




Robert W. Graeff, Ed.D.
Superintendent
720 Ninth Street, Ramona, CA 92065
(760) 787-2007

June 4, 2009

Natalie Jones


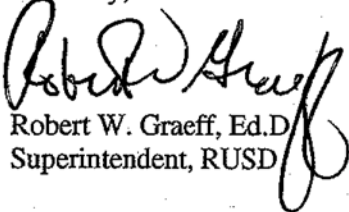
Dear Natalie,


On behalf of the Governing Board of the Ramona Unified School District and the staff of Mt. Woodson Elementary School, we would like to extend our apology to you and your family for denying you the same opportunity as your fellow classmates to give your final Excel class presentation and for requiring parental permission for the presentation. As we discussed with you and your mother in mid-April, we were exercising an abundance of caution in examining the facts at hand and were attempting to prevent what we thought might be an awkward situation for your classmates who may or may not have been prepared to participate appropriately as an audience for your research project. When examining our school district's policies and procedures at that time, it appeared to us that the content of your report might have ventured into an instructional area which is often viewed as extremely sensitive and challenging for students, parents, and teachers, alike. This concern for safeguarding the tender sensibilities of the other students in your class led us to the decision that we made at that time.

After further reflection, however, it appears that we were overly cautious in our level of concern and we are now in the process of working with our teachers to give you an opportunity to present your original presentation to the other members of your Excel class from last month. We recognize that the mention or acknowledgment of a person's sexual orientation is not sufficient to require parental permission to participate in a class or view a student's presentation.

Please accept this apology and have the confidence that our school and District leadership truly value you as a student and our local ideology which values diversity of opinion. It is our hope that – together – we can all view this incident as a learning experience and emerge wiser from the entire experience.

Sincerely,


Robert W. Graeff, Ed.D.
Superintendent, RUSD


Theresa Grace
Principal, Mt. Woodson Elementary School

cc: Mrs. Bonnie Jones
Governing Board, RUSD
David Blair-Loy & Elizabeth Gill, ACLU
Daniel Shinoff, Stutz-Artiano