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A message from SCAPPOOSE HIGH SCHOOL

SHS E-Newsletter

May 16, 2014

FYI – FROM THE DISTRICT OFFICE

Scappoose School District Withdraws Policy Governing Speech and Social Media Use of Dance Team Members in Response to Student Lawsuit

“Prior to the 2013-2014 season of the Scappoose High School dance team, the team instituted a new policy governing the conduct of dance team members, and each student and a parent were required to agree to those policies. The new policy was intended to address concerns regarding sportsmanship, student speech, social media, bullying, and harassment. The restrictions on student speech, however, were unconstitutional.

“A dance team member for two previous seasons, Marissa Harper, and her mother Alicia Harper, refused to sign the policy and informed the Scappoose School District that the policy violated their rights. After communications directed to the School District failed to lead to a resolution, the Harpers challenged the constitutionality of the policy by filing a federal lawsuit. In response to the lawsuit, the School District has withdrawn the policy and acknowledges that portions of the policy relating to student speech violated the Harpers’ First Amendment rights of free speech. The parties agreed to settle the lawsuit based on the School District’s withdrawal of the policy.

The School District regrets the former policy and is pleased that the parties were able to reach an amicable settlement and move forward in an environment where student speech is appropriately supported.”