

# Charge: Seattle grade school teacher molested girls in front of class

Private religious school teacher charged with 4 counts of child molestation

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A Seattle grade school teacher accused of sexually assaulting two girls in front of other students has been charged with child molestation.

Torah Day School teacher Jordan E. Murray was teaching first- and second-graders at the private religious school in South Seattle late last month when he is alleged to have groped the girls. Murray has since been fired.

Known to students as Rabbi Yaakov Murray, the father of three is alleged to have groped girl students after lifting them onto his lap.

Writing the court, King County Senior Deputy Prosecutor Carol Spoor noted Murray recently arrived in Washington. Murray could face a 25-year minimum term in prison if convicted as charged.

“The defendant is a clear danger to children given the circumstances of this crime,” Spoor told the court. “He abused his position of trust as a first- and second-grade teacher, secretly molesting these girls in class in front of others.”

Seattle police responded to the South Ferdinand Street school after they were notified of the allegations on April 23.

Speaking with investigators, a 6-year-old girl said Murray put her on his lap and shoved his hands down her pants while he was seated behind his desk, Seattle Detective Michael Moore told the court. The girl had approached Murray to show him her school work.

As he did so, Murray stared at the girls school work as though he was reading it, Moore continued. The detective added that the rest of the first-grade class was unaware Murray was groping the child.

Moore went on to claim Murray molested the girl behind his desk on several other occasions. The girl’s family notified authorities after she reported the apparent abuse.

A 7-year-old girl made similar allegations against Murray, claiming he molested her several times in recent weeks, Moore continued. Like the other girl, she said Murray molested her behind his desk in the classroom.

A third girl said Murray often hugged her and lifted her onto his lap at his desk at his desk. He is not alleged to have molested that girl, though investigators suggest he touched the girl over her clothing.

Murray declined to speak with investigators, according to charging papers.

Investigators note Murray is not actually an ordained rabbi; students at the school called him by that title out of respect. He has no criminal history.

Murray has been charged with four counts of first-degree child molestation. He was briefly jailed on May 3 but was released after posting bond on \$100,000 bail.

**CORRECTION:** An earlier version of this story contained allegations that Murray was previously convicted of crimes outside Washington state. Those inaccurate allegation were wrongly included in charging papers. Murray has no criminal history.

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