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Former Nardon Hills School Board President Sentenced to 14 Years in Prison

AKRON, Ohio (Wednesday, April 22, 2015) – Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh announced today that visiting Judge Richard Reinbold sentenced Steven Bittel, 54, of Ballantrae Drive in Sagamore Hills, to 14 years in prison. Judge Reinbold also ordered Bittel to register as a tier-2 sex offender. Under that designation, Bittel must register as a sex offender every six months for 25 years after he's released from prison.

'People may say that there was no victim in this case. That is just not true,' says Prosecutor Bevan Walsh. 'Mr. Bittel downloaded, viewed, and kept pornography involving children as young as 4-years-old. People like Mr. Bittel exploit these children by seeking out their videos, making the children are victims. As president of a school board, Mr. Bittel was supposed to keep the best interests of children in mind, not contribute to their victimization to satisfy his own sick criminal needs.'

On March 2nd, 2015, Bittel pled guilty to the following charges:

- Pandering Obscenity Involving a Minor, a felony of the second degree;
- Pandering, Four counts, felonies of the fourth degree;
- Illegal Use of a Minor in Nudity, Ten counts, felonies of the fifth degree;
- Obstructing Official Business, Four counts, felonies of the fifth degree.

On September 5, 2014, Bittel, who at the time was the President of Nordonia Hills Board of Education, was arrested after a five hour standoff with police at his home, during which time Bittel threatened police officers with a handgun. Sagamore Hills Police, working with the Ohio Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, were executing a search warrant issued by Stow Municipal Court after discovering Bittel's IP address was involved in a file sharing network involving child pornography.

Bittel has since resigned his position with the Board of Education.