

Winnsboro ISD's Current Superintendent and Current Superintendent Emeritus Arrested

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(Left to Right) Arrested and Charged in Texas for failing to report alleged child sex abuse scandal are Aaron Nation, **current** Superintendent, Brian David "Dave" Wilcox, **current** Superintendent Emeritus, and Ashley Wilcox, former district employee of the 2024-25 school year.

On Monday, January 12, 2026, law enforcement authorities arrested the Winnsboro Independent School District's current Superintendent Emeritus, the current superintendent, and another individual linked to the school system. This follows a connected case of two other (nor former) school district employees last year related to improper faculty-student relationships and failure to report child abuse within 48 hours. Court documents allege that these leaders neglected to promptly report two distinct instances of suspected sexual misconduct involving district staff members.

The individuals charged are Brian David Wilcox, aged 50 and reports on file indicating residing in Texarkana; Aaron David Nation, aged 39 of Winnsboro; and Ashley Wilcox, aged 52 of Texarkana, who previously worked as a speech pathology assistant for the district. Dave Wilcox and Aaron Nation were

processed in the Wood County, Texas jail system, while Ashley Wilcox was booked into the Bowie County Detention Center on January 12, 2026.

"Dave" Wilcox faces two counts of intentionally failing to report child abuse to conceal the matter. Aaron Nation is accused of evidence tampering or fabrication, along with one count of intentionally failing to report child abuse. Ashley Wilcox, a prior district speech-language pathologist until the summer of 2025, faces a single charge of failing to report child abuse.

These arrests follow investigations that began when Nicholas Gabriele, an assistant football coach and economics teacher at the high school was taken into custody on June 5, 2025 and charged with improper educator-student relationship, classified as a second-degree felony. Gabriele, a former assistant football coach and economics teacher at

Winnsboro High School, resigned from the district before the accusations became public. Gabriele later confessed to the allegations during the investigation.

Next, probable cause documents indicated a Texas Ranger spoke with Wilcox on June 9. Wilcox reportedly mentioned learning of the issue initially through his wife, and also from Nation, who served as assistant superintendent at that time. It is alleged Wilcox claimed to downplay the report, believing it concerned a different coach's personal relationship outside the district.

The documents note Wilcox's dismissive attitude toward shared screenshots of social media posts about district allegations, including statements where he refused to view such material and insisted people confront him directly rather than posting anonymously on social media or other people's phones. He allegedly acknowledged becoming aware of the concern and accusations prior to departing for vacation in 2025.

Records show Wilcox received this information before May 25, breaching the state mandatory law of 48-hour reporting window for suspected child abuse. Additionally, he allegedly withheld relevant call records, text messages, and internal district communications tied to the probe.

During the investigation into Coach Gabriele's matter, Coach Jared Alan Lancaster was arrested on June 22 or 23, 2025, and charged with knowingly failing to report child abuse, a state jail felony in this context, as it involved intent to conceal and not report within 48 hours. Instead, Lancaster allegedly tried to help conceal it by texting Gabriele things like "We got a problem my boy and I'm tryna help ya" after an anonymous Facebook post surfaced. WISD placed Lancaster on administrative leave.

Records indicate a grand jury issued a subpoena for records on July 17, 2025 but Wilcox, Nation, and the district reportedly did not comply or provide those records. However, in stark contrast, the press release issued by WISD's Director of

Communications Adriana Weems on January 13, 2026 states, "WISD has been and is fully cooperating with law enforcement authorities in their investigation."

Further allegations claim Wilcox encouraged other staff to file complaints with state and federal oversight bodies to disrupt the inquiry. Wilcox is also accused of retaliating against employees who cooperated with investigators, through actions like demotions, pressuring resignations, or terminations.

A separate case involved a report from May 29, 2025 concerning a substitute teacher accused of engaging in an inappropriate connection with a student. While Wilcox was away on vacation, Nation notified Wilcox of what was described as a bullying complaint. The two reportedly decided to delay informing Winnsboro ISD Police Chief Heath Guy until June 2.

The reports indicated Chief Guy's review concluded that the substitute had, at the very least, exchanged texts and inappropriate images with the student. The report also suggested some coaches may have assisted in concealing the situation; an affidavit states Guy reported the information back to Wilcox.

Between June 2 and June 12, it is reported Wilcox learned of alleged remarks by Guy, indicating interest in pursuing Wilcox's position for not taking care of the situation.

On June 12, Wilcox placed Guy on administrative leave, citing safety issues; Wilcox then reportedly declared the internal review closed. The school board later voted to end Guy's employment on December 18, 2025.

According to a preliminary review, the Texas Administrative Code reflects the ultimate authority and power of superintendents is over an ISD Police Chief and law enforcement resource officers under ISD contract.

This Texas Administrative code contractual law competes with the Texas Government Code for TCOLE officers law enforcement to comply with external investigators. The Administrative code does not currently have an exception of an ISD contracted TCOLE law

enforcement official, if the officer suspects an ISD superior in their chain command may be complicit in an active investigation, to be protected by withholding any information from that ISD superior. It is not known if Guy did, or did not withhold information on any of the investigation from Wilcox.

