

Former Whittell dean indicted in Georgia

BY [SCOTT NEUFFER](#),

A grand jury in Georgia has indicted a former Whittell High School administrator on felony charges of aggravated battery, invasion of privacy, and four counts of first degree cruelty to children.

Richard Darrington, 37, was hired as Whittell's dean of students at the beginning of the school year, but lost the position when the Nevada Department of Education revoked his substitute teaching license after learning of outstanding battery charges facing him in Georgia.

The charges stem from Darrington's time in the southern state, where he operated a private school for teens called Darrington Academy for five years.

The bill of indictment, which lists 23 grand jurors of the Superior Court of Fannin County, alleges that Darrington "did maliciously cause bodily harm" to one of his students "by seriously disfiguring his tooth," resulting in the aggravated battery charge.

The invasion of privacy charge alleges that Darrington placed a recording device in a girls' room and observed and recorded their activities without consent.

The four counts of cruelty to children allege that Darrington forced students to stand outside in freezing weather with no shirts, shoes or socks on two separate occasions, that he slammed a girl's head into a wall, and that he stood on a boy's ankles while in a "tripod" position and also slammed his head into a wall.

In addition to Darrington, three other teachers at the school were included in the indictment; one for invasion of privacy and six counts of cruelty to children, and the other two for two counts each of cruelty to children.

Brian Finnicum, editor of The News Observer in Blue Ridge, Ga., said a trial date has not been set yet.

"To the best of my knowledge, Mr. Darrington has not been re-arrested on the new charges," Finnicum said on Thursday. "He remains on bond at this point, and I have not seen him come through the jail again."

Douglas County School District Human Resources Director Rich Alexander said the district ended all contact with Darrington around mid-October.

"Our relationship with Darrington was completely severed," Alexander said.

Whittell Principal Sue Shannon declined to comment further on the issue.

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