

STUDENT NAME: Brian Richmond

DOB: 11-08-1994

PARENT NAME: Kathryn and Wynndel Richmond

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ISSUE SUMMARY

Brian transferred to SHS with an IEP as a child with Emotional Disabilities. Brian functioned well within the Middle School setting, receiving resource services one class per day to support his functioning, socially and academically, within the general ed. program. Brian always had great difficulty with transitioning to different schools (i.e. elementary to middle school) but with support and time was able to adjust. Brian did have periods where he would have meltdowns or issues, but with support and direction, could get back on track. Prior to the years end, Ms. Richmond met with the IEP team at Gridley to discuss his transition to Sahuaro High School and to amend his IEP so that Brian received the support needed during this time of change. Team recommended that Brian have support, such as an instructional assistant who could support him in 2-3 classes throughout the day. This person would be someone familiar with Brian's issues so that any problems could be addressed as he would be in a new setting, with unfamiliar supports, and would have an increased level of independence that may initially be difficult for him to maneuver. The IEP team felt that this level of support would be sufficient during the transition period. These supports were being added to his IEP at Gridley, but would follow him to Sahuaro. The Middle School teachers would be talking to Brian's high school teachers, familiarizing them with Brian's issues.

Brian began school at Sahuaro and by mid-August the parents received daily phone calls from Ms. Johnston requesting that they pick Brian up due to "misbehavior". With both parents working they did the best they could to pick Brian up. They report that Brian was always upset, wanting to remain at school. On occasion when parents were not available Brian was sent home unsupervised, having to walk and cross busy boulevards while agitated and upset. Mom began noting a significant change in Brian as the month progressed. He could not communicate what was bothering him and at times seemed confused and distracted. Part of his frustration stemmed from not being allowed to attend school. Brian liked Sahuaro but stated he was often bored in his classes. During this time, parents believed that Brian was receiving the support he needed. Although the school staff would send Brian home, they did not call an I.E.P. meeting to help Brian and address the behaviors that led them to remove him from school or try to help him handle them in a more appropriate manner.

By the end of August Mrs. Richmond reports calling around to schedule a mental health evaluation but due to limited availability of Psychiatrists taking new patients, the earliest Brian could be seen was 2 months out. Mrs. Richmond placed Brian on Dr. Parkinson's wait list and made staff aware of her attempts to seek out medical support. From August through October, Sahuaro staff failed to intervene or attempt to provide services to Brian that would help address his emotional needs. In addition, Brian received little to no services that were discussed during the May meeting, which would include counseling and special education support in the classes he attended to support or prevent what began to occur in the beginning of the year. On one occasion parents were called to school insisting that Brian may have taken drugs although follow up with his primary physician revealed this not to be true. The Sahuaro staff continued to attribute Brian's behaviors to drugs or willful misbehavior instead of understanding the History of emotional disabilities and the need to provide supports other than discipline when dealing with the issues presented.

Although I came to school on several occasions, there was never an IEP team meeting or support for my son. All meetings were to assign blame and send Brian home. I attended numerous meetings at school, not clear as to the purpose and always asking why there were no administrators or general education staff available to work as a team on Brian's behalf. Finally, due to the need to address Brian's re-evaluation an IEP/MET meeting was called in October. During the meeting Mrs. Richmond noted the omission of services needed during his transition from Gridley (8th grade) to Sahuaro High School. The IEP did state that Brian would receive services in a self contained placement, although this was never discussed at the end of the year IEP. As a result of this omission, Ms. Johnston placed Brian into special education math and English classes, even though he did not have problems completing the work as he is a very bright boy, as noted in the IEP. Also at the October IEP/MET meeting there was no administrator and I

felt that Brian was being blamed for his behaviors. I told the school staff that I was trying to get Brian into see a doctor and that I was very worried about his mental state. Although there one of Brian's general education teachers attended, it was clear that no support was provided to Brian and therefore the blame for his behaviors was placed on Brian rather than the absence of supports needed to get him through this difficult period.

