

CHANGING THE WORLD  
ONE GIRL AT A TIME



**ADMISSION PREVIEW:**  
Sunday, Dec. 7  
1:00 – 4:00 pm

**DAY: PRE-K-12**  
**BOARDING: 8-12**

*The Hockaday School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, sexual orientation, religion, national or ethnic origin.*



- [Schools](#)
  - [Schools Blog](#)
  - [Schools Listings](#)
  - [Education Section](#)
- [Sports](#)
  - [Subscribe to the Plaid Report](#)
- [Weddings](#)
- [Obituaries](#)
- [Society](#)
- [Classifieds](#)
  - [Classifieds – This Just In](#)
- [Worship](#)
- [Photos](#)
- [Park Cities People](#)

# PRESTON HOLLOW PEOPLE

## ESD Trial Begins Today

All's quiet in County Law Courtroom No. 1 for now, but if the pre-trial antics are any indication, the civil lawsuit against the Episcopal School of Dallas will be spirited.

The suit, brought by a family known as John and Jane Doe, is related to a teacher's alleged affair with a student.

The trial begins at 9 a.m., and I'll be posting updates as often as I can. For the unabridged version, pick up the July 29 edition of *Preston Hollow People*.

#### **UPDATE 8:55 a.m.**

Judge D'Metria Benson asks both sides if they are ready, Charla Aldous, representing the family, says "ready." ESD's lead attorney, Chrysta Castaneda, says "Not ready."

#### **UPDATE 9:15 a.m.**

ESD offers up an official "motion for continuance," which it claims was filed July 19. There is no electronic record of it on the docket, and the judge seems surprised to hear it has existed for nearly a week.

ESD says the reason for the motion is that several "key witnesses" will not be available for 1 to 2 weeks. Aldous says the plaintiffs are willing to call witnesses out of order if it will prevent a continuance. Judge says she'll wait to rule on this motion until all other pre-trial motions are presented.

#### **UPDATE 9:40 a.m.**

Still hearing pre-trial motions. First motion by the plaintiffs was granted. It excludes any evidence relating to the parents' responsibility in preventing the sexual assault of their daughter.

#### **UPDATE 10:06 a.m.**

Court reporter's cell phone goes off, prompting the judge to tell everyone to silence and put away their cell phones and other electronics. Use is now forbidden, and thus I am standing just outside the courtroom for this update. Live-blogging is about to get a lot less frequent.

#### **UPDATE 12:05 p.m.**

The court recessed for lunch after hearing more than 50 pre-trial motions.

Some of the more interesting rulings included:

Statements about the Doe's financial status will not be allowed, however similar information about ESD will be permitted as long as the school's own attorneys "open the door."

Reference to a former ESD employee, who the plaintiffs said was recently terminated for making sexual remarks to a student, will be allowed. Brent Walker quoted the former employee, who himself is not implicated in this lawsuit, as saying: "I like the way that dress looks on you. It makes my pants feel fun."

#### **UPDATE 1:15 p.m.**

The court opened with state Sen. Royce West bringing a motion to "quash the trial subpoena of J. Nathan Campbell." Aldous said the plaintiffs "had made the decision not to call Campbell," who is currently under a felony indictment for sexual assault.

#### **UPDATE 2 p.m.**

Watching attorneys nod off and fighting the urge myself as the post-lunch proceedings get underway.

### UPDATE 2:33 p.m.

The court is now hearing objections to items of evidence. Both sides have lengthy lists. There's a chance we won't even get through them all today.

### EDITOR'S NOTE 3:20 p.m.

Dan Koller here. We interrupt this live blog to inform you that Judge Benson has called a brief recess, apparently because of the very post you are reading right now. We likely won't be updating this again today. Check back in the morning for a new post.

 Like  Share 16 people like this. Be the first of your friends.

