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Chesterfield County Public Schools
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VIA EMAIL AND U.S. MAIL

July 5, 2017

Leslie Mehta, Legal Director
American Civil Liberties Union of Virginia
701 E. Franklin Street – Suite 1412
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Ms. Mehta:

Thank you for your recent correspondence. Superintendent Lane asked me to respond to your concerns on his behalf. Of course, the school division was alarmed and is deeply concerned over the allegations of religious discrimination toward a Bellwood Elementary student fasting in observance of Ramadan. The school division will be conducting a complete review of what occurred at Bellwood Elementary on May 30, 2017. The matter is currently being treated as a Human Resources investigation.

The school division will take appropriate action depending on the outcome of this review and will also use this incident as a means to review our existing instructional practices, school board policies, as well as assess the need for professional development on non-western religious beliefs and customs and our obligations under state and federal antidiscrimination laws.

The school division regrets that the parent believes the school division was insensitive to her family's observance of Ramadan. A member of the school division's administrative leadership team will be contacting the parent in the next few weeks to discuss our review of what occurred. Dr. Lane very much appreciates your organization's advocacy and thanks you for reaching out to the school division on their behalf.

Please feel free to contact me directly if you would like to discuss this matter further or wish to discuss the school division's approach to religious accommodations generally.

Very truly yours,

Wendell C. Roberts
School Board Attorney

cc: James F. Lane, Superintendent
Donald Fairheart, Chief of Staff