



TETON COUNTY OFFICE OF THE
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 19, 2023

**Former Teacher and Coach Jeffrey Wilkes Sentenced to Prison
for Sexual Abuse of Female Student**

At approximately 2:30 pm today, September 19, 2023, former Teton High School teacher and wrestling and football coach Jeffrey Wilkes was sentenced to prison in case CR41-22-1141 for sexual misconduct committed in 2017 directed toward a female student who he taught and supervised as his teaching assistant and wrestling coach statistics assistant.

Defendant Wilkes was indicted by a Teton County grand jury in November 2022 on two counts of Sexual Battery of a Minor Child. That indictment alleged that Mr. Wilkes, when he was 29 years old, had sexual contact with his 17-year old victim by placing himself on top of her and/or performing wrestling moves on her while she was lying face-down on grading papers causing his penis to press into her body and him to ejaculate into his shorts. The indictment also alleged that Mr. Wilkes solicited his victim to participate in a sexual act by sending her text messages seeking repayment or “bribes” for opening the Teton High School weight room for her including by texting that “we can always find other stuff for repayment” when offered candy by his victim, by requesting personal viewing or photos of bruising on her hips, and/or by requesting wrestling to get out of class.

On May 15, 2023, Defendant Wilkes entered a plea agreement with the State pursuant to which he agreed to plead guilty to felony Injury to Child under Idaho Code § 18-1501(1) and misdemeanor sexual battery under Idaho Code § 18-924. As part of that agreement, the Defendant agreed to undergo a psychosexual examination and polygraph test with the results submitted to the Prosecuting Attorney and the judge presiding over the case, District Judge Steven Boyce, prior to sentencing. The plea agreement also bound the State and counsel for the Defendant to jointly recommend to the Court that, if the Defendant were to be sentenced to probation as any portion of his sentence, that the Defendant would be subject to special terms of probation whereby he would be required to: (1) comply with all treatment recommended in the psychosexual evaluation; and (2) be prohibited from working as a teacher, athletic coach or in any other role or setting involving unsupervised contact with juveniles. Consistent with Idaho law, the ultimate sentence imposed upon the Defendant would be determined by the Judge.



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At the sentencing hearing, Prosecuting Attorney Bailey Smith and counsel for the Defendant provided sentencing recommendations and argument regarding incarceration time and treatment options. After considering the arguments, Judge Boyce found that there were both mitigating and aggravating factors impacting sentencing. He found mitigating factors to include that the Defendant seemed remorseful for his conduct and had no supervision violations while on pretrial release. On the other hand, he found that it was a “heavily aggravating factor” that the Defendant’s conduct occurred at a school, and highlighted that the Defendant engaged in a pattern of conduct rather than an isolated occurrence, abused a position of trust, and degraded public confidence in the education system. Judge Boyce thus sentenced Defendant Wilkes to prison¹ for a unified term of five years, comprised of one year fixed and four years indeterminate, a \$1,000 fine, and court costs. Mr. Wilkes will serve at least one year in prison before he is eligible to see the parole board, and will ultimately serve between one and five years before release. While in prison, Defendant Wilkes will be eligible to participate in sex-offender programming that would not be available in local jail. The no-contact order in the case prohibiting the Defendant from having any contact with his victim will remain in place for the duration of the Defendant’s sentence.

Links:

The Grand Jury Indictment in CR41-22-1141 is available [here](#).

The Plea Agreement in CR41-22-1141 is available [here](#).

The Criminal Information in in CR41-22-1141 is available [here](#).

The Judgment of Conviction and additional case information and documents in CR41-22-1141 can be found on the iCourt Portal [here](#).

¹ The Defendant was sentenced on Count I (Injury to Child) to a unified term of incarceration of five years, comprised of one year fixed and four years indeterminate, a \$1,000 fine, and court costs. On County II (Sexual Battery) the Defendant was sentenced to time served.