

A former **Keller ISD** student and her family say the school district failed to prevent a teacher and **coach** from sexually harassing and stalking the girl while she was a student.

Rickey Badley, 45, was a Timber Creek High School teacher and track **coach**. He pleaded guilty in October to stalking and possession of child pornography and was sentenced to more than 10 years in prison. Badley admitted that for months, he **stalked** the then-16-year-old, calling her his "new favorite" and "little girl." He circulated false and vulgar messages about her to her family and friends, sending nearly 30 sets of letters from December 2019 to April 2020.

The letters spread vulgar lies about the girl, who is referred to Jane Doe in a lawsuit filed against the school district Wednesday. Some letters demanded the girl post sexual videos on social media.

Throughout the harassment, **Keller ISD** did not fire Badley, launch an investigation or tell him to stop contacting the girl, according to the lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas— Fort Worth Division.

The school district did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the lawsuit.

"The words this teacher wrote to a 16-year-old girl were obscene in the extreme," Michelle Simpson Tuegel, attorney in the case, said in a press release. "But what is just as shocking, if not more so, is that upon being handed all of this positive proof, that there is any school official — much worse, an entire school district — that would not take every measure possible to bring the situation to an immediate halt."

Doe's family filed a police report against Badley in December 2019. In January 2020, the school confirmed that the letters sent to Doe and her family were created by a faculty member. The school did not question the faculty members, conduct an investigation or impose any contact restrictions on Badley, according to the lawsuit. During a meeting with the school's Humane Resource Department, Doe's parents were told Badley's behavior violated **Keller ISD's** code of ethics and referred to his behavior as "grooming."

The school district's response to this behavior, according to the lawsuit, was to offer Badley the option to resign.

By allowing Badley to resign on Jan. 27, 2020, instead of firing him, **Keller ISD** "knew that this would allow him to save face and would only help his future employment," the lawsuit says.

"Had the government not conducted a thorough investigation, and had Badley not been sentenced to federal prison, this decision by **Keller ISD** would have facilitated Badley's ability to work and have contact with future students," the suit says.

In February and March, Badley continued to send the "ransom note"-style letters to the student's family and friends, which he constructed by cutting out and gluing individual letters to multiple sheets of paper. The letters included false, sexually explicit and graphic descriptions about the teenager.

In February and March 2020, Badley was seen mailing more of these letters at a Fort Worth collection box. Authorities also found child pornography on Badley's laptop, including graphic images of a toddler.

The harassment Doe faced was preventable, the suit says. Other students had previously reported to Timber Creek's principal that Badley's behavior made them uncomfortable. Prior to 2020, the district did not provide adequate training to employees or students on **Keller ISD's** Title IX policy, the suit says.

"Badley's unfettered harassment," the suit says, "was made possible by **Keller ISD's** policy of turning a blind eye to Badley's behavior."

"I guess a lot of people grow up thinking high school was a great time, but I feel like my memories of high school are always going to be about being in this gross situation, and just feeling like I didn't know what to do to make it stop," Doe said in a news release from her attorney's office. "It never felt safe, it never felt fun, and I didn't feel like I was even learning. I guess the childhood idea that the adults at your school are going to protect you totally went away for me at that time."

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