



MISS NEW HAMPSHIRE

Miss New Hampshire Scholarship Program, Inc.

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To: All Media Outlets
From: Bob Oxford, Executive Director
Regarding: Miss New Hampshire and Dover Middle Schools
Date: March 28, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

The Miss New Hampshire Scholarship Program is disappointed by the decision of the Dover Schools to cancel their invitation for Miss New Hampshire to speak at their “Kick Butts” program after they took the time to seek us out to make a presentation about children making “Right Decisions.”

A little history:

We have been presenting the “Right Decisions, Right Now” program at middle schools throughout New Hampshire for the past four years.

The curriculum is written and delivered by our current Miss New Hampshire with the emphasis on making the right decisions about things such as drugs, bullying, alcohol, cigarette smoking, etc. It also provides an opportunity for the presenter to integrate a discussion of her community involvement. In this case, that is Character Education.

Each presentation is unscripted and engages the children in discussions while learning about the consequences of the decisions that they may be asked to make in their everyday lives.

This program has proved to be very popular as evidenced by the fact that schools ask us to return each year.

As a matter of course, as we approach each school to offer this presentation, we discuss the “Right Decisions, Right Now” program and indicate that it is funded by the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. You will note from most of the press that we receive on this program after presentations are made, it is usually mentioned that funding for this worthwhile program comes from R.J. Reynolds

In this specific case, we did NOT approach the Dover Middle School, they approached us. It is here where I think some communication may have broken down. We may have assumed that since the coordinator contacted Miss New Hampshire to present her program in his school, that he was well aware of what the program entailed. We may not have gone into all the detail that we would have, if we had initiated the contact. In any case, we were not hiding, and have never hidden the fact that funding comes from R.J. Reynolds.

Discovering that R.J. Reynolds funds the Right Decisions Right Now for the Miss New Hampshire organization, seems to have caused the Dover Schools to re-evaluate whether or not Miss New Hampshire and the “Right Decisions, Right Now” program should still participate in the Dover Middle School event. That is certainly a decision that the Dover School District is entitled to make. They can choose whatever presentations they see fit. A simple letter to us indicating that they would like to rescind their invitation would have been sufficient.

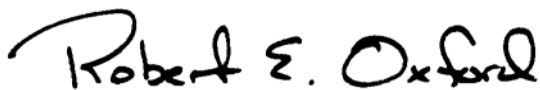
Instead of just a simple letter to us, we received a letter that not only indicated that we had been “Uninvited” but proceeded to attempt to convince us that we should not be taking money from R.J. Reynolds to fund this worthwhile program. They also felt it necessary to send this letter to select media outlets in the state. That was an unfortunate decision. While we respect the Dover School system’s right to choose their speakers, we do question the motivation of sending a copy of this letter to the media. We have an excellent track record of accomplishment through this program over the past four years. Dover is the first school to raise any issue whatsoever.

The Miss New Hampshire Organization thoroughly reviewed all of the “Right Decisions, Right Now” materials very early in the process of accepting a contract for the funding of the School Tour Program. We had high school educators and middle school educators review the materials for content appropriateness. Our Board adopted the program in 2003 and have no plans to discontinue our affiliation with the program.

We are most disappointed that this decision will prevent many deserving young middle school children in Dover from hearing a message that they need to hear. This positive message is one of making decisions and the consequences of those decisions. This program is delivered by a fantastic, capable and wonderful individual, deserving of her status as a role model and this message is delivered at a time in these student’s lives when these types of decisions are so critical.

We wish the Dover Middle School the best of luck with their program to “Kick Butts” and should they change their minds to welcome us back in the future, we would certainly be happy to consider coming back to present this program.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert E. Oxford". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robert E. Oxford
Executive Director
Miss NH Scholarship Program, Inc.