By [Claire St. Amant](#) Jul. 25, 2011 | 8:50 am | [13 Comments](#) | [Comments RSS](#)

## 13 comments to "ESD Trial Begins Today"

**Want to Keep Up With ESD Trial? | Park Cities People** @ July 25, 2011 at [9:44 am](#)

[...] Trial? .nrelate .nr\_sponsored{ left:0px !important; } // Ace reporter Claire St. Amant is there, blogging her little heart out. .nrelate .nr\_sponsored{ left:0px !important; } // By Dan Koller Jul. [...]

**Gail McBride** @ July 25, 2011 at [12:31 pm](#)

waiting for an update—the court needs to get this done with.

**episcopal parent** @ July 25, 2011 at [1:36 pm](#)

Thanks for blogging and keeping us on top of things. Keep up the good work!

**Bob** @ July 25, 2011 at [7:26 pm](#)

Reference to a former ESD employee, who the plaintiffs said was recently terminated for making sexual remarks to a student, will be allowed.

WHY WAS IDENTIFICATION AS [redacted] REMOVED FROM THIS ARTICLE?

**Concerned parent** @ July 25, 2011 at [8:29 pm](#)

Did the judge issue a gag order?  
Get a lawyer and fight for unfettered access.  
We want to know what ESD did in this case.

**ESD Trial. Day 2 | Preston Hollow People** @ July 26, 2011 at [7:57 am](#)

[...] revelation that live-blogging the courtroom proceedings was no bueno means your daily updates will be a lot less frequent than [...]

**Dan Koller** @ July 26, 2011 at [9:42 am](#)

@Bob: Until we can give this former employee a chance to answer the accusation, I don't want to use his name.

**Another Episcopalin Parent** @ July 26, 2011 at [10:39 am](#)

@ Dan, that makes sense, but the reported statement of Mr. Walker, plaintiff's attorney, that the teacher said "it makes my pants feel fun" about a female student in a dress, sure makes it difficult to understand how the former employee can defend himself. If what the Does are claiming is true, and that this type of thing has been going on on campus we have to wonder who's in charge, and also commend this family for having the guts to take on the school and its leaders.

**Former Student** @ July 26, 2011 at [12:18 pm](#)

I graduated a few years ago, and thought I'd leave a comment. I already saw the name before Dan removed it, and was not at all surprised. Students poked fun at him all the time for stuff like that, and it's not surprising to hear. It is surprising to see how long it took until something happened.

**Ronie** @ July 26, 2011 at [7:30 pm](#)

There's much more information in the online court documents. Stuff like a teacher being fired after staring creepily at a female student, being warned, and doing it again.

Another interesting item in the documents is from a teacher deposition where she admits to asking the victim if she was the reason that the alleged rapist was forced to leave the school. The teacher got a note in her file.

If you really look through the documents, a lot of revealing information is in the deposition snippets in the appendices of various filings - and reporting on that would really shake up the false opinions many parents have of ESD.

**Rose** @ August 22, 2011 at [5:48 pm](#)

Wow. This sounds like an ESD-bashing blog! Where are the comments regarding the fabulous teachers and administrative folks who have, for years, done such a great job with our kids? Let's please take a non-partisan view for a change and let both sides speak. It would not be in the courts if it was the one-sided argument you pose, I like to allow our judicial system some respect.

**ESD Trial, Day 14 | Preston Hollow People** @ August 24, 2011 at [8:42 am](#)

[...] and why it wasn't allowed to be given in front of a jury. That decision was actually made way back in July during pretrial [...]

**Tony** @ August 26, 2011 at [2:29 pm](#)

I have a child at another local private school that just hired a new teacher previously employed at ESD. There is considerable concern that this teacher is the one quoted as saying "...makes my pants feel fun". With the liability involved, ESD is certainly not going to provide any information to another school considering hiring this teacher. Dan has redacted his name from this blog to "give this former employee a chance to answer the accusation...". How/when will this former employee address this accusation? What is venue/forum? ESD heard the complaint, heard the employee's response, and decided to fire him. Is he facing any charges of which I am not aware?

## Leave a Reply

Name (required)

Mail (will not be published) (required)