

## School Demand Ltr

Please be advised that this firm has been retained to represent and interests in the above-mentioned matter. Mr. & Mrs. are the parents of , who both attend High School as a sophomore and senior respectively. Mr. & Mrs. are deaf and communicate primarily through American Sign Language.

Mr. & Mrs. have been unable to understand or participate in any way in any of their children's school functions due to your School's lack of accommodation of their disability. The have requested interpreters on many occasions and they have been denied on each and every occasion. More specifically, during a performance meeting for , Mr. and Mrs. met with teachers and a school interpreter was provided. The did not understand anything that was said during this important meeting of their daughter's performance in school. The interpreter was not qualified and the could not understand what she was conveying to them. In September, the made a request for an interpreter for a school meeting to occur in (month) of (Year) providing information to parents about school loans. The day of this meeting the school notified the that no interpreter would be provided. The attended the meeting and did not understand anything that was happening in the meeting. The also attended an awards ceremony where their son received two scholarships. They did not understand why he got the scholarships at this function.

In April of 1996, wanted to bring her daughter with her to work for "Bring your daughter to work day". She called the school four times by TDD through New Jersey Relay and each time she was hung up on by the school secretary. Finally the school secretary told her she was too busy to talk to her. Ms. was calling the school in order to have excused from school for the above special day. Ms. at that point went to the school to talk to the school principal for a matter that should have easily been taken care of by a phone call. The school secretary did write an apology to the which did not in anyway justify her conduct..

Finally in May of 1996 the requested an interpreter for the very important day of their son's graduation, , who is graduating tomorrow with high honors. The then received a letter dated May 23, 1996 from Dr. , Supervisor of Guidance Services stating to submit their request for an interpreter to Mr. . The sent a letter to Mr. dated May 30, 1996 requesting a sign-language interpreter to be provided at the High School Graduation Ceremony for June 20, 1996 as both Mr. & Mrs. require this reasonable accommodation so they can understand the proceedings. This request was denied in a letter dated June 6, 1996 from Mr. , Director of Student Personnel/Community Services. In your letter you offer an alternative of transcripts of the graduation. This is unacceptable to my clients. All the above events show an ongoing pattern of discrimination by the school district as it is an ineffective method of accommodation. Mr. & Mrs. would miss one of the most important events of their lives if forced to use written "transcripts" of a ceremony all other parents may fully enjoy..

This letter is to advise you, that you are in violation of Title II and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, signed into law by President Bush in 1990, 28 C.F.R. Section 35.104, and the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination, N.J.S.A. 10-5:1 et seq. as well as the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 if you receive any federal funds. As a local government providing a public ceremony, you must be fully accessible to all individuals regardless of the disability. Further you must ensure "effective communication" and this should be done with the use of a "qualified interpreter who can adequately, effectively and impartially interpret both expressively and receptively using any specialized vocabulary". 28 C.F.R. Section 36.301 (c). Title II further requires that the choice of the disabled person must be given primary consideration.

Please be advised the \_\_\_\_\_ have hired an interpreter from the New Jersey Division of the Deaf, a state agency in Trenton, which is an Interpreter Referral Service, whereby qualified interpreters may be obtained. We are now requesting the following proper accommodations to be made for the \_\_\_\_\_ due to their disability:

- 1) The school will place the interpreter in the front area next to the speaker(s) of the graduation ceremony on June 20, 1996.
- 2) The school will provide the \_\_\_\_\_ with front row seating so that they will be able to see the interpreter.
- 3) The school will reimburse the \_\_\_\_\_ for the cost of the interpreter that is provided for this ceremony.
- 4) The school will reimburse the \_\_\_\_\_ for all attorneys fees required for their consultation and the drafting of this letter.
- 5) The school will provide certified Interpreters for future school functions involving their children.
- 6) Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_, Vice Principal, will meet the \_\_\_\_\_ and the interpreter at 5:45 p.m. on June 20th, 1996 just outside by the fence at the gate(if indoors, by the Clayton entrance) in order to show the \_\_\_\_\_ their seats and to show the interpreter where she is to stand and interpret for the ceremony and the \_\_\_\_\_.

Please review this matter and notify my office immediately. If we do not hear from you immediately and the \_\_\_\_\_ continue to be discriminated against, we will seek further legal action. Thank you in advance for your attention and understanding to this matter.

Very Truly Yours,

cc: