

# FREEDOM FROM RELIGION *foundation*

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

November 5, 2019

**SENT VIA EMAIL & U.S. MAIL: [jesse.janssen@usd272.org](mailto:jesse.janssen@usd272.org)**

Jesse Janssen  
Superintendent  
Waconda USD 272  
P.O. Box 326  
Cawker City, KS 67430

Re: Religious Entanglement Concerns and Open Records Request

Dear Superintendent Janssen:

I am writing on behalf of the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) regarding a constitutional concern in Waconda USD 272. FFRF is a national nonprofit organization with more than 30,000 members across the country, including members in Kansas. Our purposes are to protect the constitutional principle of separation between state and church, and to educate the public on matters relating to nontheism.

A concerned area resident has reported that Tipton Community School, a public school run by USD 272, shares a building, administrators, and teachers with a private Catholic high school. For instance, it is our understanding that Gery Hake is the principal of Tipton Community School and Tipton Catholic High School. Our complainant reports that there have been instances in the past of priests going into Tipton Community School classrooms and teaching religion to its students.

This arrangement raises serious constitutional concerns, and we are interested in learning what policies the District has in place to protect the constitutional rights of Tipton Community School students against religious proselytizing and endorsement by employees who also work for a private Catholic school. Please respond to the following open records request.

## **Open Records Request**

Pursuant to the Kansas Open Records Act, K.S. 45-215 and seq., I request a copy of the following:

- 1) All contracts or other agreements between USD 272, Tipton Community School, and Tipton Catholic High School;
- 2) All District policies related to Tipton Catholic High School and the unique arrangement between the District and the school;

- 3) All email communications since January 1, 2019 between Tipton Community School administrators and Tipton Catholic High School employees;
- 4) All email communications since January 1, 2019 between Tipton Community School employees and Tipton Catholic High School employees.

I request a response within three business days. If your agency does not maintain these public records, please forward this request to the proper custodian and let me know the name and address of the custodians of these records. If you choose to deny this request, please respond with a written explanation of the denial including any references to applicable statutory exemptions upon which you rely.

If any of these records are available through electronic media (preferred), they may be e-mailed to [chris@ffrf.org](mailto:chris@ffrf.org). If a fee will be charged, please notify me of the amount. If I can provide any clarification that will help expedite your attention to my request, please contact me at 608-256-8900.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Line", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Christopher Line  
*Staff Attorney*  
*Freedom From Religion Foundation*