

## Chapter 10

### Fixing Schools and What You Can Do to Fight Back

How evil and heinous is the crime of sexual abuse? Two articles in the Wall Street Journal about recent cases provide some insight about the answer.

“Experts say incarcerating; Mr. Sandusky poses special challenges to prison officials. His age, celebrity and the nature of his crime could make him vulnerable in a population where pedophiles are particularly reviled. ‘Pedophiles sit absolutely at the bottom of the prison social structure, and people will go after them,’ said David A. Harris, a professor at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law.”

“Authorities say a Texas father won’t be charged in the beating death of a man who allegedly molested his 5-year-old daughter. Officials said the Lavaca County grand jury met Tuesday and declined to return an indictment against the father in the death of 47-year-old Jesus Mora Flores. The attack happened on the family’s ranch between the farming towns of Shiner and Yoakum. Investigators said the 23-year-old father ran toward his daughter’s screams, pulled Mr. Flores off his child and beat him with his hands. Emergency crew found Mr. Flores’s pants and underwear pulled down on his lifeless body when they responded to the father’s 911 call. The girl was taken to a hospital and examined. Authorities say forensic evidence and witness accounts corroborated the father’s story that his daughter was being sexually molested.” (Wednesday, June 20, 2012, A6)

Sexual abuse of a child is an unspeakable crime with a devastating, lifelong impact. We have a moral obligation as a society to protect children from harm and must do whatever is necessary to accomplish this.

Allowing rampant (4.5 million K-12 victims), 2004 Department of Education Report) child sexual abuse by educators to occur in our schools is unconscionable and has to be stopped. As I see it, anyone

who sexual abuses children or enables, aids, and abets the sexual abuse of children is my enemy should be incarcerated, and never allowed to be around children again.

In this chapter, I will discuss a set of aggressive recommendations to stop the problem of child sexual abuse in our schools, and advice about what you can do as a concerned parent. From my perspective, one more victim is one too many.

I will ask everyone to join with me, take appropriate corrective action, and be part of the solution. Unfortunately, I anticipate spirited, even vehement opposition to many of my recommendations. To those who are oppositional and a big part of the problem, I would assertively say that I am unwilling to compromise the safety of school children for any special interest group.

I will discuss my recommendations in the eight major problem categories identified in Chapter 2. These include: (1) School Administrators, (2) Elected Officials and Applicable Laws, (3) Government Enforcement Agencies, (4) School Accreditation Organizations, (5) State Licensing Agencies for Teachers, (6) Teacher's Unions, (7) Colligate Schools of Education, and (8) Teachers.

Before I discuss these eight categories, I want to talk about some recommendations for parents. There are four things that I believe we parents need to do: (1) get informed, (2) get mad, (3) get organized, and (4) get involved.

Get Informed I have had four children and one grandchild in K-12 schools over a 29 year span and I had no idea how many students were victimized by educator sexual misconduct and had never heard of "passing the trash" until this year, in January 2012. One of my primary reasons for writing this book is to make sure other parents become aware of how serious this problem is. We have been kept in the dark for too long! Now we need to make sure we are as informed as possible about the pandemic of

K-12 student sexual abuse/harassment, its causes, and potential solutions. Knowledge is power and we need to acquire knowledge in order to optimally exercise our power.

Get Mad When I first learned about the estimated 4.5 million students who are victimized by educator sexual misconduct, the “passing the trash” deals, the “code of silence” among teachers, and the actual cases of horrible sexual abuse, I was furious.

The thought of one child suffering through the trauma of sexual abuse is hard to bear. The thought of 4.5 million sexual abuse victims is crushing!

Many nights, I was so mad that I couldn’t sleep. It was hard for me to imagine that this horrendous problem was so enormous and had been going on for so many years.

My anger motivated me to write this book for parents and to search for strategies to stop the abuse. I am confident that parents who read this book will also become mad enough to take action. Many parents have already experienced their children being sexually abused/harassed at school, and many parents were themselves victimized. My heart goes out to all of you. Those of us who have not lived through this hell can certainly empathize with you and feel your pain and anguish.

As parents, we have every reason to be outraged at what has been going on in our schools. My hope is that we can harness and channel this rage into aggressive corrective reforms.

Get Organized There are two important aspects to getting organized. The first involves seeking out other like-minded parents who want to join together and attack the sexual abuse/harassment problem. The more parents who join together, the more you can accomplish and the more power and influence you have, especially at the ballot box when voting for school board members and local/state/national politicians.

The second aspect of getting organized involves systematically considering the resources you have available and determining the best ways to use those resources in attacking the problem. You and your fellow parents may have special talents that allow you to use certain strategies more effectively than others. As you will see in this chapter, there are many things that you could do, the challenge is to find the best fit for your existing resources.

Get Involved This recommendation entails actually implementing the corrective strategies that optimally utilize your existing personal and collective resources. Take action and attack the problem. There is certainly much that needs to be fixed, so don't delay, but get started as soon as possible. The sexual abusers and those that enable their victimization of children need to know that we won't tolerate it any longer. One more victim is one too many. We need to stop the sexual abuse of our children now!

*A few years ago, I participated in a grant-funded program at my son's elementary school called Watch D.O.G.S—Dads of Great Students, developed by the National Center for Fathering. The program was designed to get fathers more involved in their children's education.*

*A criminal background check was conducted on all volunteer dads. If cleared, volunteers were asked to spend a day at the school in their child's classroom(s), observing and helping teachers. It was a very positive experience for everyone involved.*

If necessary, a similar program could be developed formally or informally to place parent volunteers in every classroom all day, including after-school activities, to observe and assist teachers. Alternatively, a parent volunteer could be assigned to "shadow" and assist every school employee from their arrival in the morning until their departure from school.

Sexual predators don't abuse their victims in the presence of other adults. A simple program like this would virtually eliminate the probability of educator sexual abuse/harassment of students as well as significantly reduce the incidence of student-on-student abuse/harassment.

Even if enough volunteers were only available for a single day, it would be a Day Without Sexual Abuse/Harassment at School, and send a powerful message to school administrators and employees that parents are dead serious about this issue. Instead of "Occupying Wall Street", parents would "Occupy Schools" in order to stop the sexual abuse/harassment of their children.

I have formulated a Parents' Bill of Rights concerning K-12 student sexual abuse/harassment, in Figure 10-1 below. It summarizes 15 essential rights that I feel every parent is entitled to and should already have. Sadly, schools never have provided these fundamental rights to parents and probably never will, on a voluntary basis. IF you agree with me about these rights, ask your School Board or Superintendent about them. We will likely need new laws to force schools to guarantee these rights for parents. Or, perhaps a concerned, energized School Board would be bold enough to do this on their own. Good luck with yours.