Investigators obtained an audio recording from a discussion involving Wilcox, Nation, and the substitute teacher. In it, Wilcox expressed skepticism about the accusations against her and stated he believed he had fulfilled his obligations under the law, viewing the scrutiny as minor technicalities. He mentioned conducting his own review and deciding to conclude it.

Documents reflect in another meeting on August 12, Nation told a Ranger that a second officer had been sidelined while the district examined claims of deleted data from a police computer. Nation could not specify what was removed or its relevance. He declined to allow access to communication logs between himself and Wilcox related to the cases. The reports indicate Nation admitted to wiping his phone's contents, and forensic examination revealed a factory reset performed on August 11—one day before a planned session with district legal counsel and the Ranger.

SCHOOL DISTRICT STATEMENT

WISD's Communications Director Adriana Weems issued a district statement on January 12, 2026, where they announced the awareness of the three arrests of Dave Wilcox, his wife Ashley Wilcox and Aaron Nation.

The statement further read, "The district takes all allegations of misconduct seriously and is committed to maintaining a safe and supportive environment for our students, staff, and community. WISD has been and is fully cooperating with law enforcement authorities in their investigation. Counsel to these individuals has indicated that all will enter pleas of not guilty to the charges."

It is not known nor confirmed if the position is still paid or not paid through August 2026, as the school district does not place the

Superintendents contracts on their web page in a prominent place as required by state law. As of last August 2025, the last known annual salary base pay (without benefits) for Mr. Wilcox's is reportedly \$181,440 per year, significantly above the statewide median of \$153,176 for a superintendent's salary.

Dennis Glenn serves as the Director and Field Service Agent (FSA) for the Operations in the Administrative Services Department at ESC Region 7 Education Service Center in Kilgore, Texas. In a phone call with Mr. Glenn, he stated that "the 'Emeritus' position is advisory to help with the transition for two to three months, to assist Mr. Nation since he was appointed in January (2026), and that Mr. Wilcox 'emeritus' position should only be through the end of March 2026."

"Only a few months?" was inquired.

"Correct," Glenn replied, "Roughly through March since Nations was approved January 6."

This conflicts with the WISD's press release from showing Wilcox arrangement and retirement and resignation is through August 2026.

Moving Forward: January Interim

The district's communications director Adriana Weems posted another statement on January 13, 2026, regarding the temporary shuffle of other positions in the interim. The district indicated high school principal Dr. Cody Holloway steps in as acting superintendent for five days, through the remainder of that week, through Saturday, January 17, 2026. Keri Sanders (Interim Girls Athletic Director), served as Acting Principal of Winnsboro High School for the remainder of the week, through January 17, 2026. Kim Nash (Winnsboro Jr. High Principal), serving as Acting Principal of Winnsboro High School beginning January 18, 2026 forward. Christian Bosold (Winnsboro Jr. High Assistant Principal), served Acting Principal, Winnsboro Jr. High beginning January 18, 2026 forward.

In response to these developments, Winnsboro ISD scheduled a special board

session on Saturday January 17, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.

Empty board Seat Questioned

During the public forum, Trail Country Reporter editor C.G. Willis inquired to the board why there was no chair at the meeting for Trustee Duncan McAdoo, and noted he had not attended a board meeting since his last one on September 4, 2025, an absence of eight meetings in 136 days in five months.

Willis added, "I know Duncan, we all do; he's a longtime active community member. I was in Rotary with him and he was my banker. We all know he announced last fall on social media that he was moving and left his job locally to relocate. His board seat is vacant."

Willis continued, "I verified today that he did leave the bank and moved. Seeing he is no longer here in our community; do you have a resignation or not? As a community citizen, voter and taxpayer, and seeing his is no longer qualified for service on the board, can the trustees please declare the seat vacated immediately, and that the public trust required the board's responsibility to address the situation promptly to ensure full representation?"

Willis continued, "Texas law reads you can fill it by appointment until the next trustee

election. This ongoing vacancy raises questions about injustice and accountability to the voters of the Winnsboro ISD, who elected McAdoo to serve, and the community and taxpayers' rights to a fully functioning board. Please address this issue before the filing date of February 14 for this year's election."

The board went into an executive session seeking guidance from the district's attorney on current legal issues. After returning to the public session, the board voted 6-0 to place Nation on administrative leave. The trustees also voted to name Dr. Cody Holloway as acting superintendent until candidates for interim superintendent could be interviewed and one hired. The position of Wilcox continuing serving as the current Superintendent Emeritus was not addressed by the board.

Update: The WISD board of Trustees is meeting on January 31, 2026 to address some of these issues.

Tipsters have provided information that the external investigation is still ongoing with potential additional arrests. All allegations are alleged and suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. Information obtained from public records and statements on record.