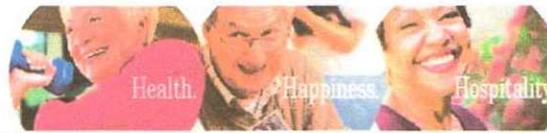


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Lawsuit alleges bullying at Fairport schools

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Written by Meaghan M. McDermott Staff writer

Parents of a Fairport Central School District student have filed a federal lawsuit against the district, alleging officials there didn't take adequate steps to protect their child from bullies.

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In the civil rights suit, filed Aug. 3 in U.S. District Court, the student's parents allege that over the past two years, their son was subject to "unrelenting peer-on-peer bullying, including repeated assaults" severe enough that the child's psychologist has recommended the child not return to Fairport schools.

In court papers, the parents allege the boy was teased relentlessly throughout his sixth grade year at Martha Brown Middle School, and the school counselor and the principal made the situation worse by reprimanding the alleged bully.

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The parents also allege that in one incident that took place in May, 2011, the student was repeatedly jabbed in the buttocks by a bully wielding a lacrosse stick.

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According to the suit, the student finished that school year with home tutoring and transferred to Johanna Perrin Middle School the next year.

However, according to court papers, the bullying continued, with one of the lacrosse players from Martha Brown allegedly enlisting "a gang" of his friends to continue harassing the student at Johanna Perrin. The suit alleges other students stole one of the boy's science reports from a printer and

hid it; threw sports equipment at him during gym class; struck him in the chest with a hockey puck; and verbally harassed him with escalating sexually explicit taunting and name-calling.

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The student was also subjected to escalating physical and sexual abuse, including having his buttocks groped, his nipples touched, and his genitals grabbed, according to the lawsuit.

As a result, according to the suit, the student missed numerous days of school due to stress-related illnesses and developed a severe anxiety disorder.

According to the suit, despite numerous meetings with the parents over the incidents, school officials displayed a pattern of "deliberate indifference" toward the bullying and did not adequately punish or monitor the aggressive students.

Fairport district officials couldn't be reached for comment.

The parents are seeking damages in excess of \$1 million.

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