Not long after the IEP/MET I was called to school for a Manifestation meeting, as they claimed that Brian made threatening comments and often left class without permission. I arrived at the site and no one except Dr. Hamway was at the meeting. We had to reschedule the meeting several times, and at each meeting only one or no required members familiar with Brian's issues and behaviors were in attendance. The school kept suspending Brian rather than trying to help him. Finally we held the Manifestation meeting even though no administrator or counselor was present. Dr. Hamway suggested writing a Behavior Plan and we talked about ways to help Brian. I was called shortly after the meeting where we decided the behaviors were related to his disability and we reviewed the plan. Again no one but Dr. Hamway attended that meeting. She assured me that she would go over the plan with all staff so that we could begin to address Brian's behaviors not through discipline but through services that allowed him a "safe place" and options that would help him until I could get medical assistance.

Regardless of what we discussed, the calls continued, and I was told that Brian did not belong at Sahuarro because they did not have the services he needed. I, as well as Brian, felt that moving him would make things worse and that Brian had a right to remain at his home school. At one point I thought of withdrawing Brian, seeing that the staff at Sahuarro was making things worse by blaming him and not giving him the help he needed to succeed. Dr. Hamway suggested a shortened day until Brian was seen by his psychiatrist but apparently the administration would not accept that suggestion. I am not sure why they did not attend the meeting to participate in Brian's care; rather they avoided any meetings seeming to only want him out of their school. Finally I was called and told that Brian was making threatening comments. I question whether this really occurred as Brian said that he was feeling picked on and acknowledged saying inappropriate things to students but not threatening them like was reported. Brian was becoming more and more frustrated by being sent home and not understanding why. Brian wanted to go to school but not allowed to return. Another IEP meeting (10-27-2009) was called and this time all staff attended. By this time we were being called every day to pick Brian up and we again considered pulling Brian out of school, but this upset Brian as he liked school and wanted to try and make it work. Brian attended this meeting and was told he could not come to Sahuarro. Brian became very upset from that point on, not given any other options but to be removed from campus. Later that night Brian decompensated and was put in Sonoran Behavior Hospital on 10-29-2009.

Brian was evaluated at the facility and placed on medications which seemed to sedate him but helped his feelings of anxiety. Brian wanted to go home, especially with his Birthday fast approaching. He also wanted to go back to school and at this point parents did not feel he was safe due to the staff's ongoing targeting of Brian. Brian eventually agreed to attend Palo Verde School with the promise of eventually returning to Sahuarro. Brian was enrolled at Palo Verde on November 13, 2009 and they were very accepting of Brian and called in the Behavior Intervention team to develop a plan that would support him at this new school. Brian left campus daily because it was too restrictive and he felt claustrophobic. He was placed in a couple of gen. ed. classes: Fine Arts (staff) and English (alone). ** Brian was suspended in January for bringing pot to school. A Manifestation meeting took place (although Mom did not receive a copy of report) and Brian returned to school. Even at the new site, where they claimed Brian would get the help he needed, he has been repeatedly sent home from school. Brian has been sent home for well over 10 days throughout this school year and has received no educational services during this time. It is no wonder that he has fallen further behind and most likely losing ground in his classes.

Sometime in February the Palo Verde Staff no longer could work with Brian, repeatedly sending him home due to problem behaviors. During this entire time, Brian wanted to return to Sahuarro. I do not believe that the Behavior Plan was followed or adjusted appropriately during his time at Palo Verde and again the promise of having a specialized team work with Brian at Palo Verde did not happen. Palo Verde now wanted Brian removed from their campus and wanted him placed at Mary Meredith. Brian has been working so hard so that he can return to Sahuarro but his classes and

coursework is very low and parents fear he is not receiving a curriculum that would engage him or keep him interested so that he remains focused. Brian states that this new school is really easy and really boring. Brian has begun to get physically sick in the morning when having to go to Mary Meredith. Although Brian does have an emotional disability, he has never received the support that he needs in his general education program and is becoming increasingly uncomfortable in the constant change of settings and being denied his return to the school he feels most comfortable with and where his friends are attending and familiar with his issues. Brian is entitled to receiving the general education curriculum and in fact is most likely bored by what is given in some of the resource classes and self contained setting. A review of lesson plans and class work reveals that he is not receiving curriculum that is standards based and in line with the gen. ed. program.