

THREE LARGE ALABAMA SCHOOL DISTRICTS FILE LAWSUITS AGAINST SOCIAL MEDIA GIANTS

Alabama school districts allege Meta (Facebook and Instagram), TikTok, YouTube and Snapchat created a youth mental health crisis.

Montgomery, Ala. (March 29, 2023) – Beasley Allen, Wagstaff & Cartmell, and Goza & Honnold lawyers filed lawsuits on behalf of three Alabama school districts against Meta (Facebook and Instagram), TikTok, YouTube and Snapchat over the youth mental health crisis caused by the social media companies. The Baldwin County, Montgomery Public and Tuscaloosa City School Districts’ lawsuits are filed in the California state court Judicial Council Coordination Proceeding (JCCP).

“The harm created by social media companies has strained already limited school resources as educators attempt to combat the widespread problems caused by social media addiction,” said Beasley Allen attorney and JCCP co-lead counsel Joseph VanZandt. “These lawsuits make it clear to social media companies that they will face consequences for their conduct not only from the adolescents they harmed but also from the people and institutions supporting our youth.”

Beasley Allen attorney Davis Vaughn agreed. “We must guide our youth through this mental health crisis. To do so, our schools need additional funding, personnel, training and more. Beasley Allen attorneys, along with our co-counsel at Wagstaff Cartmell and Goza & Honnold, seek to help these school districts get the resources they need from the companies that preyed upon our youth.”

The Alabama school districts are among the first to file these types of suits against social media companies. The complaints allege public nuisance and negligence claims under Alabama law. The three districts fall within the top 15 in Alabama based on student population, according to the U.S. Department of Education.

Last year, Beasley Allen began filing social media lawsuits nationwide on behalf of adolescents harmed by social media addiction. The suits claimed social media companies knowingly exploited young people for profit, employed addictive psychological tactics to increase the use of their products and failed to protect young, vulnerable and at-risk users. They further alleged that social media addiction causes harms, such as anxiety, depression, body dysmorphia, self-harm and even suicide.

Beasley Allen attorney Joseph VanZandt also serves on the Plaintiffs Steering Committee for the federal Social Media MDL consolidated in the Northern District of California, Oakland. In addition to VanZandt, the school districts are represented by Beasley Allen lawyers Davis Vaughn, Jennifer Emmel, Clinton Richardson and Seth Harding, along with attorneys from Wagstaff & Cartmell and Goza & Honnold,

The case involving the Alabama school districts is *Baldwin County Public Schools, et al. v. Meta Platforms, et al.*, filed in the Superior Court of the State of California for the County of Los Angeles.

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