



Council on American-Islamic Relations
CAIR Office in Maryland

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July 3, 2024

Ms. Deatrice Womack
Robert Goddard Montessori School
Prince George's County Public Schools
9850 Good Luck Road
Seabrook, MD 20706

RE: Call for investigation, immediate action following threats, Islamophobic slurs targeting Muslim student at Robert Goddard Montessori School

Dear Ms. Womack,

On behalf of the Maryland office of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the nation's largest Muslim civil rights and civil liberties organization, I am writing to formally request an investigation and immediate action into an incident recently reported to my office involving a fifth grade student [REDACTED] at your school that has raised significant concerns about her personal safety, the school climate for Muslim students and general standards of conduct within the school community.

In May, [REDACTED] was reportedly involved in a minor situation with another student who allegedly took her pencil without permission. CAIR was informed that this matter was resolved, and that [REDACTED]'s pencil was returned to her. [REDACTED], who has no previous reports of misconduct according to her parents, and appears to be a model student, wears the Islamic headscarf, or hijab.

[REDACTED]'s parents came to learn about this when, a few weeks later, the father of the student who took her pencil posted very troubling Islamophobic audio and text messages in a WhatsApp group chat with other parents that included vulgar slurs and tropes. CAIR is in receipt of these messages which are deeply racist and directly target [REDACTED] and her family. In them, this male adult calls this minor Muslim child a "future terrorist" and her family "followers of child molester," and says that he is "taking things into [his] own hands" among other threats and slurs. In one audio clip forwarded to CAIR, the father of the other student, [REDACTED], angrily calls [REDACTED] a "terrorist," says "f**** you, you terrorist piece of s****" before saying "I think it's my time [inaudible] put a bullet, f*** Muhammad." The individual's display photo in the group chat is of an Israeli flag.

[REDACTED]'s parents, who reportedly have not had any interaction with this person and aren't familiar with him or his daughter, have been shocked and horrified to read and hear these messages. They are understandably deeply concerned and fearful for their daughter's safety, and CAIR shares their concerns. This matter has been reported to the Prince George's County Police Department, and [REDACTED]'s family is seeking a restraining order against this individual.

Considering these events, it is crucial that you and administrators at your school take immediate action to strongly condemn these threats and hateful rhetoric. We respectfully urge you to conduct a swift and thorough investigation into

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this matter and provide us with the steps you are taking to protect [REDACTED] and other Muslim children at your school and to avoid these kind of incidents in the future.

CAIR is confident that with your support and swift action, we can work together to ease the fears of your Muslim students and families and help foster a more inclusive and respectful school environment. We offer free trainings on Islamophobia, anti-bullying and cultural competency related to Islam and Muslims that we would be glad to arrange at your and your staff's convenience.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. I look forward to your response and your continued commitment to the safety and well-being of all students.

Regards,



Zainab Chaudry, Pharm.D.
Director, CAIR Office in Maryland
Council on American-Islamic Relations

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