



PRESS RELEASE

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VICTIM OF TEACHER JAILED FOR SEXUAL ASSAULT FILES MOTION FOR PUNITIVE DAMAGES AGAINST BARSTOW CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Victim's attorneys allege that Barstow Christian School sexual abuse rules violate State child protection laws.

Attorneys representing the victim of convicted child molester, former Barstow Christian School secretary and teacher Kristen Blanton, filed a motion in San Bernardino Superior Court to add punitive damages to their lawsuit against Kristen Blanton and Barstow Christian School. [Click here for motion.](#)

The motion alleges that the Barstow Christian principal knew of inappropriate sexual contact between Blanton and a 14-year-old male student as early as October 2014 and failed to report it to authorities as required by State law.

Barton was arrested in January 2015 for allegedly molesting the victim multiple times beginning in October 2014. She subsequently plead guilty and is serving a three sentence in State prison.

Victim's attorney Morgan Stewart conducted a deposition with Barstow Christian School Principal Heather Bradford in which Bradford admitted to knowing that Blanton kissed the victim in class and engaged in other inappropriate conduct. Bradford warned the victim not to be alone with Blanton and advised Blanton that she was always to remain at least six feet away from the victim at-all-times.

Blanton proceeded to abuse the victim for the following two and half months.

"Barstow Christian School Principal Heather Bradford admittedly had clear knowledge of Blanton's inappropriate sexual contact with my client. She told Blanton and our client to stay away from each other in school but she did not report to authorities as required by law. She also did not tell the victim's parents. Under California law that constitutes fraud and entitles our client to punitive damages," said victim's attorney Morgan Stewart.

Barstow Christian maintains a Board Policy Manual which sets forth rules of conduct for its teachers and staff. A section titled "Teacher-Student Safeguards in Dealing with Students" states, "Often teachers and workers are falsely charged with molestation. By the time they are proven innocent have already been ruined. The possibility of being falsely accused has led many institutions initiating strict policies which safeguard teachers, workers and children. ...the purpose for developing the above policies is two-fold. First and foremost, they are meant to protect our teachers and staff members from ever being falsely accused of molestation and other related charges. Secondly, they are to protect the students."

The motion alleges that these policies place the reputation of teachers and school officials above the protection of students. It is also alleged that they violate state law which require teachers and other "mandatory reporters" to immediately notify the authorities in the event of child sexual abuse.

The victim's mother learned of the sexual relationship between her son and Blanton after the Principal imposed the "six-foot separation." She immediately called police who arrested Blanton in school on January 15, 2015.

Manly, Stewart & Finaldi is California's leading law firm representing child victims of sexual abuse. The firm has represented more than 150 victims of clergy sexual abuse in California and hundreds of others throughout the United States. The firm also represented plaintiffs in the \$140,000,000 settlement against LAUSD in the Miramonte case, the largest sex abuse settlement against a School District in the US.