Figure 10-1  
Parents of K-12 Students Bill of Rights  
Concerning Sexual Abuse/Harassment

All parents of K-12 students should be guaranteed the following rights concerning sexual abuse/harassment:

1. The right to receive and review, prior to the enrollment of their daughter/son in a school system, published summary statistics on the incidence of documented sexual abuse/harassment cases at the institution.
2. The right to know that no employee in the school system has a prior criminal or disciplinary record for sexual abuse/harassment.
3. The right to know that anyone hired by the school for full-time or part-time positions has successfully passed a fingerprint-based national criminal check and thorough assessment of previous employers, to include prior disciplinary issues.
4. The right to know that their daughter/son will receive age appropriate mandatory annual training on sexual abuse/harassment to include:
  1. a clear statement of student rights and responsibilities,
  2. specific guidelines concerning appropriate and inappropriate employee behaviors,
  3. simple instructions concerning how and where to file a complaint, and
  4. a full explanation of options to initiate civil and/or criminal charges, along with applicable filing deadlines.
5. The right to know that all school employees have successfully completed a mandatory training program on sexual abuse/harassment, to include:
  1. specific employee responsibilities, including reporting,
  2. clear guidelines concerning appropriate and inappropriate behaviors, and
  3. the serious disciplinary consequences for those who violate student rights or fail to report violations.
6. The right to available training for parents on school-based sexual abuse/harassment.
7. The right to have a truly student-friendly complaint process that encourages victims to come forward.
8. The right to know that all complaints (both formal or informal) concerning alleged faculty employee sexual abuse/harassment conduct will be competently, confidentially, and thoroughly investigated in a timely manner by qualified professionals, to include contacting former students who may have been victimized, or who may have information relevant to the complaint.
9. The right to know that school employees charged with sexual abuse/harassment will be immediately removed from any positions involving student contact, pending the results of a full investigation.

10. The right to know that students found guilty of sexual abuse/harassment will be appropriately disciplined (including suspension or expulsion, depending upon offense severity and frequency).
11. The right to know that school employees found guilty of illegal sexual abuse/harassment will be appropriately disciplined (including termination, depending upon offense frequency and severity).
12. The right to know that school employees who are aware of suspected sexual abuse/harassment, but fail to report it, will be disciplined, up to and including termination.
13. The right to know that their daughter/son (and the entire family if necessary) will receive counseling/therapy, if victimized by sexual abuse/harassment at school, paid for by the institution.
14. The right to know that their daughter/son will be protected from any attempted retaliation for filing a complaint, initiated by the alleged abuser/harasser or his supporters.
15. The right to know that their daughter/son will be protected after filing a complaint, from any continuing sexual abuse/harassment, initiated by the alleged abuser/harasser and/or his supporters.

I have also prepared two sample letters that you might consider sending to your school board and/or superintendent. The first letter, Figure 10-2, asks for written responses to four critical questions that all parents should want answers to. The second letter (Figure 10-3) is much more aggressive. It strongly communicates that sexual abuse/harassment of your child or any child should not occur and promises swift legal action, holding the School Board and superintendent fully responsible, if any student is victimized. Modify either of the letters to suit your situation and use them if you feel they will be helpful.

Figure 10-2

Letter #1

School Superintendents and School Board Presidents

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and my child(ren) attends the \_\_\_\_\_ school system. As a parent, I am very concerned about the sexual abuse and sexual harassment of students by school teachers and employees. I want to insure that this does not happen to my child(ren) or anyone's children within our school district.

I would like to ask you four questions and request that you provide written answers to each one.

1. Does the school system currently employ anyone (full or part-time) who has a prior record for sexual abuse, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct? If "yes", why have you placed my child and other children at risk by this sexual predator?
2. Does the school system currently employ anyone (full or part-time) against whom formal and/or informal complaints have been lodged, alleging sexual abuse, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct and no action has been taken by the administration? If yes, the individual(s) involved needs to be immediately suspended (with full pay) until a comprehensive, professional investigation has been conducted.
3. Does the school system conduct the following pre-employment procedures before hiring any new employee: (1) a fingerprint-based national criminal background check and (2) a complete assessment of all previous employment, to include disciplinary action/charges/investigation/pending investigation for sexual abuse, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct? If "no" why are these steps to protect the welfare of our students not taken?
4. Does the school system require all volunteers and substitute teachers to have a fingerprint-based national criminal background check? If "no", why not?

I look forward to receiving your responses and the opportunity to work with you to protect the safety of our students.

If any questions arise, please contact me at: \_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

Figure 10-3

Letter #2

School Superintendents and School Board Presidents

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and my child(ren) attends the \_\_\_\_\_ school system. As a parent, I am very concerned about the sexual abuse and sexual harassment of students by school teachers and employees. I want to insure that this does not happen to my child(ren) or anyone's children within our school district.

I am familiar with the U.S. Department of Education Report, entitled "Educator Sexual Misconduct: A Synthesis of Existing Literature" (2004) and its disturbing findings:

1. an estimated 4.5 million children are victimized by educator sexual abuse in grades K-12,
2. teachers rarely report other teachers who illegally sexually abuse children,
3. school administrators rarely report teachers who illegally sexually abuse children to the police, and,
4. school administrators often negotiate with teachers who sexually abuse children to resign in exchange for a positive letter of reference and no reporting to police.

None of this illegal and reprehensible conduct should be occurring in our school district! If it does and one child is victimized (mine or anyone else's), I will hold you, directly and personally responsible, and will take the following legal actions and/or encourage other parents to do likewise.

1. I will request that full criminal charges be filed against the child sexual abuser.
2. I will aggressively seek criminal charges for aiding and abetting a child abuser, being an accessory to child sexual abuse, conspiracy to commit child sexual abuse, criminal negligence in hiring, criminal negligence in supervision, and/or criminal negligence in retention against you, and any other administrators, teachers, or union officials who knew or should have known about the sexual abuse and did nothing.
3. I will file a complaint against the school district on behalf of my child with the Office for Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education for a violation of Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, and ask for a full investigation and corrective action.
4. I will file a complaint against the school district on behalf of my child with the U.S. Department of Justice for civil rights violation, and ask for a full investigation and corrective action.
5. I will file legal action in federal court against the school district on behalf of my child for a violation of Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments.
6. I will file legal action in federal court against the perpetrator, you personally, and any other administrators, union official, and/or teachers who knew or should have known about the sexual abuse under the provisions of the Equal Protection Clause of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution, 42 U.S.C. §1983, and 18 U.S.C. §241.
7. I will file civil legal action in state court against the perpetrator, you personally, and any other administrators who knew or should have known about the sexual abuse and did nothing for all

of the following that apply: (a) assault, (b) battery, (c) false imprisonment, (d) invasion of privacy, (e) professional malpractice, (f) intentional infliction of emotional distress, (g) breach of contract, (h) negligent hiring, (i) negligent supervision, and (j) negligent retention.

