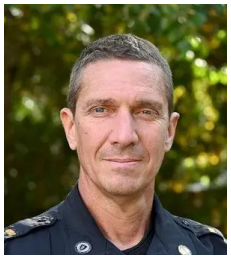
26 Recent Cases of Child Sexual Abuse in Massachusetts Schools

Scott McGinley, 55 a former Longmeadow Middle School librarian was charged August 2025 by federal prosecutors on one count of distribution of child sexual abuse material to a group chat titled "Little boyz only." He allegedly exchanged direct messages with an undercover law enforcement officer and disclosed his sexual preference for "boys age 2-12 … especially 4-7." A search of McGinley's home and electronic devices allegedly turned up more than 100 files depicting child sexual abuse, as well as "a medley of items for children approximately five to seven years old," the U.S. Attorney's Office said. Also found inside a locked case in his basement were children's underwear, bedding, a Santa costume, diapers, etc. McGinley told undercover officer that he had students who were between the ages of 11 to 14 but hadn't touched them sexually, though he sat "hot boys" strategically close to him so he could see under their desks. Since 2016, McGinley worked as a school librarian for Williams Middle School and Glenbrook Middle School.

Matthew Cunningham, a 35-year-old Brockton High School Choral Director was charged in August 2025 for paying for sex acts with a 17-year-old male Brockton High School student. Brockton Public Schools immediately placed him on paid administrative leave. Cunningham asked the victim if he was willing to engage in sex acts for money through Grindr, an LGBTQ+ dating app. According to the DA's office, the App administrators contacted the FBI after flagging the monetary transaction between an adult and a minor. The FBI contacted Brockton Police and the investigation commenced, resulting in his arrest. According to his LinkedIn page, Cunningham has been the choral director at Brockton High School since 2013. Prior to that, he was an elementary music teacher in Holbrook Public Schools from August 2012 to June 2013.

Christopher Carlisle, a 30-year-old former Needham Extended Day teacher, was arrested in June 2025 and charged with possession of child pornography and distribution of obscene materials. Carlisle worked in the after-school program at Eliot Elementary School and was the third Needham Public Schools employee to be arrested on CSAM-related charges since April 2025.



John Porter, a 54-year-old former Hopkinton Police Chief and school resource officer at Hopkinton High School, was charged in June 2025 with three counts of child rape. In 2004 and 2005, Porter used his position of authority while working at the high school to groom and sexually assault a 15-year-old student on multiple occasions. Porter worked for the police department for 30 years and also coached the varsity girls' soccer team at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical School in Upton.

David Martinson, a 61-year-old cabinet remodeling teacher at Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School in Charlton, was arrested in May 2025 on 9 charges of indecent assault and harassment. At least 3 female students report Martinson grabbing their buttocks on multiple occasions, grabbing one of their necks while asking if they liked being choked, as well as making comments to students about: threesomes, the "perfect angle" when a student was kneeling, talking about his own vasectomy, asking about a student's virginity, and saying that he'd like to "have fun" with a student when they turn 18. Martinson taught at Bay Path for 21 years. His LinkedIn profile also mentions being the varsity boys' soccer coach and bowling coach.

Joshua DeWitte, a 50-year-old music teacher at Buckingham Browne & Nichols private school in Cambridge, was charged in May 2025 by federal authorities on **6** counts of disseminating obscene material to a child, one count of distribution of material depicting a child in a sexual act, and one count of possession of child pornography. DeWitte had explicit sexual conversations with minors on Snapchat, sent photos of his penis, uploaded child sexual abuse material (CSAM), and also paid for someone else to produce CSAM and recruit young boys. The school said it had followed all hiring standards and DeWitte had passed background checks and had strong references from past employers, including Cambridge Public Schools and St. Mary's International School in Tokyo, Japan.

Spencer Parish, a 47-year-old Band Director at Needham High School was charged with possessing child pornography and was placed on administrative leave and his access to NPS buildings, grounds, and digital files was removed. This arrest in April 2025 was made nearly one month after another Needham School District teacher, **Michael Ciccolella** was arraigned on similar charges. (See below.) Parrish has worked for Needham public schools since 2021. He was formerly employed as an elementary school teacher in Newton from 2020-21 where he taught at the Horace Mann Elementary School. Parrish garnered public attention through frequent regional performances, as well as his music writing and production abilities.

