

## Summary of Recent Cases of Sexual Abuse in MA Schools – April 2023



**Salvatore Freiri, Principal of Lenox Memorial Middle School** resigned only two weeks after allegations emerged that he had an illicit relationship in 2008 with a 15-year-old foster child and Sophomore at the **Berkshire Arts and Technology Charter School** in Adams, where he was previously employed. A 27-year-old substitute teacher then, Frieri violated school policy by giving her rides in his car, giving her alcohol at his home and engaging in a sexual relationship with her. He was fired and no charges were ever brought against him by police, DCF, or the DA as the youth claimed the relationship was consensual.

When teachers at the BART School learned of his appointment as Lenox Principal in 2022, they alerted a reporter at [iberkshires.com](http://iberkshires.com) that published an article which resulted in Frieri's resignation. He had held the position of Principal formerly at elementary schools in **Westfield** and **Holyoke** and taught for five years at a **Pittsfield** Middle School.



**Thomas Davis**, a 42-year-old former **Foxborough Special Education High School teacher** was arrested after showing someone a video of himself having sex with a teenager who he said was a student. He was reported to federal authorities who seized his laptop on which they found hundreds of child sexual abuse materials. He pled guilty in February to possession and receipt of child pornography. He had worked previously at the **Sharon Middle School**.



**Paul Cheffi**, a 43-year-old **Chelsea High School Science teacher** groomed a 14-year-old student by taking her on errands, giving her rides from school and paying her to clean his house, where he sexually assaulted her telling her, *"I can give you a piece of my heart, but you can never include me in your stories."* He went on to sexually abuse her in the classroom, in his car and at his home. When a friend of the girl's told a teacher about the abuse, she was told to "stop talking about it or you'll get in trouble." The victim, now an adult, has filed civil charges against him, the City of Chelsea and Boston University, which had control of the Chelsea Schools at the time of the abuse.



**Henry Wilson, 57**, and **Member of the Chelsea School Committee** pled guilty in February to raping a 12-year old student. The child was walking home when Wilson offered him a ride home. He then drove to a parking lot, where the boy was sexually assaulted in the car. The DA's office reported parts of the sexual assault were recorded on a cellphone camera. Wilson was sentenced to 5 years in prison and 5 years of probation. Wilson joined Chelsea School Committee in 2018, and before that was a youth mentor for the district's students, and a member of the Chelsea Planning Board and Zoning Board. He had received several community awards.



**Daniel Hakim**, a 37-year-old former **gym teacher** at the Saltonstall School in **Salem** was arrested a few months ago on 37 counts of indecent assault and battery of a child under 14 and 2 counts of rape of a child. Twelve children between the ages of 6 and 8 were allegedly assaulted while Hakim taught at the school between 2015 and 2018. The teacher pled not guilty in January and is awaiting trial. He remains free on \$200,000 cash bail, under house arrest and is monitored by a GPS bracelet.



**James Toltz**, a former **Peabody gym teacher and coach** is facing civil charges filed on behalf of 50 students for having sexually abused them during his 34-year tenure in local schools. The City is facing negligence charges for failing to have trained, supervised and disciplined the employee. The class action suit alleges that as many as 500 students ages 10 – 17 were likely victims of the teacher's sexual assaults which ranged from fondling to rape. He also provided cocaine to students at the school and in his home.



**Larry Chen**, a 36-year-old former **Brookline Social Studies teacher** was charged with 58 counts of statutory rape and indecent assault and battery of a child under 14. The female victim, a 6<sup>th</sup> grader, was assaulted in the school over a two-year period. The teacher also tutored part time and worked summers in the city's Recreation Department.