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January 25, 2011

American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts
211 Congress Street
Boston, MA 02110

Attention: Laura Rótolo, Staff Attorney

RE: Public Records Request
Surveillance Cameras in Newton Public Schools

Dear Attorney Rótolo:

Please accept this letter in response to the American Civil Liberties Union's ("ACLU") request for records concerning surveillance cameras in Newton Public Schools ("NPS"). As background for this response, Newton Public Schools has fifteen elementary schools, four middle schools, and two high schools. At the current time, only one elementary school has surveillance cameras (exterior only) in operation. Several schools, including Bowen Elementary School and Newton North High School, have used temporary surveillance cameras on a few instances in the past. Last June, the Newton School Committee updated its Security Policy to specifically address the use of surveillance cameras. Future installation and use of such cameras will be undertaken in conformity with this policy.

REQUEST 1. At the Franklin Elementary School, four exterior security cameras located at the rear loading dock area. These cameras are clearly visible and the area is posted with no trespassing signs. These cameras have been installed for a number of years, and it's not known if any notice was sent out at the time of their original installation.

Per our conversation in which you limited the time frame for notices to those

sent in the past several years, I've enclosed copies of a notice sent in the spring of 2010 to the Bowen Elementary School community. Following that notice, a single camera was installed in a public corridor at the Bowen Elementary School for approximately one month.

Also enclosed are several notices sent out during the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years to the Newton North High School community. Following the 2009 notice, four exterior cameras at entrances were installed at the old Newton North High School. There are no surveillance cameras currently installed at the new Newton North High School, although there are plans to install cameras at both Newton North and South High Schools. Those installations will be consistent with the Security Policy adopted by the Newton School Committee.

REQUEST 2. No documents responsive to this Request exist.

REQUEST 3. No documents responsive to this Request exist.

REQUEST 4. See enclosed Security Policy for the Newton Public Schools.

REQUEST 5. See enclosed Memorandum of Understanding between the Newton Public Schools and the Newton Police Department.

REQUEST 6. As noted, currently there are no interior surveillance cameras in operation. Any interior cameras installed in the future will comply with the Newton School Committee's Security Policy regarding location of the same.

Please let me know if you have further questions regarding this request.

Very truly yours,



Ouida C.M. Young
Associate City Solicitor

cc: David D. Olson, City Clerk