sheldon Clark High School