

L-R leader: Music prof being sued was 'successful' teacher

by Marie Saavedra, KY3 News



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[Video](#)

ROGERSVILLE, Mo. -- The superintendent of the Logan-Rogersville School District says a university professor who is being sued for sexual abuse was a successful music teacher when he was at Rogersville High School. Beyond that, Superintendent Jeremy Tucker calls the lawsuit against [Brad Barrett](#) by a former student “a deplorable circumstance.”

To read the lawsuit, [click here](#).

Barrett taught in the Logan-Rogersville School district from 1986 to 1997. He now teaches at the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls.

Walker said he's coming forward now because he couldn't live in silence anymore.

"It steals your life. You're walking around in circles," Walker said at a news conference at UNI on Thursday.

Walker says he doesn't want others to go through what he did. He says he wants others to know what happened to prevent any more abuse.

"He's still surrounding himself with young adults, teenagers. For me to even fathom the fact that a junior high or high schooler may have to go through what I went through, I can't do that," said Walker.

It was inside the walls of the old Rogersville High School where Walker says he was robbed -- of innocence and other things by Barrett.

"For me, that time is gone; all I can do is look forward," he said.

At the news conference, Walker said the abuse started at age 15.

"You spend hundreds of hours in a practice room. You take lessons, go on trips. There's lots of excitement built around that. Those are all things he uses as leverage; at least he used them on me," he said.

Walker, 31, filed a federal lawsuit in the Western District of Missouri last November. It seeks damages from Barrett, Logan-Rogersville School District, and John Hetherington, high school principal when Walker says he was assaulted between 1992 and 1995.

The school district and Hetherington have asked a U.S. District judge to dismiss them from the lawsuit. They say they had no knowledge of the abuse that Walker says he suffered. A reporter tried several times to reach Hetherington for a comment on Friday but no one answered his home telephone number.

Barrett is now on paid leave from UNI, which didn't know about the lawsuit until Walker's news conference on Thursday. UNI released a statement saying it put Barrett on leave while the university investigates. School officials said UNI would hold accountable people whose actions violate the law or the university's conduct policies.

Despite Tucker's praise for Barrett as a teacher, he said an allegation of abuse, true or not, is never praised.

"It's a deplorable circumstance. We're addressing that, working through that process," said Tucker.

Barrett's attorney, David Bell of Kansas City, released a statement after Walker's news conference.

"We regret that Mr. Walker has chosen to act outside of the appropriate forum for resolution of this matter. As all Americans know, a person accused of any misconduct is presumed innocent until such allegations have been proven in a court of law.

"The judicial system, rather than the media, is the appropriate and Constitutionally guaranteed forum for resolution of these disputes because the judicial system properly recognizes the interests of all parties and not merely the party who has chosen to organize a press conference.

"It is unfortunate that Mr. Walker has chosen to disregard Professor Barrett's Constitutionally protected rights by attempting to inflame public opinion against him."