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July 26, 2023

Samantha F. Lawrence  
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*Via First Class Mail and Email*

**Re: Vicksburg Community Schools**

Dear Ms. Lawrence:

This firm represents Vicksburg Community Schools. I write in response to your letter dated July 12, 2023. In the letter, you expressed concern regarding “prayers” led by a District employee during the Vicksburg High School Senior Award Banquet. You requested that the District investigate the matter and “ensure that no future school-sponsored events include prayer.”

On May 18, 2023, Vicksburg High School hosted its annual “Vicksburg Honors Reception,” honoring members of the graduating senior class. The reception began with a welcome message that was followed by an “invocation” led by District staff member Lisa Coe. Ms. Coe also led another invocation before the dinner portion of the program. This program has run the same way for many years without complaint.

The District appreciates you bringing District parent concerns about these invocations to its attention. Please be advised that, from this point forward, the District will not incorporate invocations or prayers into school-sponsored events, like this reception.

If there are any other steps you feel the District is required to take or you have other questions or concerns as to this matter, please contact me.

Very truly yours,

THRUN LAW FIRM, P.C.

  
Cristina T. Patzelt

c: Keevin O’Neill, Superintendent, Vicksburg Community Schools