



NEWS RELEASE

GREENE COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

DAN PATTERSON

Contact: Rhonda Ogden, Office Manager – (417) 868-4061
1010 Boonville
Springfield, MO 65802

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ASH GROVE TEACHER SENTENCED TO PRISON

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Greene County Prosecuting Attorney Dan Patterson announces that William Nathan Herrington, 37, of Springfield, Missouri was sentenced today to four years in the Missouri Department of Corrections following his pleas of guilty to the felonies of statutory sodomy in the second degree and sexual contact by a teacher with a student. Herrington was a history teacher with Ash Grove High School. In the fall of 2014, he began a sexual relationship with a 16 year old female student. Herrington engaged in sexual contact with the victim at his home and at the school. The abuse came to light when the victim's mother, who was actively involved in her child's life, noticed a change in the victim's behavior and was able to uncover the abuse. She then alerted the Ash Grove school district who, in turn, quickly notified police.

Herrington pled guilty to the charges of statutory sodomy in the 2nd degree and sexual contact by a teacher with a student on March 9, 2017. At sentencing, the State asked that the defendant be sentenced to prison. Herrington requested probation. Judge Mountjoy followed the State's recommendation and sentenced the defendant to four years in prison for each conviction and denied probation. In sentencing him to prison, Judge Mountjoy cited the fact that Herrington was in a position of trust, that he had a responsibility to both teach and safeguard the children entrusted to him, that he had taken advantage of that trust, and no amount of good deeds could reverse the damage that had been done.

If you would like to talk to your kids about abuse, there are many resources to help you have that difficult conversation. The Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network (RAINN) has online resources to help you talk about sexual abuse (www.rainn.org). In addition, the U.S. Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Website has resources about education and prevention (www.nsopw.gov). Finally, if you suspect

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that a child is being abused or neglected, please call the Child Abuse and Neglect
Hotline at 1-800-392-3738.

**This case is being prosecuted by Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Nathan
Chapman. It was investigated by the Ash Grove Police Department and Detective
Brian Swearengen was the lead investigator assigned to the case.**

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