I know what my legal rights are and I will fully exercise them if my child or any child in our school district is victimized by educator sexual abuse. I hope for everyone's sake that the school district does not have any serial child sexual abusers on-staff and in contact with our students, and that you have exercised due diligence in thoroughly assessing the background and prior employment of anyone hired by the school district.

If so, congratulations on doing your job and protecting our students from sexual abusers. If not, you need to take immediate and aggressive correction action or face the consequences.

My concerns also extend to sexual abuse initiated by students. Again I expect that you have effective programs in place to: (1) train students about their rights and responsibilities, (2) monitor student behavior, (3) initiate prompt corrective action if student misconduct occurs, and (4) remove students who pose a threat to others from our school system.

As a precaution, I have instructed my child(ren) to never be alone with anyone at school--teachers, staff, administrators, or other students. If a school employee needs to meet with my child(ren), I request that another school employee be present, or that you contact me, so that I or my spouse can attend the meeting.

If questions arise, or you would like to discuss any of these issues, please contact me at:

\_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

Let's talk now about specific recommendations in the eight categories listed above.

## 1. Senior School Administrators and Administration

### Senior School Administrators

In this group, I include superintendents and school board members. I have a lot to say to these individuals and several recommendations.

First, if you have negotiated or approved "passing the trash" deals in the past, those wrongs need to be corrected immediately. However belatedly, report the abuser to police. Identify past victims in your school system, apologize, and offer free access to professional counseling services. Contact the school(s) the abuser went to, based upon your favorable recommendation, tell the truth, apologize, and offer to assist victims. Turn yourself in to the police. Serve your sentence for failure to notify police. Look for work in another field that does not involve children.

If senior school administrators who have negotiated or approved "passing the trash" deals in the past don't come forward now, they face prosecution to the fullest extent to the law when their illegal conduct is discovered.

Second, I have formulated a sample pledge for superintendents and school board members concerning sexual abuse/harassment issues in school. I recommend using a document like this in hiring/retaining superintendents and electing/retaining school board members.

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### Figure 10-4

#### Sample Pledge for Superintendents and School Board Members

As a Superintendent/School Board Member, I Pledge To:

1. Personally report any suspected case of child sexual abuse to law enforcement authorities.
2. Never allow a "passing the trash" deal to be negotiated with child sexual abusers.

3. Support and enforce a zero-tolerance policy on sexual abuse/harassment of students, with discipline proportional to the offense committed by violators.
  4. Insure that any employee who fails to report suspected child sexual abuse to law enforcement authorities and school administrators is disciplined.
  5. Insure that all new hires complete thorough national criminal background checks and rigorous reference checking with prior employers.
  6. Insure that sexual abuse/harassment training/education is provided annually to all school employees, all students, and interested parents.
  7. Support and enforce school policies on employees never being alone with students and appropriate touching of students by employees, with discipline for violators.
  8. Conduct and publish results of an annual sexual abuse/harassment survey of students.
  9. Publish annual incidence rates of student sexual abuse/harassment.
  10. Assemble and publish an annual summary of sexual abuse/harassment cases and outcomes (without individual names).
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In my opinion, if a prospective or current superintendent cannot commit to protecting the safety and welfare of children, I would not recommend hiring or retaining such an individual. The same applies to school board members.

You or the PTO/PTA could propose the use of such a pledge with the superintendent and school board members in your district. If they didn't support any of the items in the pledge, I would ask for a public explanation.

#### School Administration

My recommendations concerning school administration will be organized in the same manner as the rating scale contained in Appendix B. Thus, I will offer suggestions pertinent to:

1. Formal Institutional policies,
2. Sexual Abuse/Harassment Training
3. Student Support Services

4.Complaint Processing and Investigations

5.Discipline Public Reporting and Information Dissemination

Formal School Policies I have five specific recommendations concerning formal school policies.

As a parent, if these recommendations are applicable to your school, I suggest that you make an appropriate request to your school board or superintendent.

1.It is essential that schools have a carefully crafted, zero-tolerance policy on sexual abuse/harassment that is widely distributed to students, employees, and parents. The policy should highlight examples of prohibited conduct, clear instructions on complaint filing, mandatory reporting requirements for all employees, disciplinary consequences for violators, and retaliation protection for complaints.

2.Every school should have a strongly worded policy prohibiting employees from being alone with students under any circumstances.

3.Schools should have research-based, psychologically sound policies on appropriate and inappropriate teacher touching of students. Most professionals agree that after elementary school, teacher touching should be largely eliminated.

4.Schools should have a strict policy requiring at least one male and female parent be present on all field trips.

5.I have witnessed on several occasions the negative effects of a poorly written and/or improperly enforced student dress code on the overall climate within a school, primarily in high school. Allow students to wear provocative or revealing clothing creates a sexually-charged environment, conducive to sexual abuse/harassment. Thus, I highly recommend that every school system have a comprehensive dress code that explicitly prohibits inappropriate clothing and is strictly enforced. As a parent, visit your high school in the fall or late spring to get a first-

hand impression of dress code enforcement, and initiate a complaint with the principal, superintendant, or school board if corrective action is needed.

Hiring Recommendations      The overwhelming majority of a school's problems with educator sexual abuse/harassment of children can be prevented with comprehensive screening in the hiring process. With this in mind, I offer the following specific recommendations and encourage you to submit them to your school board or superintendent.

1. All applicants for school employment should be required to undergo a fingerprint-based national criminal background check and pay for it themselves. This requirement can cause individuals with criminal records to withdraw from the application process. Obviously, anyone with a prior criminal record would be excluded from further consideration.

2. Application forms for all school positions should clearly state that information provided will be subject to verification and that providing false or incomplete information will result in exclusion from the application process or immediate termination if already hired.

