

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 2, 2026

CARMEL, Indiana – Attorneys Laura Swafford and Stephen Wagner of Wagner Reese, LLP represent the family of a 7-year-old non-verbal special needs child who was repeatedly sexually assaulted in March and April of 2025 by an older student while being transported on a special needs school bus operated by the Jennings County (Indiana) School Corporation.

Last night, a Jennings County jury returned a guilty verdict against the assailant on multiple felony counts arising from the assaults which took place on April 16, 2025. The family of the victim expresses deep relief following the jury's verdict and extends sincere appreciation to the prosecutor and jurors for their time, attention, and commitment to justice. While no verdict can undo the profound harm to the victim, the family believes that some measure of justice was served, at least when it comes to accountability on the part of the assailant.

While the verdict brings accountability to the assailant, it does not address how these brutal assaults were allowed to occur repeatedly—not just on April 16, 2025, but on at least thirteen prior occasions—while the child was entrusted to the care of the school and its employees.

Today, the family filed a civil lawsuit against the Jennings County School Corporation, as well as the bus driver and bus monitor responsible for supervising the children on the bus. The lawsuit alleges that these preventable and horrific acts occurred as a result of a complete failure to properly supervise and protect a vulnerable, non-verbal child who depended entirely on the adults charged with his care.

The family remains committed to seeking accountability through the civil justice system and to ensuring that meaningful changes are made to protect vulnerable children in school transportation settings.

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Attorneys for the Child Victim and his family who will remain anonymous