

NJ Parents File \$30M Suit Alleging Students Were Tied Up, Gagged In School

Four School Students Allegedly Abused In Bathroom By 2 Now-Fired Janitors

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LONG BRANCH, N.J. (CBSNewYork) — The families of some students in New Jersey have filed a lawsuit after they said their children were allegedly abused at school.

One year ago at Gregory Elementary School in Long Branch, two janitors were accused of tying up and gagging four students in a bathroom, allegedly taunting them and taking their pictures.

The families of the children have now filed a civil lawsuit seeking \$30 million in damages.

Local parents were taking sides on Thursday.

“It was terrible, but you know, do what you can do for your kids. I would’ve sued them, too,” parent Tanesha Bowles told CBS 2’s Hazel Sanchez.

“I probably would do the same thing, but not for that much. Because they said it was just a joke,” another parent, Natosha Scott, said.

Three families are suing Long Branch Public Schools, the Board of Education, and the Gregory School, claiming they downplayed the incident and teachers ignored the children’s complaints.

The janitors were fired, but the victims’ attorney said the children were still left traumatized and depressed.

“They’re dealing with bouts of depression, they’re dealing with bouts of fear of school. Nightmares are prevalent. Some of these kids, when they think about the incident, they get nauseous,” attorney Joseph Tacopina said.

“I don’t believe it’s worth that much money and a year later the kids are still traumatized over what was basically a prank?” said Midge Archer of Long Branch.

Some parents said the lawsuit is a wake-up call for the schools.

“It might make them a little stricter on the backgrounds of finding out what these janitors are doing, to look more into their backgrounds,” said parent Danielle Russo.

“For the school not to take immediate action — that goes to show you there’s a lack of self-discipline on behalf of the staff and whoever is in charge of the school,” said parent Mark Hill.

CBS 2 reached out to the superintendent of schools, but was told the administration and Board of Education do not comment on pending litigation.

The lawsuit also claims pictures of the alleged janitor incident were never recovered.



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