3. Application forms for all school positions should contain the following question, designed explicitly to stop "passing the trash":

Have you ever been disciplined for misconduct involving students by a previous employer, chosen to resign rather than face discipline for misconduct involving students, resigned while under investigation for misconduct involving students, or resigned after complaints were filed against you for misconduct involving students? If yes, please explain fully. My experience with this type of question in other work settings is that many males voluntarily withdraw from the application process rather than respond.

4. Applicants for school systems should personally sign a "waiver of liability" letters to all former employers, requesting a complete reference and holding them legally harmless for the content.

Once again, my experience with this practice in other employment settings is that many individuals withdraw from the application process.

5. The field of industrial/organizational psychology has made great strides over the last 20 years in developing psychological tests to substantially improve accuracy in the hiring process. I firmly believe that a well-formulated, research-based personality test could be a valuable addition to the screening process for school employees by identifying individuals with a high propensity for sexually abusing/harassing children.

Let me give you an example of how psychological testing has been very useful in a similarly challenging work environment. Nearly 30 years ago, a TV-station in a large Midwestern city conducted an investigation of police brutality to determine who was responsible, what did it cost, and how it could be prevented.

As is the case with educator sexual abuse/harassment, the investigation revealed that a tiny percentage of all police officers were responsible for most of the brutality cases. With a strong union backing them, it was very difficult for the city to terminate the offenders. Rather, they were often transferred to other precincts ("passing the trash") and the brutality reoccurred, over and over again.

The physical injuries sustained by savagely beaten victims were horrific. The lawsuits brought in these cases were costing the city millions of dollars annually.

Surprisingly, and unlike other major cities at the time, this municipal police department did not do any psychological screening of applicants. Thus, one of the recommendations made as a result of the investigation was that the city begin using psychological tests to identify those applicants with a high propensity to abuse their authority and brutalize citizens.

A test with a record of success in other large cities was identified. Its use over the next five years did result in significantly fewer charges of police brutality against the newly hired officers and substantially lower legal and settlement expenses.

Although there is no psychological test presently designed for use in screening school applicants, there are several tests that are utilized in our legal system to make decisions about convicted sex offenders; for example, what risk do they pose to others if paroled or released from prison. I have written to the publishers of these instruments and inquired about their interest in developing and validating such an assessment tool. To date, I have not yet found one interested in doing this.

In my opinion, it would be an invaluable addition to current screening procedures by helping to identify those individuals most likely to sexually abuse children. The presence of such a tool in the hiring process would also act to discourage child abusers with criminal/disciplinary records from applying. Given the high potential of this approach to dramatically reduce the incidence of child sexual abuse/harassment (and the horrible harm that is done) and significantly lower the associated financial costs to schools, I will continue the search for an interested test publisher.

Perhaps the American Psychological Association or its Division 14, the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology could be approached about overseeing the development of such a tool as a public service project of national importance.

6. As part of the hiring process for school employees, I recommend a longer probationary period during which time closer supervision and performance monitoring occur to screen for potential signs of abuse/harassment. The enhanced monitoring should include collecting feedback from students, parents, and other employees.

7. Given the conclusive research finding that the overwhelming majority of child sexual abusers are male, schools should consider enhanced screening procedures for male applicants. I fully understand the value and need for men as teachers and role models in the educational process. However, in view of the substantial additional risk of child sexual abuse associated with males, additional hiring requirements would be prudent. This could perhaps take the form of more thorough psychological screening.

Given that male coaches have the highest rates of sexual abuse for any teachers, I would either: (1) ban male coaches entirely for female sports teams or (2) assign an adult female co-coach in every instance, to be present at all team activities

Once hired, males should be monitored more closely by school administrators to detect early signs of student grooming or abuse and corrective action initiated immediately.

This monitoring should include direct observation of interaction with students and the solicitation of feedback from students, parents, and colleagues.

I understand that these recommendations will arouse strong condemnation from many men. Remember however, my goal is to stop the sexual abuse/harassment of K-12 students. Men are the perpetrators of virtually all of this abuse. Thus, additional protective measures for children are demanded. If some men or male coaches don't like this, I'm sorry the safety and welfare of children come first!

My fundamental question about "passing the trash" deals is why do school districts hire "trash" in the first place? More rigorous selection screening can help schools deny employment to "trash", thus preventing problems before they occur.

Training

Efforts to prevent sexual abuse/harassment in K-12 must include mandatory annual training for all stakeholder groups, focused solely on the school environment, with employees, volunteers, and students identified as potential abusers/harassers. These stakeholder groups include: (1) all school employees, (2) substitute teachers, (3) volunteers, (4) administrators and school board members, and (5) parents.

Clearly training for students must be age-appropriate with understandable content and examples. Training for parents could be a mandatory part of the school registration process, with a child's parent required to view a video about K-12 sexual abuse/harassment and invited to attend a longer, interactive session on the subject.

At a bare minimum, the following topics should be addressed in an interactive manner during the training:

- 1.the school's zero-tolerance policy on sexual abuse/harassment,
- 2.the definition of sexual abuse/harassment, along with relevant examples in the school environment,
- 3.the school's policy on employees touching students, the school's policy on employees touching students,
- 4.the school's policy on employees not being alone with students,
5. persons could abuse/harass, including teachers, administrators, other school employees, and students.
- 6.complaint filing option-how, with whom, and contact information.
- 7.the grooming process,
- 8.how to protect yourself from sexual abuse/harassment,
- 9.proper and improper roles/boundaries for employees and students,
- 10.protection from retaliation for complaint filers,

11. efforts to keep complaint information confidential,
12. all complaints are investigated in a timely manner,
13. disciplinary outcomes commensurate with the severity of the offense, up to termination for employees and expulsion for students,
14. potential criminal violations are referred to the police,
15. the responsibility of all employees to report suspected child sexual abuse to the police and school administration,
16. the disciplinary consequences for employees who fail to report suspected child sexual abuse,
17. a summary of the most recent annual:
  - a) student sexual abuse/harassment survey
  - b) sexual abuse/harassment incidence statistics, and
  - c) sexual abuse/harassment case outcomes summary.

I would also like to see basic self-defense training offered annually to all K-12 children. This would help to build self-confidence and provide the skills necessary to an attempted sexual attack.

Student Support Services Schools have done a disgraceful job in providing much needed counseling and support services to victims of sexual abuse/harassment. If children are victimized at school by poorly monitored students or school employees, the district has a responsibility to provide immediate assistances.

If a child falls down at school and breaks a leg, emergency medical care is quickly provided. It would be unthinkable to allow the child to continue suffering, provide no treatment, and not inform parents.

