

Grand jury indicts Hilton principal accused of sexually abusing students

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A grand jury has indicted Kirk Ashton, the Northwood Elementary School principal accused of molesting nine boys at the school.

Prosecutors announced in a remote hearing in Greece Town Court Tuesday that a grand jury has taken action against Ashton. More specifics will not be available until the indictment is formally handed up, at the completion of the grand jury, and made public.

Ashton appeared masked at the remote hearing Tuesday from the Niagara County Jail, where he is now being held.

A longtime principal at Northwood, an elementary school in the Hilton Central School District, Ashton was arrested on April 14 on charges that he molested nine boys. Investigators are also trying to determine whether there may be allegations of more victims. Ashton, who has been principal at Northwood since 2004, was placed on administrative leave on April 8.

Ashton was initially charged with six counts of first-degree sexual abuse and five counts of second-degree course of sexual conduct, both felonies, and nine counts of endangering the welfare of a child, a misdemeanor.

The Monroe County Sheriff's Office said it often moves individuals accused of high-profile crimes to other jails. Ashton was transferred to the Niagara jail April 16, records show.

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Ashton