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## Via Mail and Email

**Mr. Marshall W. Grate**  
Clark Hill  
300 Ottawa St. NW  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
Emailed: [mgrate@clarkhill.com](mailto:mgrate@clarkhill.com)

**Re: Grant Public Schools District Board of Education**

Dear Mr. Grate,

Thank you for your letter on April 8, 2024. As you know, I am representing a group of local citizens going by the name Grant Community Cares. Today I am addressing what we believe are First Amendment violations by members of Grant's Board of Education.

Both Rachal Gort and Sabrina Veltkamp-Blok regularly and often post Board business on their respective personal social media accounts. However, each has blocked certain members of the community from commenting, questioning, or responding in any way to such posts. This is a violation of the First Amendment which has been recently clarified by the U.S. Supreme Court. *O'Connor-Ratcliffe v. Garnier*, 601 US \_\_\_ *Lindke v. Freed*, 598 US \_\_\_ (March 15, 2024). These issues are certainly a matter of public concern. The intention of their political posts are clearly to influence the Grant community and potential voters. Since Ms. Gort and Ms. Veltkamp-Blok use their personal accounts to conduct Board business in this manner, they must unblock each and every person who may potentially want to respond on their posts. Blocking commentary or commentors that do not agree with

these Board members' positions violates our Constitution and must stop. Further, we ask both Ms. Gort and Ms. Veltkamp-Blok to cease and desist from blocking comments, and allow public commentary on their Facebook accounts in the future.

Additionally, each of these Board members has indicated on their social media posts that certain community members who oppose their views are pedophiles in that they must be "grooming" children. (See attached posts). While run of the mill disparagement between members of a community with opposing political views comes with the territory in social media banter, indicating or insinuating that individuals are pedophiles is beyond the pale and is in fact defamatory and actionable as defamation *per se*. We ask both Ms. Gort and Ms. Veltkamp-Blok to retract such statements (or memes) and issue an apology for such conduct.

Finally, after further investigation, there appears to have been several dummy Facebook accounts created to make comments supporting incumbent board members that are up for recall election and otherwise. It is suspected that the creators of the accounts of "Jake Andrews" and "William Edwards" were either Board members, or their agents at the direction of Board members. While this may not be an uncommon tactic in the political arena, it is still fraudulent conduct, and it likely violates Michigan campaign finance law. We ask that any dummy Facebook account (and/or persona) that has been created by an individual associated with the GPS board please be taken down, along with all the commentary and/or posts associated with the account.

Very truly yours,

PINSKY SMITH, PC

*Katherine Smith Kennedy*

/s/

On behalf of  
Grant Community Cares

KSK/mi