The psychological (and perhaps physical) wounds of sexual abuse/harassment are equally painful and traumatic. Immediate attention is also needed to stop the damage and begin the healing

process. Thus, counseling and other support services need to be easily and immediately accessible to children, with referrals to local mental health providers as appropriate.

### Complaint Filing and Investigations

It is essential that schools create complaint filing systems that encourage victims to come forward. This should entail: (1) multiple complaint filing options, including any teacher or administrator and an anonymous option, (2) the promise that all complaints will be investigated, (3) a pledge that confidentiality will be maintained to the maximum extent possible, (4) an assurance that the complaint will be protected from retaliation, and (5) the provision of immediate counseling services to complainants, as needed.

In terms of complaint investigations, my recommendations include:

- (1) the investigator should be a trained professional, hired from outside the school district, in order to insure a thorough, unbiased investigation is conducted,
- (2) the investigation should be conducted in a timely manner and concluded within 7-10 days of the complaint, and
- (3) any evidence uncovered in the investigation suggesting criminal violations should be immediately provided to law enforcement authorities.

Discipline Zero-tolerance for sexual abuse/harassment means that every policy violation results in disciplinary action, with the severity of the discipline commensurate with the seriousness of the offense. Flagrant or repeated violations should result in termination for employees and expulsion for students.

Failure to report suspected child sexual abuse/harassment and violations of the school's employee touching and alone with students policies, must also result in progressive disciplinary actions. For repeated violations of these policies, an employee could be suspended and referred for a mandatory

“fitness for duty” evaluation by a mental health professional and not allowed back in the workplace until “cleared” as not posing a threat to student safety and welfare.

It is not enough to simply include discipline in a school policy and talk about it in training programs, administrators must discipline any policy violators. As Dr. Louise Fitzgerald and her team of researchers have repeatedly demonstrated, serious disciplinary consequences for violators consistently results in lower incidence rates of sexual abuse/harassment. Disciplinary action, especially in egregious cases when termination or expulsion are clearly warranted, sends a powerful message to school employees and students that the administration has zero-tolerance for sexual abuse/harassment and will impose stiff discipline, including termination or expulsion, on any offenders. Every school needs to create such an environment, in which everyone knows that sexual abuse/harassment will not be tolerated!

#### Public Reporting and Information Dissemination

The general public, students, parents, and tax payers all have a right to know about the pandemic of K-12 student sexual abuse/harassment in our schools. We need to demand this information from school boards and superintendents. If they are not willing to provide this information they should be replaced! Hopefully, executive orders will be signed or federal and/or state laws will be passed in the near future requiring schools to provide complete information to the public. This should include:

- (1) annual incidence rates of student sexual abuse/harassment,
- (2) annual summaries of sexual abuse/harassment complaints and outcomes, without names,  
and
- (3) annual results of student sexual abuse/harassment surveys. Only by having this data available will we know how bad the problem is in a particular school system and whether

progress is made over time in addressing it. Full disclosure is critical to stopping the disgraceful sexual abuse/harassment of our K-12 students.

### Tenure

As I argued in Chapter 2, tenure is a major reason why schools are not able to effectively discipline and terminate teachers who sexually abuse/harass students, leading to “pass the trash” deals. Consequently, states need to substantially modify their tenure statutes to allow schools to fire sexual predators in a timely, cost-effective manner. If such modifications are not made, public opinion could turn decidedly negative toward teacher tenure, potentially resulting in legislative attempts to ban it. Teachers’ unions can be expected to vigorously oppose any efforts to revise tenure laws. This is very unfortunate, as revisions are desperately needed to better protect children. Supporting the rights of sexual predators masquerading as teachers, over those of innocent children, is just plain wrong and will only serve to reinforce the continuing national decline in support for unions.

### Financial Mismanagement

In Chapter 2, I talked about the huge costs associated with school mismanagement of the sexual abuse/harassment problem—costs that are hidden from the public.

I recommend that state’s and/or school districts require that the costs associated with sexual abuse/harassment of students be made publically available on an annual basis and posted at the school’s website. Let’s shine a spotlight on this hidden problem and force schools to be accountable.

Until school districts and states are required to publish this information I recommend that you individually request an accounting of these costs from your school system (and state) for the last 5 years, along with an explanation of why this information was never made available previously. Your request should include the following specific items:

- 1.damage awards and financial settlements,
- 2.annual premiums for liability insurance covering sexual abuse/harassment,
- 3.legal fees for outside attorney and/or the dollar value of ht time spent by school attorneys,
- 4.the dollar value of the time spent on these cases by school administrators and employees,
- 5.the costs of supplies and equipment used, and
- 6.the cost of any expert witnesses required.

If you are successful in obtaining this information, prepared to be shocked and outraged. With tight school budgets everywhere in the country, there is no excuse for spending scarce resources due to school management's inability to effectively prevent and correct the sexual abuse/harassment of students. There are strategies to stop this problem and administrators need to be held strictly accountable for doing so, while properly managing the school to maximize the educational experience of students.

#### Sue Former Teachers and/or Administrators for Damages Paid by School Districts

*The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) represented 80 females employed at Astra USA in a 1998 case alleging widespread sexual harassment against the firm and its CEO Lars Bildman. The company agreed to settle the case for 10 million dollars, fired the CEO, and immediately initiated a civil lawsuit against him for \$15 million to recover the costs of the settlement, its legal fees, and the adverse publicity.*

*In 1996, William and Mary College and Virginia Common Wealth University both file lawsuits against faculty members who had been fired for sexually harassing students. This had resulted in substantial damage awards to the victims. Schools argued that the offending professors were personally responsible for the entire damages awarded.*

I use those examples in sexual harassment prevention training for managers and professors to clearly communicate the substantial personal financial risks associated with sexual misconduct. Similarly, civil lawsuits could function as a powerful deterrent to teachers contemplating sexual misconduct and administrators planning “passing the trash” deals.

Thus I highly recommend that schools communicate to all of their administrators and employees that civil lawsuits will be initiated to recover damages paid as a result of employee or administration sexual abuse/harassment. We then need schools to follow-up on this promise and actually file such lawsuits. Taxpayers should demand such a strategy as a routine business practice to recover public funds spent in damage awards. Therefore, you could recommend and insist that this approach be utilized within your school district.

#### Liability Insurance Firms

Schools purchase liability insurance to protect themselves from the costs associated with cases involving the sexual abuse/harassment of students. As with any other type of insurance, schools pay an annual premium, based upon the predicted risk they pose.

