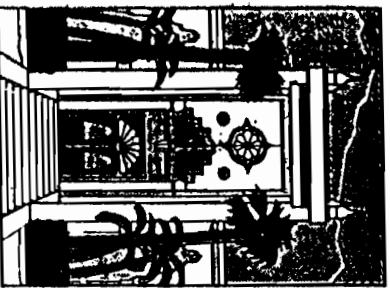


Glendale



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Judge orders Ritalin attorneys to pay \$27,000

Lawyers say they can't afford to pay that amount and will appeal decision

By Hector Gonzalez
Staff writer

A Glendale Superior Court Judge on Friday ordered the plaintiff's attorneys in the Ritalin lawsuit that ended in a mistrial to pay \$27,000 in legal fees to the Glendale Unified School District and the county of Los Angeles.

Robert Brenna, one of two attorneys for plaintiff Adalia Lorenzo, said he will appeal the decision by Judge Joseph Kalin.

"We feel the order is dead wrong and we're confident that the appeals judge will overturn it," Bren-

nan said.

Gary Gibeau, the attorney for the district, filed the motion to recover more than \$25,000 in legal fees expended in defending against the lawsuit.

Gibeau couldn't be reached for comment Friday.

The county of Los Angeles and attorneys for Dr. Alvin Yussim, the county doctor who prescribed Ritalin to Lorenzo's son, filed to re-

cover more than \$34,000 in legal costs.

The \$27,000 in sanctions against Brennan and attorney Rick Moxon would be split between the district and the county attorneys.

But Brennan said he is counting on a reversal of the decision. He said neither he, nor Moxon can afford to pay the amount.

Brennan, who has been in practice for three years, said he specifi-

cally told Kalin an award of sanctions to the defendants would financially cripple his firm.

"There's no way that my firm has that kind of money," he said.

The lawsuit involved allegations by Lorenzo that district officials coerced her into putting her son on Ritalin, a drug used widely to treat hyperactivity in children.

But the suit ended in mistrial Dec. 6, after Kalin ruled the plain-

tiff's attorney inappropriately tried to paint a picture of blatant racism on the part of district officials against the Lorenzos.

Kalin said there just wasn't enough evidence to prove the accusation.

At a hearing on the motion for sanctions last week, however, Kalin said he believed the plaintiff still had possible grounds for a lawsuit, but one based strictly on

whether school officials followed proper procedures in dealing with Michael Lorenzo and whether the boy was properly diagnosed by county officials.

Brennan said Friday he and Moxon intend to refile the lawsuit in a different court jurisdiction.

He said a hearing on the appeal of the \$27,000 judgment could take several months.

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