Sean Loomis, a 51-year old former girls Ski Trainer with the Mohawk Trail and Hawlemont School Districts in Shelbourne Falls, was named in March 2025 in a civil law suit file by a former student. The complaint alleges Loomis began pursuing the plaintiff in 2014, when she was 13 years old. Using his position of authority, he allegedly sent her numerous unwanted sexually explicit text messages, made inappropriate comments and invaded her social life - activity that evolved into unwanted touching and eventually sexual assaults on numerous occasions. Loomis stepped down in 2024 from his position at Rowe Park Commission, where he had been Manager for 22 years. Due to MA's Age of Consent law, the Franklin County DA announced he is unable to press criminal charges. Mohawk Trail School District, the Rowe Park Commission, Town of Rowe and Loomis' wife, who was the Title IX Coordinator for the School District and failed to report him, are included in the civil suit.

Mike Micucci, a former Frisbee Coach at the Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter School in South Hadley faced new civil charges in March 2025 by a former student who alleged that beginning when she was 12, Micucci used intimate conversations, cuddles, private meetings and off-campus rendezvous to groom her and other students into later developing sexual relationships with them while administrators took no action and laid responsibility on the girls. This student was sexually abused one day after her 18th birthday. The District Attorney has ruled that due to the Age of Consent law, Micucci cannot be prosecuted. In 2022, another student, "Jane Doe," filed a similar case in federal court against him. Court records show that case was settled in 2023.

Michael Ciccolella, a 47-year old teacher at High Rock Middle School in Needham was charged March 2025 with viewing and distributing sexually explicit images of minors ranging from ages 3 to 12 using the online messaging applications Media Lab/Kik. Police allege he also communicated with an officer posing as a 13-year-old boy on an adult website. In addition to his role as a teacher, Ciccolella has been involved since 2017 with area club soccer teams. In his profile on LinkedIn, he describes himself as a "dedicated educator and soccer coach with a proven ability to inspire and empower young minds."

Daniel Hakim, a 37-year-old former gym teacher at the Saltonstall School in Salem was indicted in March 2025 by the Essex County Grand Jury of an additional charge of aggravated rape of a child. Hakim had been arrested in 2023 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 for 3 years. He has pled not guilty and is awaiting trial in August. He remains free on $200,000 cash bail and under house arrest. Before teaching in Salem, Hakim taught at the Brooks School in North Andover and the Shawsheen Elementary School in Wilmington.

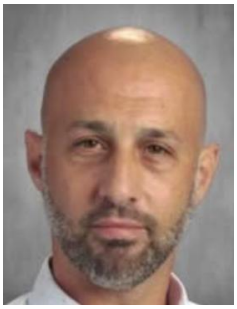
John Magee Gavin, 35 of Brookline, a former science teacher at the **Josiah Quincy Upper School in Boston** was charged federally in February 2025 with enticing a child under 16, possession of child pornography and other offenses. He was the owner of a Discord account who messaged at least 20 underage females between the ages of 12-17 across the U.S. Evidence seized from his home included approximately 150 images and videos depicting rape of female and male minors ranging in age from 5-17. He allegedly engaged in online masturbation sessions with minors, solicitated and exchanged images with them and engaged in sexualized conversations while at school. The chats allegedly included conversations in which Gavin expressed sexual interest in certain students at Josiah Quincy. He was hired in 2022 as a 6th grade teacher at the Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter School in Hyde Park and in 2020 as a paraprofessional in Brookline Schools.

Robert Gayle, 60, a former teacher at the Springfield STEM Middle Academy was federally charged in February 2025 in a suit alleging sexual harassment, grooming, and abuse of middle school students. There are currently three other criminal cases against Gayle for sexual assault, statutory rape and indecent assault and battery. Gayle was alleged to have groomed students by kissing them on the neck, providing food during class for his girl students, asking students to stay after class and not to tell anyone, etc. *The suit was also filed against School officials for negligence to properly hire, train, supervise, and discipline Gayle.*

Curt Field, 29-year old Athletics Director for Auburn Public Schools was arrested by Auburn Police in January 2025 and arraigned in Worcester District Court for disseminating obscene material to a minor. He had been communicating online with a 17-year old student for three months before the teen disclosed that Field had sent him videos he made of himself having oral sex. The teen received sexually explicit requests from Field encouraging him to have sex, e.g. "…in my office here it's private If that turns u on" and "Send daddy a face pic I'm over at Auburn hs." The investigation remains ongoing, and indications are that there is possibly another 17-year-old "potential victim."

