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## **Federal Lawsuit Alleges Central Bucks School District Failed to Protect Nonverbal Autistic Student from Severe Abuse**

*Complaint alleges a child was illegally restrained nearly 3,000 times and that district officials concealed reports of abuse*

**PHILADELPHIA, PA** – Laffey Bucci D’Andrea Reich & Ryan has filed a federal civil rights lawsuit on behalf of a 10-year-old survivor with nonverbal autism who allegedly endured thousands of illegal restraints and other severe abuse while attending an autistic support classroom at Jamison Elementary School.

The Complaint alleges that the child survivor, identified in the complaint as J.P., was illegally restrained 2,933 times between September 3 and December 20, 2024 more than 27 times per school day. School employees restricted his access to water and the bathroom, removed his communication device, subjected him to physical and psychological mistreatment, and repeatedly humiliated him because of behaviors connected to his disability.

According to the lawsuit, J.P.’s inability to speak and communicate what was happening made him particularly vulnerable. His parents did not learn the full extent of the alleged mistreatment until a classroom aide came forward in December 2024.

“This case involves an extraordinary betrayal of a child who depended entirely on the adults around him for his safety, education, and care,” said [Attorney M. Stewart Ryan](#), partner at Laffey Bucci D’Andrea Reich & Ryan. “Not only did our client endure relentless and degrading treatment, but district officials were repeatedly given opportunities to protect him and failed to do so.”

The suit alleges Central Bucks School District officials received detailed reports of the conduct but allowed the employees accused of mistreating the child to remain in the classroom. The Complaint further claims that district officials delayed reporting the allegations to ChildLine, provided incomplete or misleading information to authorities and falsely told the child’s parents that an internal investigation had found no evidence of abuse.

Subsequent investigations cited in the Complaint found that other students in the classroom experienced mistreatment, neglect, illegal restraints, prohibited disciplinary techniques, and disability discrimination. The district’s own subsequent review determined that none of the 2,933 restraints involving J.P. had been reported to his parents or through the Pennsylvania Department of Education’s required reporting system.

J.P. has since been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, according to the Complaint. In a joint statement, the family said: “It is devastating to learn that our son was treated this way by the very people we trusted to care for and protect him. Because he is nonverbal, he could not come home and tell us that he was being viciously abused and traumatized on a daily basis. We are also furious with the many people who covered up his abuse. We are speaking out for our son and for every vulnerable and defenseless child who depends on teachers and school administrators to protect their dignity and keep them safe. Our son and entire family have been changed forever. This can never happen again to another child.”

“Holding schools accountable is not only about securing justice for one survivor,” said Ryan. “Accountability can expose dangerous practices, force institutions to confront failures in their systems, and help create safer environments for every student who enters a classroom in the future. Children with disabilities deserve the same dignity, protection and opportunity to learn as every other child.”

The lawsuit names Central Bucks School District, former district administrators, J.P.’s former teacher and educational assistant, and other individuals who allegedly participated in or failed to properly report and respond to the conduct. It asserts federal civil rights and state law claims and seeks compensatory and punitive damages, attorneys’ fees and other relief.

[Laffey Bucci D’Andrea Reich & Ryan LLP](#) is a Philadelphia-based, trauma-informed personal injury law firm dedicated to representing individuals who have suffered severe injuries due to negligence. Since 2009, the firm has provided exceptional “leave no stone unturned” representation in personal injury, construction accident cases, workers’ compensation, workplace falls, and product liability. The crime victim department, staffed by former sex crimes prosecutors, exclusively represents survivors of abuse, assault, and human trafficking nationwide. The firm’s attorneys bring over 140 years of combined experience and have secured more than \$850 million in compensation, providing a track record of relentless advocacy and results-driven representation for their clients.