

Akron Beacon Journal

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Former East high principal settles APS wrongful termination lawsuit for \$250,000



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Akron Public Schools has settled a wrongful termination lawsuit filed by [former East high school principal Vyrone Finney](#) for \$250,000.

The Akron school board fired Finney in 2023, nearly four years after he was accused of hitting a student in the face. He was acquitted of criminal charges related to the same incident, but an APS administrative case considered whether he violated school district policies.

In his lawsuit, Finney alleged he was discriminated against and punished for speaking out about the district's role in creating a school-to-prison pipeline and for reporting other teachers' conduct.

The settlement splits the \$250,000, with \$50,000 going to Finney and \$200,000 going to his attorney, Matt Markling, according to the settlement.

Finney declined to comment per the settlement agreement.

Akron school board members approved the settlement June 9.

What did police, APS say happened?

According to a police report filed after the incident, Finney slapped a student in 2019 after the teen called him an expletive in an altercation witnessed by school resource officers.

The school board passed a resolution that same year to begin the termination process, which noted Finney "struck a student in the face resulting in an injury to the student's lip," and "then continued to engage with the student pushing the student back against the wall."

"His actions caused the student to escalate," the document said.

The two school resource officers had to separate Finney from the 15-year-old student.

Although Finney was acquitted in Akron Municipal Court in 2021 of a misdemeanor assault charge, the board found his behavior was "just cause" for termination. He was "provoked and momentarily lost control of himself and struck the student out of anger."

Finney now works for Akron Municipal Courts as a housing specialist, owns a real estate and property management company and is an associate pastor at Second Baptist Church.

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