Insurance companies could drive the reforms needed to better protect students by offering substantially lower premiums to those schools that effectively implemented necessary preventive and corrective actions. Schools could be rewarded for earning higher scores with lower premiums.

You could challenge your school board or superintendent to approach their insurance carrier about the possibility of substantially lowering premiums if certain preventive steps are taken. If the insurance firm does not respond favorably, I would rebid the contract and seek other firms that would work with the school system to lower premiums.

#### 2.Elected Officials and Laws

The president and state governors have broad powers to regulate organizations that receive government funding. Our president or any state governor could issue an “executive order”, covering all schools that receive federal or state funding, that directs these institutes to implement specific reform policies and procedures designed to better protect children, as a condition for receiving government funds.

For example, President Johnson issued Executive Order 11246 in 1965 that directed organizations receiving federal contracts valued at \$10,000 or more to implement specific procedures to prevent workplace discrimination. In a similar manner, President Obama, or any state governor, could issue an executive order directing that schools (1) ban the practice of “passing the trash”, (2) require national fingerprint-based criminal background checks in the hiring process, (3) provide annual sexual abuse/harassment training to all employees, students, and parents, (4) provide accurate references for previous employees, (5) allow complaints to be filed with any teacher or administrator, (6) implement and enforce policies on teachers being alone with students and appropriate touching of students by teachers, and (7) publish annual sexual abuse/harassment statistics.

An executive order is certainly more expedient than trying to get supportive laws passed through contentious legislatures. All that is needed is a supportive, energized president or governor, unafraid of political fallout and opposition from teachers’ unions.

Congress and/or state legislatures could pass laws to improve the protection of children in our schools. Topics for new legislation could include those discussed above in the section on executive orders. In addition new laws are needed at the national (or state) level to:

- (1) lower the legal requirements necessary to establish school liability in sexual abuse/harassment cases, especially “deliberate indifference” and the need to prove that the abuse/harassment was “severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive”,

- (2) hold schools legally responsible for all of the actions taken by teachers and other professionals,
- (3) increase criminal penalties for educators who fail to report suspected child sexual abuse,

*“Florida Passes Stringent Reporting law for Suspected Child Sex Abuse- Florida now boasts the strictest mandatory reporting law for suspected child sex abuse, under a measure signed by Gov. Rick Scott on April 27. The Protection of Vulnerable Persons Act, which takes effect Oct 1, tightens requirements for reporting known or suspected abuse of a child and raises the criminal penalties for individuals who fail to report such abuse from a misdemeanor to a third-degree felony. The law applies to anyone and everyone who suspects or knows of child abuse and “willfully and knowingly” fails to report it. For more information, go to <http://www.myfloridahouse.gov>, click on ‘Find a Bill’ and enter 1355.”*

Thompson’s Educator’s Guide to Controlling Sexual Harassment, June 2012

- (4) substantially increase the enforcement authority of the U.S. Office for Civil Rights (OCR), so as to be equivalent to that of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), especially the power to sue schools on behalf of student victims.

More states need to follow Florida’s lead in increasing the criminal penalties for failure to report child sexual abuse by educators. In addition to tougher laws, we need prosecutors who are willing to file charges against those who fail to meet this critical legal responsibility.

The Florida example is one of an increasing number of encouraging signs that our society has had enough with school predators and won’t take anymore. In my opinion, parents need to be the driving force in these and lead national, state efforts and local initiatives.

- (5) significantly increase the budget of the OCR to allow for both more extensive preventive efforts and increased legal action against offending schools, and

(6) reduce the burden on children to testify repeatedly about the alleged abuse, which only serves to revictimize them and prolong their recovery.

Given the continuing gridlock in Congress, successful legislative action is more likely at the state level. You can facilitate this process by contacting and lobbying with your state legislators.

Below are two recent encouraging examples of bills introduced (one in the U.S. House Of Representatives and one in New York) by concerned legislators to address the sexual abuse/harassment pandemic in our schools. I hope these bills pass and I hope others like them are introduced.

Both of these examples are from Thomson's Educator's Guide to Controlling Sexual Harassment, July 2012, p. 8:

"House Bill Would Bar Employer Relocation of Sex Offenders- A bill introduced late last year in the U.S. House of Representatives would amend the federal criminal code to bar employers from encouraging employees who engage in sexual conduct with underage persons to relocate to another state. The Jeremy Bell Act of 2011 also would require both private and public schools and education agencies to adopt policies that ensure that all of their employees undergo a fingerprint-based check of the national crime information databases and of state criminal history databases. The bill would condition receipt of Elementary and Secondary Education Act funds on enforcement of a state law that ensures all of the following:

- That schools report to law enforcement officials any incidents of sexual conduct involving a minor and a school employee;
- That schools that fail to report such incidents are penalized;

- That states report to an interstate clearinghouse the identity of school employees investigated for sexual conduct involving a minor and whose employment was terminated as a result; and
- That such information is only made available to schools and educational agencies, and not the general public.

The bill was introduced by Rep. Michael Fitzpatrick (R-Pa.) and referred to the House Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education March 29. It currently has seven cosponsors. For more information, go to <http://thomas.loc.gov> and search for 'Jeremy Bell Act.'"

"N.Y. Bill Would Make it Easier to fire Teachers Accused of Sexual Misconduct- In New York, there is a push for state legislation to make it easier to dismiss teachers who engage in sexual misconduct with students. Sponsored by State Sen. Stephen Saland and supported by New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, the bill would give school districts the power to decide whether a teacher accused of sexual misconduct should be fired. Currently, outside hearing officers have this authority, and school districts must abide by the hearing officer's decision.

The reform would amend New York State Education Law 3020-a so that school districts – and in New York City, the Schools Chancellor – have the final say on what action to take. In a press release, Bloomberg said the Department of Education has been prevented from terminating teachers in cases where the City's own independent investigator found instances of inappropriate sexual conduct.

'If a school employee is found to have engaged in sexual behavior or made sexual comments towards students, the Chancellor should have the final say on what action to take, and the legislation we are proposing would provide that authority,' said Mayor Bloomberg. 'Every child deserves a safe learning environment and every parent has the right to know that his or her child is safe while at school,' he said."

### 3. Government Enforcement Agencies

If the office for Civil Rights (OCR) is charged with protecting K-12 children from sexual abuse/harassment, major changes are needed. I recommend that the OCR prepare a report for Congress summarizing the pandemic nature of the problem, the limits of its capabilities to address the problem and specifically, what is required to substantially enhance its K-12 schools and effectiveness. For example, the statistic for FY 2008, indicating that no complaints of sexual abuse/harassment were received from K-12 students strongly suggests that the OCR is a non-entity in this critical domain.

