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## Former CAHS Principal Seeks Dismissal in Civil Suit Over Failure to Stop Convicted Child Molester

**Alcede Edwards argues he cannot be held liable for abuse that began nearly a decade before he became principal, saying the lawsuit fails to show he created or increased harm or treated the anonymous plaintiff differently from others.**

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**Former CAHS Principal Alcede Edwards. By. VIDE**

A former high school principal being sued for allegedly failing to prevent the abuse committed by convicted child molester Alfredo Bruce Smith has now asked the court to dismiss the case against him.

Alcede Edwards, former principal of Charlotte Amalie High School, is among several defendants named in a civil lawsuit filed against the Government of the Virgin Islands. The suit alleges that officials at CAHS and the Department of Human Services [failed to act](#) as reports of Alfredo Bruce Smith's sexual abuse of minors began to surface.

However, Edwards' attorneys argue that the claims against him should be dismissed due to multiple legal deficiencies. First, they contend that Edwards did not violate the plaintiff's due process rights, asserting there was no action on his part that created or increased the risk of harm. According to the filing, Smith began sexually abusing male students at CAHS in 2006. Edwards did not become principal until 2015.

"Smith's sexual abuse of students at CAHS was the status quo," the defense states in a memorandum of law supporting the motion to dismiss. They argue that Edwards, upon becoming principal, did not alter that status quo in a way that would expose the plaintiff—who was a student at the time—to additional risk. "On similar facts, courts in this Circuit have routinely held that a school official's failure to act in the face of a teacher's sexual misconduct towards students did not constitute an affirmative act needed to find state created danger liability," the memorandum adds.

The attorneys further argue that Edwards did not engage in discriminatory conduct against the plaintiff, who filed the lawsuit anonymously. The complaint, they say, "does not identify any similarly situated individuals who were treated differently by Mr. Edwards." As a result, they contend, the Equal Protection Clause claim should not stand.

Should the court agree to dismiss the federal claims, Edwards' attorneys also request that it decline to exercise supplemental jurisdiction over the remaining territorial claims. In legal terms, this means they are asking the District Court not to rule on the local (Virgin Islands) law issues tied to the case, since those claims only remain if the federal ones are dismissed. The attorneys argue that such matters are more appropriately resolved in local court, rather than in federal jurisdiction.

As of press time, the plaintiff had not yet filed a response to Edwards' motion to dismiss.