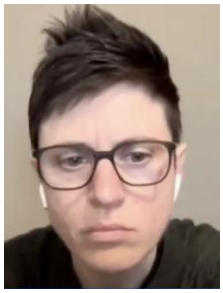
Matthew Rutledge, 62-year-old History teacher at Miss Hall's School in Pittsfield for 30 years, was charged in December 2024 with sexual abuse by 5 former students of the prestigious prep school for girls. *A civil suit has also been brought against the school for failing to respond to reports made by past and current students and teachers about the overt sexual misconduct of Rutledge and others.* Victims claim that school officials retaliated against students and some faculty who reported such instances over the years. Rutledge was forced to resign but due to MA's Age of Consent law, the Berkshire County DA is unable to press criminal charges. The civil case proceeds.

Salvatore Frieri, **Principal of Lenox Memorial Middle School** resigned in 2024, two weeks after allegations 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 BART School learned of his appointment in Lenox, they alerted the media, which published an article resulting in his resignation. After leaving BART he served as Principal at **Westfield** and **Holyoke schools** and taught 5 years at **Pittsfield** Middle school.



Darren Benedick, a 42-year-old Athletic Director at the Excel Academy Charter School in Salem was caught in July 2024 in a "teens only" online chat room making plans to meet with a 14-year-old girl for a sexual encounter. He was actually engaged with an undercover Newbury Police Officer. He was charged in Essex County District Court with enticement of a child under 16; possession of child pornography; distribution of obscene material to a minor; and three counts of sharing sexual material of a child in a sex act. He was placed on house arrest and a $5,000 bail was set. Benedick was previously Youth Director for the Congregation Sherat Hayam on Nantucket.

Shawn Baillargeon, a 54-year-old Vocational Instructor at the South High Community High School in Worcester was charged in July 2024 with aggravated rape of a child, rape of a child, and Indecent Assault and Battery of child under 14. More than one victim has come forward and police report that the sexual crimes were committed over several years. He was placed immediately on administrative leave.



Caitlin Harding, 37, a former teacher at **JFK Middle School in Hudson**, was previously charged with raping a then-13-year-old student. She faced a civil lawsuit in 2024 for similar conduct for allegedly grooming the female student from when she was 11 years old, and later engaging in explicit sexual behavior and lewd and lascivious conduct with her. The student says that Harding's alleged abuse caused her "severe emotional distress and physical harm" including depression, panic attacks, and suicidal ideation. The Town of Hudson, its Superintendent, Principal and Assistant Principal were also charged in the suit for negligent hiring/retention and for deprivation of rights. A criminal trial is currently pending in 2025 in Middlesex Superior Court after a judge declared two mistrials.

David Weremay, a 44-year-old teacher at the New Leadership Charter School in Springfield was convicted in June 2024 to 8 to 10 years in prison on aggravated rape of a child, indecent assault and battery, and intimidation of witness. The victim said in court that she "looked up to him as a father figure because she didn't have the best relationship with her dad." Defendant began grooming her in 8th Grade by holding hands, hugging, and kissing her. A school counselor reported her concerns to DCF but the victim was coerced not to tell and the investigation ended. Defendant went on later to teach at the Springfield Renaissance School before his arrest in 2023.

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 to possession and receipt of child sexual abuse material and was sentenced in January 2024 to 5 years in prison and 5 years of supervised release. He had worked previously at the **Sharon** Middle School.

Robert Barsanti, a 59-year-old former Nantucket teacher, was sued by a 17-year-old Pittsfield student for numerous sexual comments and references to the student. Barsanti also used innuendos in the classroom and discussed his "porn addiction" in class. The student made a formal Title IX complaint to the school regarding Barsanti's behavior in November 2023. The investigation found Barsanti engaged in sexual harassment, according to court filings. He retired from teaching in 2024.

Henry Wilson, 57, a **member of the Chelsea School Committee** pled guilty in 2023 to raping a 12-year old student. The child was walking home when Wilson offered him a ride and then drove to a parking lot where he sexually assaulted the boy and recorded the assault on his cellphone camera. Wilson was sentenced to 5 years in prison and 5 years of probation. He 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 and Zoning Boards. He had received several community awards.

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 saying, *"I can give you a piece of my heart, but you can never include me in your stories."* He sexually abused her in the classroom, his car and at his home. A student who told a teacher about the abuse was told to "*stop talking about it or you'll get in trouble."* The victim filed civil charges in 2022 against Cheffi, the City of Chelsea and Boston University, which had control of the Chelsea Schools at the time of the abuse. The case is still pending.

James Toltz, a former Peabody gym teacher and coach is facing civil charges filed in 2022 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. The case is still pending.

Larry Chen, a 36-year-old former Brookline Social Studies teacher faced 54 charges filed in 2022, including 18 counts of aggravated statutory rape, rape of the on a child under 16 and indecent assault and battery of a person under 14. The female victim, a 6th 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.

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