Clearly, the enforcement authority of the OCR must be significantly enhanced (the power to sue schools on behalf of students) if it is to successfully perform its mission. In addition, large increases in staff and budget are necessary to “extend the reach” of the OCR and firmly establish its role in protecting children.

For prosecutors, I would strongly recommend that they give K-12 sexual abuse/harassment cases their highest priority. We need a concerted national effort to stop sexual predators from harming our children and hold enabling non-reports criminally accountable as well.

### 4. Teachers’ Unions

My recommendation to teachers’ unions is quite simple: Stop protecting teacher sexual predators and allowing them to stay in the classroom, where they continue to abuse innocent students. Until this happens, unions will find themselves in an indefensible, very unpopular position.

While unions have historically served critically important roles in our country’s development, the number of union members and support for unions have fallen dramatically in recent years. If unions choose to continue fighting to keep sexual predators in teaching positions, support will fall to new lows.

Failing to report suspected child sexual abuse to police and negotiating “passing the trash deals” are illegal and immoral. Union officials, and anyone else, who participates in these unlawful activities should be incarcerated.

I advise union leaders to think long and hard about these issues and abandon illegal indefensible practices. Unions could play a significant positive role in formulating solutions to the pandemic of K-12 student sexual abuse/harassment, or they could choose to obstruct needed reforms and remain a big part of the problem.

I believe I speak for most parents when I say; we will not compromise on student safety and welfare. This has to come first. Anything that jeopardizes or threatens child safety and welfare must be aggressively fought. I personally look forward to collaborating with union leaders to address this national problem, while at all times vigorously protecting student safety and welfare.

For those union leaders who have participated in negotiating “passing the trash” deals and failed to notify police, I have the following specific recommendation. Those past wrongs need to be corrected immediately. Contact police and report the suspected abuse now! Assist authorities in identifying past student victims, so that they can get professional counseling and support services. Apologize to them for turning your back on their suffering. Turn yourself in to the police and serve your sentence. Vow never to abandon children and fail to report abuse again. If you don’t come forward, when your illegal conduct is discovered, you face prosecution to the fullest extent of the law.

#### 5.Collegiate Schools of Education

This is the first door through which sexual predators must pass in their quest to have easy access to young students. Teachers who fail to report sexual abuse/harassment and administrators who both

fail to report and negotiate “passing the trash” deals also pass through the collegiate school of education door. Thus, I have several recommendations about how to improve this process.

I would suggest that college officials and faculty take these recommendations seriously. One way to further motivate reform efforts is to routinely report the college from which convicted child sexual abusers and colluding/enabling administrators graduated from. In fact, I would like to see a study done with the expanding population of convicted teacher sex offenders to identify where they did go to college. This data would tell us which colleges are doing a poor job and which are doing a good job and should thus be emulated.

1. Collegiate schools of education need to improve the process of screening and admitting students. For example, several schools could pool their data on graduates who were convicted of sex crimes with students in order to obtain a large sample size. This group of felons could be compared to graduates who were not convicted of sex crimes in order to determine if there are factors that reliably differentiate between the two groups and predict the likelihood of criminal activity. There may be information in college applications that could be useful in screening out and deny admission to high probability sexual abusers.

Also, just as I suggest for public schools in the hiring process, collegiate schools of education could work with publishers of psychological tests to develop an instrument to identify individuals with a high probability of sexual abuse. Again, applicants in this category would be denied admission.

While many schools of education may balk at these recommendations, I would strongly argue that they have a responsibility to society to make every effort to prevent pedophiles from becoming teachers. I firmly believe that parents and the general public would support my position.

2. Collegiate schools of education need to significantly improve their evaluation of required student teaching assignments in order to detect any signs of sexual abuse/harassment. This should include feedback from students, other teachers, and administrators. If the time period allowed for student teaching is too short to allow for an accurate, comprehensive assessment, then it needs to be lengthened.

The bottom line is that collegiate schools of education need to “certify” that their graduates have been rigorously screened and evaluated and are highly unlikely to become sex offenders. Before I would hire a newly graduated teacher, I would want assurances from the college she/he graduated from, that every effort had been made to screen out potential child sexual abusers/harassers. Otherwise, why take the chance. Colleges which do take additional steps to prevent this problem will be rewarded in the marketplace with more jobs for their graduates and a better reputation.

3. Collegiate schools of education need to dramatically improve the ways in which they teach students about their professional, ethical, moral, and legal responsibilities, with respect to reporting of suspected child sexual abuse/harassment by teachers. While it is illegal not to report suspected abuse, it is also immoral, unethical, and unprofessional! Not reporting abandons children to continuing trauma and denies them the opportunity for treatment.

It is unimaginable that anyone could do this, much less a teacher who supposedly cares about students.

4. The graduate courses on leadership in education doctoral programs for superintendents need to be redesigned or refocused to emphasize the professional, ethical, moral, and legal responsibilities that school administrators have to protect children. “Passing the trash” deals should be unthinkable and out-of-the question for anyone, especially the superintendant in a

school district. Once again, collegiate schools of education need to take responsibility for their role in the pandemic of K-12 student sexual abuse/harassment and aggressively implement corrective strategies.

#### 6.School Accreditation Organizations

Give the extremely high value schools place on being accredited; the organizations responsible for granting accreditation could easily take a leadership role in addressing the pandemic of K-12 student sexual abuse/harassment. For example, if one of the six regional accrediting organizations recognized by the U.S. Department of Education required the reforms I recommended above for school administration, institutions would be compelled to make the necessary changes or face potential denial of accreditation. The rating scale for schools contained in Appendix B or something similar could be used by accrediting bodies to insure that everything possible is being done to prevent and correct the problem of student sexual abuse/harassment.

#### 7.State Teacher Certification Agencies

State agencies that require and process information in order to certify individuals to teach could play a crucial role in addressing the pandemic of K-12 student sexual abuse/harassment. I have four specific recommendations.

First, states could uniformly require all applicants to pass national fingerprint-based criminal background checks to insure that convicted predators are not allowed to teach in any state.

Second, states could seriously consider the use of psychological testing in the certification forces to screen out individuals with a high predicted probability of child sexual abuse.

Third, states should uniformly revoke the certification of any teacher who fails to report suspected child abuse.

Fourth, state certification agencies should request additional funding and staff in order to process revocation of certification cases in a more efficient and timely manner. This would insure that offenders lose their certification as quickly as possible and thus also lose their easy access to children.

