

Ohio State Settles With Some Strauss Abuse Victims

By: Jason Scott | March, 2020

Ohio State University has reportedly reached a settlement with some of the hundreds of men who accused a former team doctor of having sexually abused them decades ago.

The Associated Press [reports](#) that the settlement was announced on Friday, and affects nearly half of the 350 or so men who've come forward with claims that the late Dr. Richard Strauss groped or otherwise sexually abused them. An investigation by the law firm Perkins Coie resulted in a report that detailed acts of Strauss' abuse against 177 former students, many of whom were student-athletes. The report indicated that university officials were reportedly aware of concerns regarding Strauss' conduct, but did little to prevent it during his two-decade tenure.

In a [statement](#), Ohio State said that funds would be allocated "on an individual basis based on the harm and damages experienced by each survivor." The settlement monies will come from existing institutional discretionary funds, meaning that no taxpayer, tuition or donor money will be used to payout the settlement.

"Strauss' conduct was reprehensible, and the university's failures at the time are completely unacceptable," OSU president Michael V. Drake said. "While nothing can undo what happened here years ago, today's university has a responsibility to support our former students and alumni, and this initial settlement is another important step in the process of restorative justice."

Specifics on the settlement weren't disclosed.

"After extensive negotiations, we were able to reach a settlement on behalf of our clients," attorney Rick Schulte, the lead negotiator for the plaintiffs said. "The bravery of our clients is humbling. We are pleased that Ohio State stepped forward and did the right thing. This settlement will help our clients move forward with the healing process."

The AP reports that lawsuits brought by other Strauss victims remain unresolved, despite months of mediation efforts. Some accusers say that seeking justice from the university is their only recourse since Strauss himself died by suicide in 2005. Others say that the institution should feel the cost so deeply that it conveys that schools must prevent abuse like that Strauss engaged in from happening.

"The other half of us that haven't settled have experienced significant sexual abuse and significant cover-up by Ohio State, so we feel we should be compensated similar to what Michigan State and Penn State people were," Brian Garrett, the lead plaintiff in a still-pending case, told the AP.

Michigan State recently settled with victims of Dr. Larry Nassar for \$500 million.