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Major Win for Messa & Associates Attorney Laura E. Laughlin and Co-Counsel Adele Kimmel of Public Justice in Their Case Against North Penn School District Involving the Repeated Sexual Harassment of Student.

The lawsuit filed in December 2020, *Jane Doe v. North Penn School District*, seeks to hold North Penn School District accountable for its failure to appropriately respond to the repeated sexual assaults of Jane Doe by a classmate and failure to train its teachers and administration on identifying, investigating, and responding to student-on-student sexual harassment in its schools.

Late last week, the federal district court denied North Penn's motion for summary judgment, rejecting the District's attempt to dismiss Ms. Doe's case in its entirety. *In its opinion*, the court held that all of Ms. Doe's claims must be decided by a jury. Ms. Doe also filed a motion for summary judgment asking the court to find that Ms. Doe was sexually harassed in elementary school and that the District knew about it. The District conceded these points and the court ruled in Ms. Doe's favor.

This is a big win for survivors harmed by their schools, but especially for Ms. Doe, whose education was completely derailed by the District's numerous failures.

"We are glad the Court denied North Penn School District's attempt to dismiss Ms. Doe's claims in this case," said Laura E. Laughlin of Messa & Associates, who has broad experience in handling sexual assault cases, and is co-counsel for Jane Doe. "North Penn's failure to adequately train its teachers and administrators and failure to appropriately respond after it knew of Ms. Doe's assaults caused Ms. Doe physical and emotional trauma that no child should have to experience in our public school system. We look forward to the opportunity to get justice for Ms. Doe from a jury."

"I would give North Penn School District an 'F' on fulfilling its obligation to ensure its students can receive their education free from sexual harassment," said Adele Kimmel, co-counsel for Jane Doe and Public Justice's Students' Civil Rights Project Director. "We are pleased that the court's ruling gives Jane an opportunity to expose how badly North Penn failed her and how its lack of sexual harassment training endangers other students."

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About Messa & Associates, P.C

Messa & Associates, P.C. represents individuals and their families in complex personal injury matters, including sexual assault, catastrophic injury, medical malpractice, product liability, motor vehicle accidents, fires and explosions. Our attorneys serve Pennsylvania clients throughout the state, including in Philadelphia and other surrounding communities in Montgomery County, Chester County, Delaware County, Bucks County, and Luzerne County. Additionally, Messa & Associates are proud to serve New Jersey clients throughout that state, and also litigate selected cases throughout the country.

About Public Justice

Public Justice is a national public interest advocacy organization that fights against abusive corporate power and predatory practices, the assault on civil rights and liberties, and the destruction of the earth's sustainability. Public Justice specializes in connecting high-impact litigation with strategic communications and the strength of its partnerships to fight these abusive and discriminatory systems and win social and economic justice.