

Teen Sues School Over Alleged Cyber-Bullying

Girl Claims Our Lady Of Lourdes Academy Ignored Problem



WTVJ-TV

updated 4:31 a.m. ET, Fri., July. 25, 2008

MIAMI -

A teenage student is suing her South Florida parochial school because, she claimed, the school failed to step in when she reported being bullied.

The 15-year-old girl, a former student at Our Lady of Lourdes Academy, claimed that her classmates began bullying her in Fall 2007 during her freshman year and created a "hate page" against her on Facebook.com, according to a news release by her lawyers.

They'd rub against me just to bother me," the teenager said. "They'd yell when I was walking, names... they used profanity. They'd write on boards saying 'kill the flea' because they called me that."

Although the teenager's mother met with the school dean about the alleged bullying, it continued, according to the lawsuit.

After several months of the alleged abuse, the student dropped out of school. The lawsuit claimed the girl suffered from emotional and physical problems as a result of the other students' alleged treatment of her.

The teen and her parents are suing Our Lady of Lourdes Academy and the Archdiocese of Miami for damages of \$15,000.

According to her attorney, Ronald Weil, the lawsuit alleges that the school and the archdiocese allowed the taunting to continue, violating anti-bullying policies.

“The suit alleges negligence on the part of the archdiocese and the school,” Weil said. “The school and the archdiocese both had an anti-bullying policy, which they refused to enforce.”

The policy calls for the immediate suspension of students involved in bullying.

“We know for a fact that the students were not suspended,” Weil said.

The archdiocese is strongly refuting that claim. Mary Ross Agosta, director of communications for the Archdiocese of Miami, said the policy was enforced.

”Students were suspended because of allegations of bullying, and they were not permitted to attend a social dance as part of their punishment,” Agosta

said. “So to say that nothing was done, that the policy was not followed, is inaccurate.”