### 8. Teachers

I have a great deal to say to teachers and several recommendations that apply to the whole profession, along with specific subsets.

First, let me begin with the microscopic minority of teachers who have in the past and are presently sexually abusing students. You need to stop now! Turn yourself in to police, confess your crimes, and assist in the process of identifying victims so that they can receive professional counseling and support services. Serve your sentence and then find a job in a field that does not involve children. Forever, stay away from our children!

If you don't come forward now, when your crimes are discovered, you will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the local law. Stop the abuse now and turn yourself in!

Second, I have recommendations for those teachers who have suspected or known about child sexual abuse by a fellow educator and failed to meet their legal, professional, and moral obligation to report it. Your past wrongs need to be corrected now. Any suspected child sexual abuse needs to be immediately reported to the police and senior school administrators. Assist authorities in trying to identify student victims — those innocent children that you turned your back on — so that they can get professional counseling and support services. Apologize to those children.

Turn yourself in to law enforcement authorities for your failure to report suspected child sexual abuse. Serve your sentence. Try to find an employer willing to hire someone with your record. Vow never to be silent again and enable predators to sexually abuse children.

Third, for those teachers who have never seen or heard of child sexual abuse in their school, never heard of “passing the trash”, and never seen the statistics originally published in the Department of Education 2004 report on educator misconduct. Citing 4.5 million student victims, I recommend that you start paying closer attention to these issues. Your profession is justifiably under assault for the pandemic of K-12 student sexual abuse/harassment and apparent indifference of most teachers.

I am outraged, other parents are outraged, and we expect you to be outraged also, leading the fight to attack this problem. There is a lot that needs to be done and I would like to see teachers taking leadership roles in reform initiatives at the classroom, school, district, state, and national levels. We need your help in ridding sexual abuse/harassment from our schools. Please join us!

In addition to reporting suspected child abuse/harassment, I would encourage teachers to: (1) role model appropriate behavior and language for students and colleagues, (2) affirmatively raise the issue of respectful interaction and communication with students, parents, and colleagues, (3) monitor the conduct of your students and colleagues for compliance with the school’s sexual abuse/harassment policy, and (4) initiate immediate corrective action if violations occur.

#### Enlist the Support of an Activist Teacher

Finding an activist teacher within the school system who supports your cause and isn’t afraid to stand-up to the administration, the teachers’ union, or other teachers can be invaluable. Typically this person should have tenure and thus, some reasonable measure of job security. Otherwise, quick termination by the administration is a likely outcome. While such retaliation for trying to protect student civil rights is illegal, a lengthy lawsuit is often required to get back one’s job, plus damages.

*In the Jackson v. Birmingham Board of Education case, the Supreme Court ruled in 2005 that school employees can sue school districts for disciplinary action (including wrongful termination) taken against them, as a result of their complaints about discrimination/harassment directed at students.*

If you can find a supportive teacher (or teachers, better yet) willing to work with you and other parents to protect students, here are some specific actions that can be implemented.

- (1) Classroom Discussion The teacher can include in her/his classes a brief discussion of sexual abuse/ sexual harassment, the school policy (if there is one), and how to report complaints.
- (2) Classroom Management The teacher can clearly communicate behavioral expectations for classroom conduct, closely monitor classroom interaction, and take immediate steps to correct unacceptable conduct.
- (3) Role Model The teacher can role model appropriate professional conduct for all students to see and learn from.
- (4) Reporting If student complaints of sexual abuse or sexual harassment are brought to the teacher's attention, he/she should: (a) encourage the student to file a formal complaint with the school and accompany the student to the appropriate office, (b) file his/her own complaint about the reported violation with the school administration, (c) if the reported violation involves potentially criminal conduct, contact both Child Protective Services and local law enforcement authorities, and (d) consider filing an advocate complaint, on behalf of the student, with the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education.
- (5) Legal Testimony Perhaps the most potent action available to a teacher is to provide sworn legal testimony in court cases, on behalf of students, whose parents sue the school system, the perpetrator, and/or unresponsive, cowardly administrators over sexual abuse or sexual harassment. Supportive testimony from a teacher against the school district has a

powerful impact on judges and juries, and can serve as a strong incentive to schools to settle cases without going to court.

Before implementing any of the above strategies, a teacher should carefully consider the following simple questions and answers.

Can the actions discussed above have an immediate impact on the incidence of sexual abuse and sexual harassment at your school?      Yes, I have used all of them to effect profound improvements in the sexual harassment climate on campus and send a powerful message to sexual predators and administrators that the abuse must stop.

Are the recommended pro-student strategies viewed by many in the school community as radical, controversial, and unacceptable?      Yes, it is an unfortunate commentary on the values and practices of education that efforts to aggressively protect student civil rights would be viewed with such disdain.

Can you expect that utilizing any of the above strategies will lead to negative consequences for you personally?      Yes, you should be prepared to deal with the potential repercussions, including unfavorable faculty committee, unions, and administrative decisions, ostracism, and lack of collegial support, threats to your personal welfare and that of family members, and frivolous nuisance lawsuits for intimidation purposes.

Can one successfully deal with these negative repercussions?      Yes, you learn: (1) to carefully and objectively document your actions and productivity, (2) who your real friends and colleagues are, (3) how to file police reports and take extra safety precautions, and (4) how to file aggressive counter-suits!

Is it all worth it? Yes, when you have talked to as many abuse and harassment victims as I have and seen first-hand the horrible damage that has been inflicted, any efforts on your part to spare another student this type of suffering are well worth it!

*As mentioned earlier, after receiving death threats to my family as a result of my aggressive, pro-students actions on campus in the late 1990's. I was forced to relocate to another state, 100 miles away. This provided a much needed sense of safety and security to the entire family. Luckily, since 1999, we have not had any incidents.*

I will repeat the quote cited earlier in the book by Edmund Burke: "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men [and women] do nothing." Teachers need to become part of the solution, not part of the problem. Good luck finding a strong teacher to support your efforts to protect children!

### Conclusion

The pandemic of K-12 student sexual abuse/harassment plaguing U.S. schools has multiple powerful causes that are firmly entrenched in our society. Attacking these causes will be neither quick nor easy. Success requires a concerted effort over time by parents and concerned citizens.

There are many potent strategies that individual parents can implement to substantially improve protection of our children in school. I encourage you to try-out different corrective approaches and experiment with new ones. The more of us who get involved and take action the quicker we will prevail. Good luck in your fight, and remember that child safety and welfare have to be our top priority!