

The *Mead* Case

Case Name: *Mead v. Rockford Public School District*

Case Status: Case filed on December 18th, 2023, in the United States District Court for The Western District of Michigan Southern Division

Significance: Whether the Rockford Public School District can make major decisions about a child without her parents' knowledge or consent.



Background: Dan and Jennifer Mead's daughter attended East Rockford Middle School in Michigan. While there, Dan and Jennifer's daughter began regularly meeting with a school counselor, who regularly updated Jennifer about her daughter's academic progress and general well-being at school. Eventually, the Meads came to communicate even more frequently with the school after she was diagnosed with autism. They trusted school staff to keep them informed about how their daughter was doing and how the school was treating her. But no one told the Meads—let alone asked for their consent—when the District began to treat their daughter as a boy, referring to her with male pronouns and a masculine name. The District took these actions pursuant to its own policy. And that policy even required District employees to intentionally alter some official records to remove references to the masculine name and male pronouns used by the District before sending those records to the Meads. The Meads only learned about this when they received a document that had accidentally not been fully altered. Alliance Defending Freedom represents Dan and Jennifer Mead in a lawsuit against the Rockford Public School District over its violation of their fundamental parental rights.

Key Points

- Parents love their children most and know them best.
- Parents have the fundamental right and responsibility to direct the upbringing, education, and healthcare of their children.
- Schools should partner with parents to educate their children and should not treat parents as an obstacle.

Key Facts

- The District intentionally altered documents to remove references to the masculine name and male pronouns used by the District before sending those records to the Meads.
- The U.S. Constitution protects parental rights.

The Bottom Line: Parents have a right to know what is happening to their children so they can make the best decisions for them.