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Former substitute teacher receives 75 month prison sentence for sexually abusing third grade student

Today, Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill announced that 54-year-old Dale Arnold Buckendahl, a former substitute teacher with the Reynolds School District, received a 75 month prison sentence for sexually abusing a third grade student.

In court on Wednesday, the victim said, "In the end, no verdict or sentencing will bring me back my childhood or my innocence. It won't compensate [for] the years I spent confused as a child wondering why me? ...I come here today not as that helpless little girl...but as a mother with endless fears of sending out my own daughter into the world. We tell our children not to worry as we look for the monsters under the bed but the real monsters are people like [Dale Buckendahl] who are in our daycares, our schools and our churches. It's always people like him who hide behind the power and the title that they have and use it to take advantage and prey on the vulnerable."

[A jury convicted Buckendahl on December 13, 2018 of one count of sexual abuse in the first degree.](#)

At trial, the state presented evidence to prove that in 2008 Buckendahl was a substitute teacher for a third grade class at Alder Elementary School, located in Fairview, Oregon. In 2011, the victim, who was then in sixth grade, reported to authorities that a substitute teacher, in 2008, put his hands up her skirt and rubbed her bare leg in a sexual manner.

"The event consumed my life. I was never able to feel like a normal child again," the victim said in court. "I wasn't able to have the typical experiences in school anymore because school to me was never about my education from that day on but instead about survival."

"[Dale Buckendahl] hid his conduct from the other students and rubbed the victim's leg under a table," said Multnomah County Senior Deputy District Attorney Amity Girt, who prosecuted this case. "The victim was nine years old and Buckendahl was 44 years old. He was a well-known substitute teacher at the time. The trust that is violated when a teacher touches a nine year old in a sexual manner should be self-evident."

The trial, which started December 3, 2018, was presided over by Multnomah County Circuit Court Judge Kelly Skye.

As part of its sentencing request, the state argued the court should consider a 2002 investigation into Buckendahl's other alleged inappropriate conduct with students while at the Beaverton School District.

The jury acquitted Buckendahl of one count of sexual abuse in the first degree.

This case was investigated by the Multnomah County Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Team, which includes representatives from local law enforcement, public schools, hospitals, courts, health departments, the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS), and the Oregon Department of Employment Child Care Division.

The Multnomah County District Attorney's Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Team is responsible for reviewing and coordinating all child abuse and neglect cases in Multnomah County. The team also handles all child homicides, felony child physical abuse cases, felony child abandonment cases, custodial interference cases, and felony sex crimes where the victim is currently under the age of 18 and where the perpetrator is determined not to be a stranger to the child.

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