

Central Market  
**WEEKLY SAVOR**

**ORGANIC  
NAVEL ORANGES**

Seedless and ripened to sweet, juicy perfection! And it's organic!

**87¢** /lb.  
SAVE \$1.10

**CLICK HERE  
FOR MORE SPECIALS** >

  **MAKE *Saving* YOUR NEW HOLIDAY TRADITION WITH OUR LOW PRICES.**

Rollover to view holiday items >



by The Dallas Morning News

COMMUNITIES LOCAL NEWS WEATHER



## Episcopal School of Dallas found grossly negligent in handling student-teacher relationship

[f](#) Share [t](#) Tweet [e](#) Email [c](#) Comment [p](#) Print

By **DIANE JENNINGS** and **SCOTT GOLDSTEIN**

Staff Writers

Published: 21 September 2011 12:00 PM

Updated: 21 September 2011 11:39 PM

The Episcopal School of Dallas was slapped with a multimillion-dollar jury verdict Wednesday afternoon largely for forcing a student to leave the school after her sexual relationship with a teacher was discovered.

But jurors in the more than two-month-long, hotly contested lawsuit found the school was largely not liable for failing to prevent the inappropriate relationship.

“I think the jury heard the evidence,” said the family’s lead attorney, Charla Aldous. “I thought they sent a message loud and clear that our community will not allow a sexual abuse victim to be treated like Jane Doe.”

The family declined to comment after the verdict was announced, but Aldous said she talked to the girl, who was identified as Jane Doe in court filings and whose name is not being published because to do so would identify a sexual abuse victim. She was not present for the announcement. “There was lots of crying over the phone,” Aldous said.

“She said, ‘You did it!’” Aldous said. “I said, ‘No, we did it.’”

Calculating damages

The amount of compensatory damages announced in court totaled about \$8.5 million, with another \$700,000 for punitive damages, totaling a little more than \$9 million. But attorneys for the school say the compensatory amount is actually a little more than \$5 million when calculated for duplication.

“There’s a concept of law called the single injury rule, which means you cannot recover multiple times for the same damages,” said Chrysta Castañeda, attorney for the school.

She said the school will ask the judge to make a final determination of the actual total dollar amount.

Brent Walker, attorney for the family, said school lawyers can argue what they want after the verdict but, “The jury charge was thoroughly vetted by the court, and the charge was correct, and the jury’s verdict totals between \$9.2 [million] and \$9.3 million.”

The school has insurance for such claims.

The girl, who went on to graduate from another high school, is attending college on an athletic scholarship. She was 16 when the relationship with history teacher Nathan Campbell, then 34, began.

The relationship lasted for about seven months and ended when police discovered the couple in a car in a parking lot in November 2009.

Campbell resigned and admitted the relationship. He is facing one count of sexual assault of a child and one count of improper relationship with a student. His attorney has said he is negotiating a plea bargain in the criminal case.

Verdict ‘was wrong’

School board president John Eagle said: “The verdict of the jury was wrong. It’s unfortunate ESD never got the opportunity to put on their case.”

Eagle and Castañeda said the jury should have heard testimony from the girl’s former best friend, who would have disputed some of the girl’s testimony, particularly about an incident in which she said she had never asked fellow students to see if Campbell’s then-wife, who also worked at the school, was wearing her wedding ring.

That testimony would have bolstered the reasons for the school's decision to force the girl to withdraw, Eagle said. School officials said the school was an unhealthy environment for the girl because she didn't stop talking about the relationship, so forcing her to withdraw was in her best interest.

Eagle and Castañeda said the school will appeal.

"An excellent institution was deprived of its day in court," Castañeda said.

Aldous said changes need to be made in the administration at ESD, calling for the firing of the headmaster, the Rev. Stephen Swann; chief academic officer Rebecca Royall; and Erin Mayo, head of the upper school.

Eagle said it's easy to call for replacing administrators but hard to change 37 years of history and successful students. Swann started the school in 1974. Enrollment is about 1,100 students, from pre-school through 12th grade. Eagle said the board will investigate what changes need to be made.

If changes are not made in the school administration, Aldous said that she will feel like, "I've won for Jane, but I'm not sure I've won for the next victim."

#### Damages detailed

Jurors said the school was 40 percent responsible for the damages to Jane Doe, and Campbell was 60 percent responsible. Campbell was not a party in the lawsuit and did not testify. The jury also determined the school was not "grossly negligent" for failing to protect her from the relationship.

But jurors said the school was 90 percent responsible for Jane Doe's withdrawal from the school while she was 10 percent responsible. The damages awarded to her in that area were substantial: \$500,000 for past mental anguish, \$500,000 for future mental anguish, \$150,000 for past pain and suffering, \$150,000 for future pain and suffering, \$750,000 for loss of enjoyment of life in the past and \$1 million for loss of enjoyment of life in the future.

She was also awarded \$50,000 for medical expenses up to age 18, \$50,000 for medical expenses up to the time of trial and \$500,000 for future medical expenses.

More than \$2 million was awarded for anguish, pain and suffering, and loss of enjoyment of

life due to the fraud and breach of trust by the school. Her mother and father were each awarded a little more than \$1 million for past and future mental anguish also.

### Forced withdrawal

When it came to the forced withdrawal of Jane Doe, the school acted with gross negligence, jurors said. They also determined the school is a charitable institution but that status should not keep them from having to pay the full judgment. School officials had argued that damages should be capped at \$500,000 under Texas law for charitable organizations.

After announcing compensatory damages in the morning, jurors returned quickly Wednesday afternoon to award the additional \$700,000 in punitive damages.

Eagle said the school tried to settle the lawsuit before the often painful trial was held. In testimony, he said officials even offered at one point to provide housing in another community so the girl could attend school and later to give her a car.

Jurors declined to comment after the verdict.

djennings@dallasnews.com;

sgoldstein@dallasnews.com



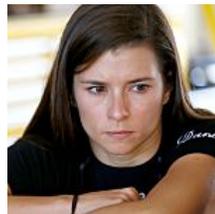
Did you see something wrong in this story, or something missing? Let us know.

---

### Promoted Stories From The Web



Dale Earnhardt Jr. losing pit crew members to JGR  
(SportingNews)



Will 2015 be Danica Patrick's final season in NASCAR Sprint Cup Series?  
(FOX Sports)



Serena Williams In A Bikini On Croatian Vacay  
(Bossip)



Top 50 NFL Draft Busts Ever: Where Are They Now?  
(LostLettermen)