



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on September 27, 2010

School District Pays for Strip Search for Marijuana

A New Hampshire school district agreed to pay \$2,500 to a female former student who was forced to partially undress in front of two male teachers who were searching her clothing for evidence of drug possession, the New Hampshire Union Leader reported Monday. The statewide daily obtained a copy of the agreement through a request under the state's Right to Know law.



The search took place in 2004 when Kristina Roderick, then a 14-year-old freshman at Spaulding High in Rochester, was suspected of passing marijuana to a classmate. She was called out of class by her teacher, John Eliopoulos, and taken to a conference room for a search for marijuana believed to be in her possession. Another teacher, Richard Towne, joined Eliopoulos in the search. The girl was ordered to remove her shoes and her sweatshirt so the men could search the shoes and pockets for the contraband. She protested that she was wearing only a small tank top underneath the sweatshirt. The tank top was a "Joe Boxer spaghetti strap cropped undergarment," according to Roderick's suit, filed in New Hampshire's Strafford County Superior Court and later moved to federal court. The suit claimed the male teachers insisted, nonetheless, that the girl remove the sweatshirt and give it up for inspection. No marijuana or other contraband was found by the teachers.

"At no time during the strip search of the plaintiff's upper body did defendants Eliopoulos or Towne call a female school official or female resource officer to assist in the search of the plaintiff," Roderick's suit claimed.

The settlement was paid by the school's insurance company, Primex, a public insurance pool, the *Union Leader* reported. Neither Roderick's attorney, Michael Seaton, nor Superintendent of Schools Michael Hopkins responded to the paper's request for comments about the incident and the settlement. The school district and the teachers named as defendants in the suit deny all liability, wrongdoing, and responsibility, according to the agreement.



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