

# ACLU Wisconsin: Calls on Greendale School District to improve racial climate in its schools

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MILWAUKEE – Recently, a concerned family filed a complaint against Greendale School District for creating a racially hostile environment. We are asking the district to investigate – and meaningfully act upon – a series of racial incidents in its high school and elementary school, including the use of racial slurs, posting of racially offensive videos, and other harassment – that have created a hostile environment. A number of these behaviors occurred as recently as last month – despite repeated reports to administration by complainant and others, and despite the “equity plan” the District is developing. The District is on notice of the racially hostile environment, but its response to the climate of racial harassment in its schools has been ineffective and inadequate, as the recent uptick in incidents shows.

“While the District may have taken action against some of the individuals involved, the repeated incidents show a need for an effective and systemic response and one that meaningfully includes affected students and families,” noted Karyn Rotker, ACLU of Wisconsin staff attorney. “Federal civil rights guidance suggests that a more effective response could include, in addition to punishing the individuals responsible, to take steps to reaffirming the school’s policy against discrimination (including racial harassment), publicizing the ways to report allegations of racial harassment, training faculty on constructive responses to racial conflict, hosting class discussions about racial harassment and sensitivity to students of other races, and conducting outreach to involve parents and students to identify problems and improve the school environment. This needs to happen as soon as possible.”



To view this statement and the complaint online please visit our website at <https://www.aclu-wi.org/en/news/aclu-wisconsins-files-complaint-against-greendale-school-district>