



Office of General Counsel
Columbus City Schools
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James A. Barnes, General Counsel

Mission: Each student is highly educated, prepared for leadership and service, and empowered for success as a citizen in a global community.

July 2, 2025

Sent via U.S. Mail and Electronic Mail - stephanie.jablonsky@thefire.org

Stephanie Jablonsky
The Foundation for Individual Rights
and Expression
510 Walnut Street, Suite 900
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Dear Ms. Jablonsky,

Thank you for your June 25, 2025 letter to former Principal Janet Routzong at Whetstone High School. Your letter has been referred to me to provide a response.

Columbus City Schools, like other school districts, has bathroom guidelines in place to address student needs, enhance safety, and maintain an educational environment. Unfortunately, your letter is premised on inaccurate information regarding an interaction between former Principal Routzong and a student at the school. No student was advised to not speak with the media. Instead, following the student's interview with the media, Principal Routzong reached out to the student so that the student could share the student's concerns with Principal Routzong and work together to create a feasible plan to address challenges with the safety and security of students. At all times, Principal Routzong encouraged students to share their concerns with school building leadership as that is where the concerns could be directly addressed.

Please be advised that Columbus City Schools, and its Board of Education, have not, and will not, violate any students' First Amendment Rights. We respect, and abide by, the rights of all our students. Again, thank you for your letter.

Sincerely,

James A. Barnes