



Educator sexual abuse lawsuit filed against the Union School District and its former top administrators

Lawsuit seeks a court order to force the District to implement proactive preventative measures to better protect students from being sexually abused by educators.

A ground breaking lawsuit filed by childhood sexual abuse lawyers [Robert Allard](#) and [Lauren Cerri](#) of the law firm of Corsiglia, McMahon & Allard alleges that top Union School District officials ignored numerous [“red flag” warning signs](#) for almost a decade that then Dartmouth Middle School teacher Samuel Neipp was grooming and sexually abusing his students.

The lawsuit seeks a court order mandating that the District implement new policies that would result in either immediate suspension without pay or termination for all personnel who violate rules or regulations designed to protect children. For example, the lawsuit is asking that all employees communicate with students using only district issued email addresses and that personal communication via phone, text or social media be prohibited. The lawsuit is also requesting that the court mandate that the District educate and train all employees, students and teachers on the grooming behavior of child predators and remove door locks from all teacher’s offices, which are located inside their classrooms.

“The fact that the District did nothing to stop Neipp from committing additional crimes or to remedy the deficiencies in its training, policies or procedures is motivating the victim and her family to ensure through this lawsuit that the entire community and future students are no longer at risk from abuse by predators at any of the District’s schools,” said attorney Lauren Cerri.

Neipp’s “red flag” behavior was first reported in the Fall of 2010, two years after being hired at Dartmouth Middle School and while he was allegedly sexually abusing a student in his office. Despite a parent’s complaint of his inappropriate text messages to her thirteen-year-old daughter, one of which stated, “the only girl I want anything to do



with is you! The rest are dead to me,” the District failed to report the behavior to law enforcement and instead conducted its own investigation using an outside law firm. Meanwhile, Neipp was free to allegedly continue sexually abusing his former student.

As a result of the law firm investigation, Neipp was instructed to refrain from texting students but nothing was done to enforce his compliance with this mandate. Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Mary Berkey and Principal Carole Carlson wrote to Neipp, “We intend to keep this confidential and highly recommend that you maintain confidentiality also.”

One month later, in September 2010, Neipp received a promotion and nine months later, in August 2011, he was given tenure. According to the lawsuit, District documents reflect that it considered the possibility that the texting behavior during the 2010 timeframe could have been a “pedophile fishing for victims.”

In January of 2013, Neipp violated the 2010 warning by exchanging 397 text messages over a 17-month period with a former 13-year-old female student. The District responded by issuing another letter reiterating the instructions issued in 2010. By again failing to notify law enforcement, the District emboldened and/or enabled him to escalate his predatory behaviors.

In 2014, according to the lawsuit, Neipp is accused of sexually abusing the plaintiff in his office starting when she was 13 years old. The abuse continued on school grounds while she was in high school up until October of 2017 when Neipp was arrested after the plaintiff called the police stating that Neipp threatened to expose videos of her if she didn’t make more time for him.

“As long as insurance companies continue to pay verdicts and settlements on behalf of school districts without implementing strong safe guards to protect child, educator sexual abuse will continue to be a major societal problem for our children,” said attorney Robert Allard. “This is why we are taking the extra step of requesting a court order to force the creation of a child safety system. This step is necessary since this school district is unable to protect students from predators.