

LAWSUIT: Third teacher alleges she was fired from Kanye West's private school in retaliation for reporting violations

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- **A copy of the lawsuit, a photo and press release can be found in this [Google Drive folder](#)** (The plaintiff is not immediately available for interviews.)

LAWSUIT: Third former teacher comes forward with allegations that she was fired from Kanye West's private California Christian school in retaliation for reporting education, health and safety code violations

A third former teacher at Kanye West's secretive Southern California private Christian school has joined a lawsuit against the Grammy Award-winning artist, who legally changed his name to Ye, in a complaint containing shocking allegations of health, safety and education code violations, illegal retaliatory conduct and racial discrimination.

The initial lawsuit was filed on April 6 in Los Angeles County Superior Court by plaintiffs Cecilia Hailey and her daughter Chekarey Byers who allege they were fired from Ye's Donda Academy in March 2023 in retaliation for reporting code violations, that they were discriminated against based on their race and illegally had wages withheld or were repeatedly improperly paid. Hailey was hired in 2022 and Byers in January 2023.

An amended complaint was filed Thursday adding former Donda Academy teacher Timanii Meeks who alleges she was fired about six months earlier in retaliation for reporting some of the exact same concerns including exposed and dangerous electrical wiring, and bullying and assaults on campus.



“Clearly, Ye has a big problem on his hands with this school, and the addition of Ms. Meeks to the complaint only serves to reinforce the nightmarish conditions for staff and students at Donda Academy,” said plaintiffs’ attorney Ron Zambrano, a partner and Employment Litigation Chair at [West Coast Employment Lawyers](#). “Ms. Meeks was fired months before Cecilia Hailey and Chekarey Byers were terminated but all three clearly witnessed the same illegal and disturbing code violations and conduct at the school, and all three were given the same retaliatory and unlawful treatment merely for trying to stand up for the students’ rights to a meaningful education. Donda and Ye now have an established pattern of retaliation, from two independent sources, to contend with.”

“Plaintiff Meeks is informed and believes that the building was not safe for occupants, let alone children,” according to the amended complaint.

Meeks was hired through an agency in August 2022 as a substitute teacher. She says that soon after, plans were in motion to give her a full-time teaching position in the theater department.

From the start of her employment, Meeks says she lodged numerous complaints to the principal, vice principal and director Brianne Cambell about student safety and building hazards, according to the lawsuit.

“Instead of addressing her complaints, Plaintiff MEEKS was simply told, ‘It’s a work in progress,’ and ‘We’re working on the kinks,’” the lawsuit states.

In early October 2022, Meeks alleges, several parents sat in on one of her math classes, and subsequently complained about the conditions. Meeks took the complaints to Cambell.

“Specifically, they complained that there were no books, textbooks, or any sort of educational items that would typically be found in a classroom. Students were eventually given workbooks and printouts of online worksheets,” the lawsuit states. “In response to parents voicing their concerns, Defendant BRIANNE CABELL reprimanded Plaintiff MEEKS.”

Just days later on Oct. 12, 2022, Meeks was informed by her agency - Teachers on Reserve - that the school had terminated her. No reason was provided.

“Plaintiff MEEKS is informed and believes that, prior to her termination, her contract had been extended, and she was supposed to work until at least the end of the year,” according to the complaint.

The initial complaint filed by Hailey and Byers also contains peculiar — and in some instances illegal — rules in place at the school Ye opened in 2021 named after his late mother initially in Simi Valley before moving it to nearby Chatsworth. He now serves as the Chief Executive Officer, Secretary and Chief Financial Officer and is named as a defendant in the complaint along with

the school and three of its directors.

The lawsuit alleges, among other things, teachers not being trained to provide basic life support, that doors were locked from the outside, students had no access to forks or utensils or even chairs to sit on, and unsecured and expired medications were improperly stored while there were no cleaning services or school nurse. And one meal a day was served – sushi - which students had to eat sitting on the floor.

A lack of security and bullying also were reported.

“In one incident, a student assaulted an eighth grade student by slapping her, then attempted to assault another teacher. The student had multiple accounts of bullying, both physically and verbally, that had gone without discipline,” according to the complaint.

Shortly after taking the job, according to the lawsuit, Byers began reporting the numerous health and safety violations and unlawful educational practices but, again, like Meeks, nothing was done.

Instead, according to the complaint, Byers and Hailey were met with pushback and called “aggressive,” behavior the plaintiffs believed “facilitates stereotypes about African American women as being confrontational simply for doing their job and voicing their legitimate concerns in order to provide a safe environment and proper education for their students.”

Meanwhile, the complaint states, West had other unusual rules, including not allowing artwork to be hung on walls, not allowing kids on the second floor because “he was reportedly afraid of stairs,” and forbidding jewelry.

In addition to being “terminated in retaliation for their complaints about defendants’ unlawful and unsafe educational practices,” as well as racial discrimination, Hailey and Byers allege that their paychecks were “untimely or inaccurate” with Byers never receiving her first check and ensuing checks often being short up to \$2,700, in violation of state and local labor laws.

The lawsuit aims to hold West and the school liable for the retaliatory wrongful termination and discrimination and each of the named individual defendants for unpaid wages.

The lawsuit was filed at the Los Angeles County Superior Court; Cecelia Hailey et al. v. Donda Academy Inc. et al., Case # 23STCV07583.

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backgrounds and legal knowledge to stand up to the corporations they once defended. Ron Zambrano is a partner and the Employment Litigation Chair at West Coast Trial Lawyers, where he brings more than a decade of experience fighting for employee rights. Since 2008, he's exclusively represented victims of workplace discrimination and harassment, wrongful termination, whistleblower retaliation, and wage and hour violations. Ron has settled millions of dollars in claims on behalf of aggrieved employees from various walks of life and backgrounds.

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