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Carol A. Woodbury
Superintendent of Schools
Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District
296 Station Avenue
South Yarmouth, MA 02664

November 1, 2010

Re: Public Records Request

Dear Superintendent Woodbury,

This letter constitutes a request under the Public Records Law, Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 66, §10 for documents in the custody of the Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District. The request seeks documents regarding surveillance cameras installed in the schools and police access to those cameras.

As a civil rights organization, the ACLU of Massachusetts has for some years been concerned, generally, about the proliferation of surveillance cameras in all facets of our lives, including streets, stores, schools and transportation. In order to fully understand the scope of the surveillance systems in use, we have made numerous requests for public records to cities, towns, and other public entities in Massachusetts.

It is our understanding that the Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District recently received a \$75,000 grant from the Department of Justice to install security cameras and access control doors for the school. According to press reports, these funds must be matched by local dollars.¹ The federal government states on its open government website USASpending.gov that Yarmouth also received a \$250,000 grant in 2002 for a "COPS IN SCHOOLS" program.²

I understand and appreciate the school's efforts to ensure the safety of the children in its care. Our goal is to educate the public about how the cameras are currently being used, and their potential for different kinds of uses, in order to ensure an informed discussion of these issues. For that reason we are seeking the records listed below.

¹ Cassidy, Patrick, "D-Y awarded grant to beef up school security," CapeCodOnline.com, October 9, 2010. Available at <http://www.capecodonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20101009/NEWS/10090328/-1/NEWSMAP>

² Information available at http://usaspending.gov/explore?carryfilters=on&overridecook=yes&fromfiscal=yes&tab=By+Prime+Awardee&typeofview=complete&comingfrom=searchresults&frompage=assistance&federal_award_id=2002SHWX0329&federal_award_mod=&fiscal_year=2002&pop_state=MA&major_contracting_agency=15&mod_agency=1550&recipientid=67150&record_id=3648951

Specific Documents Requested:

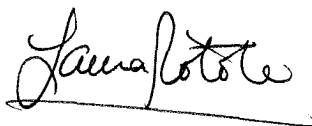
1. Any and all records that provide notice to students, parents, staff and/or teachers that surveillance cameras are in use in the Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District ("DYRSD") and/or any of the schools therein. This includes documents such as letters, posted signs, notices or billboards.
2. Any and all grant proposals made to any federal or state agency during the period of 2002 to present for funding relating to cameras in schools or police officers in schools. Any and all records received from any federal or state agency during the period of 2002 to present accepting or denying any grant proposals relating to cameras in schools or police officers in schools.
3. Any and all records describing matching funds from the state or town to fund cameras in schools.
4. Any and all contracts between the DYRSD and/or any of the schools therein and any company providing surveillance equipment, consulting related to camera surveillance, and/or installation or maintenance of camera equipment.
5. Any and all policies, procedures, rules and training materials regarding the use of cameras, the retention and deletion of data and the security of the video data.
6. Any and all contracts, agreements or memoranda of understanding between DYRSD and/or any of the schools therein and any local, state or federal law enforcement agency regarding the use of or access to surveillance cameras installed in the schools.
7. Any and all documents showing the location of cameras inside DYRSD and/or any of the schools therein.

Because this request involves a matter of public concern and because it is made on behalf of a nonprofit organization, I ask that you waive any copying costs pursuant to 950 C.M.R. § 32.06(5). We appreciate receiving documents in electronic form.

Should you determine that some portion of the documents requested are exempt from disclosure, please release any reasonably segregable portions that are not exempt. In addition, please note the applicable statutory exemption and explain why it applies to the redacted portions. As you know, a custodian of public records shall comply with a request within ten days after receipt.

Thank you for your assistance. I would be happy to discuss this request with you in order to clarify any of the issues and to modify the request, if necessary. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Laura Pote", with a long horizontal flourish underneath.