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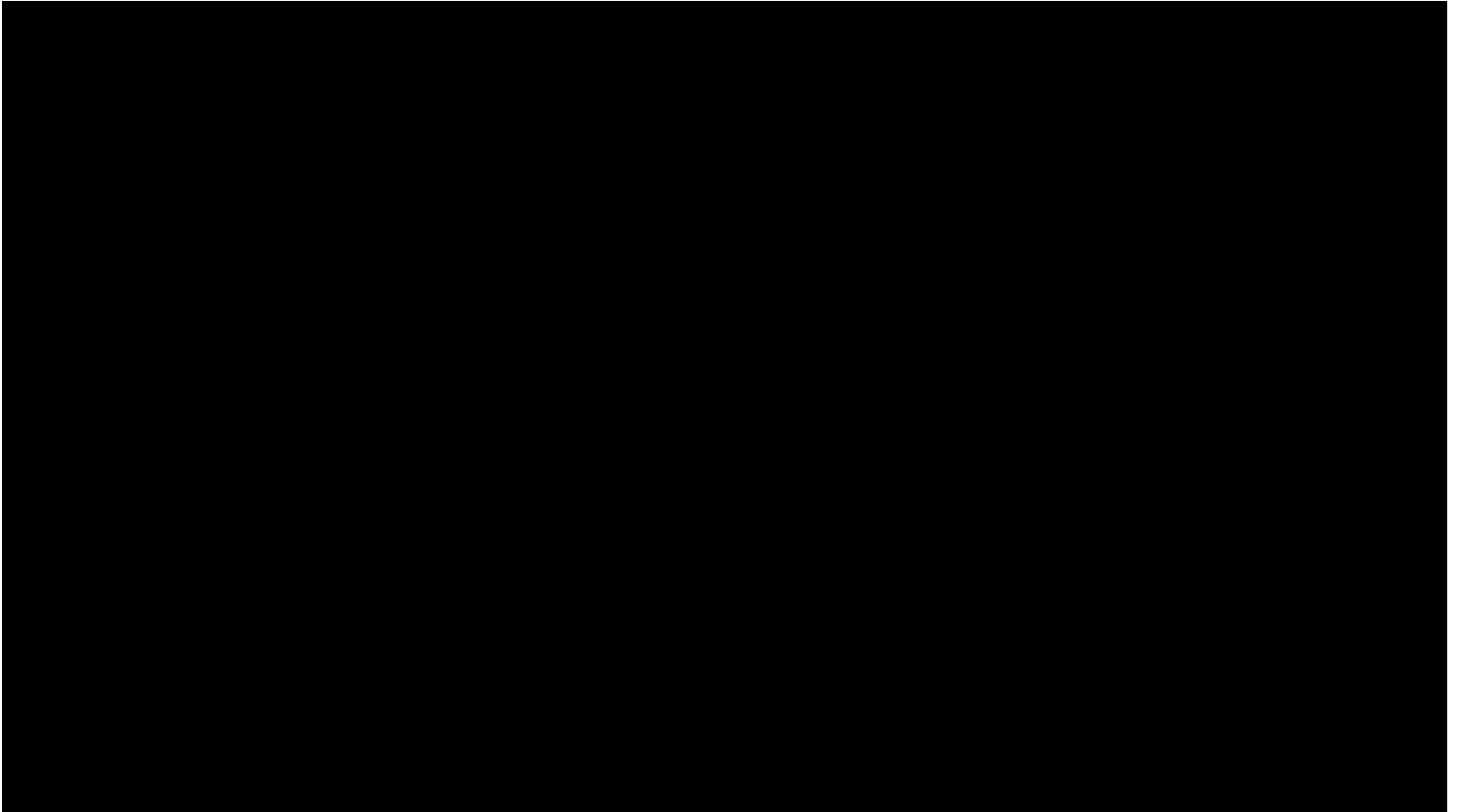


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## Middle school Dean of Students accused of assaulting child with special needs



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March 12, 2015 at 2:11 AM CDT - Updated July 27 at 6:40 AM

QUITMAN COUNTY, MS (WMC) - A 10-year-old child with special needs was taken to the hospital after a member of his school's administration took excessive disciplinary action against the child.

"In the trailer house, he whooped me 30 times," recalled the child.

The child says the purple and blue bruises on his legs and arms came from his middle school Dean of Students' belt.

The child's adopted father, L.B. Smith, identified the Dean of Students as Larry Johnson.

"He was scared," recalled the boy's adopted mother, Annette Smith. "He said he was scared of him, so he

thought he was going to get him again."

Annette Smith says her son told her Johnson whipped him repeatedly in a trailer behind the school.

According to a report from the Marks Police Department, another teacher saw one of the whippings and told the school's principal, who met the parents and the child at the hospital with police.

"We asked him why," recalled Annette Smith. "He said, 'Because I was laughing and playing at school.'"

The Smiths say they took an oath to care for the child when they adopted him 10 years ago. They say this situation is ripping at their hearts.

"We made a statement upstairs to the good Lord that we're supposed to be watching out for this kid," said L.B. Smith. "So that's what we're doing and trying to protect him."

Quitman County Schools superintendent couldn't say if the educator was still employed, but said they're handling the situation, and student safety comes first.

However, the Smiths aren't positive that every staff member got the message.

"He could have called us and told us, 'Look, I'm having a bad day,'" said L.B. Smith. "'I'm having a bad day with your son, would you please come get your son?'"

The family filed charges against Johnson in Quitman County Justice Court on Wednesday. However, he will not be arrested until he has a probable cause hearing because he is a teacher.

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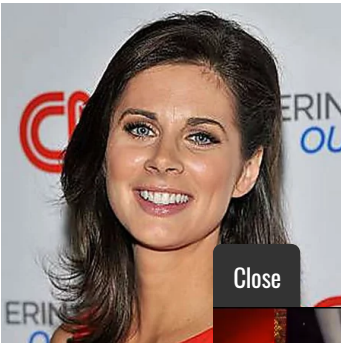
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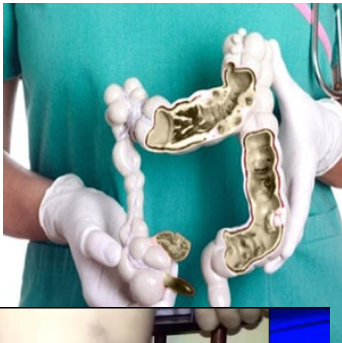
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