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## **Mother of kindergartner abducted from school, raped sues Phila. School District and teacher**

By JON CAMPISI

The mother of a young girl who was raped after a stranger was able to walk

out of a Philadelphia classroom with the child during the middle of a school day last year has filed a civil suit against the School District of Philadelphia and others accusing the defendants of not doing enough to protect her daughter.

Attorneys from the Philadelphia firm Kline & Spector, who announced earlier this month that a suit would be forthcoming, filed a complaint March 26 in U.S. District Court on behalf of their client, identified only as “L.R.,” whose child, “N.R.,” abducted from W.C. Bryant Elementary School in West Philadelphia on Jan. 14, 2013, by 19-year-old Christina Regusters, the suit states.

Regusters, who had worked at an after-school program attended by the plaintiff’s then-5-year-old child, went to the school on that mid-January day last year dressed in full Muslim garb and posed as the girl’s mother, which enabled her to take the student out of school and to a house in neighboring Delaware County where the youngster was ultimately sexually assaulted, according to the complaint and past news reports.

According to the lawsuit, Reginald Littlejohn, the child’s teacher, had asked Regusters for identification when she attempted to take the girl out of class, and despite the fact that the woman couldn’t produce an ID, the girl was “recklessly and willfully” released into Regusters’ custody, the complaint states.

Littlejohn’s release of N.R. to an unidentified stranger such as Regusters manifested a “willful disregard” for the child’s safety, the suit states.

Littlejohn is a co-defendant in the litigation, as is the Philadelphia School Reform Commission.

Regusters ended up sexually assaulting the child in a nearby home; the girl was found at about 4:40 in the morning on Jan. 15 by a sanitation worker in a rain-soaked playground in Upper Darby, Delaware County.

The child, who was in kindergarten at the time, suffered anxiety, fear and fright, mental anguish, post-traumatic stress, and other ills and injuries, the lawsuit states.

The defendants are accused of violating the child's civil rights.

"The specific harm to which defendants School District of Philadelphia, School Reform Commission, and Littlejohn exposed N.R. was foreseeable and direct in that they were aware that releasing pupils to unidentified and otherwise unverified adults would result in harm to those pupils, including but not limited to sexual assault," the complaint states.

Littlejohn's release of the 5-year-old child to an unidentified adult created a "degree of culpability that shocks the conscience," the suit says.

"Despite their awareness of the risk of pupil abduction by unidentified individuals, policymakers within defendant School District of Philadelphia and School Reform Commission either deliberately chose not to train their employees, including Defendant Littlejohn, regarding policies for release of pupils during the school day, or acquiesced in a longstanding practice or custom of inaction in this regard," the complaint reads. "The constitutional rights violated by defendants School District of Philadelphia, School Reform Commission, and Littlejohn consisted of liberty, privacy, and bodily integrity.

The plaintiff seeks more than \$150,000 in damages, along with attorneys' fees, costs and interest.

The suit was filed by Kline & Specter attorneys Thomas Kline, Dominic Guerrini and David Williams.