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Sexual offender released: Local authorities, school district claim they have yet to be informed that William Heim is out



By [KATE PERRY](#)

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TROY – A former School 14 guidance counselor was released from state prison Monday after serving two years for sexual contact with an 11-year-old boy.

William J. Heim, 62, of 39 Greenock Road in Delmar, was convicted of a course of sexual conduct against a child in the second degree, a felony. In court, he admitted touching the boy's buttocks and genitals at his second home at 16 Calkins Farm Road in Sand Lake on more than one occasion between summer 2001 and Valentine's Day 2002. He was sentenced in August 2002.

Heim is classified as a level three sex offender, which means he is at high risk for repeat offenses.

Heim came to the phone at his Delmar home at around 4 p.m. Monday and confirmed that he was paroled from state prison the same day, but then hung up. A call to the Sand Lake home was received by an answering machine for the Heim family, but there is no other confirmation that the family maintains a home there.

Monday afternoon, Bethlehem Police Sgt. Paul Roberts said he had yet to receive a call from the state Department of Criminal Justice Services for notification that Heim was back in the area. Roberts added that he had contacted the department to confirm that Heim was released.

“They have confirmed that he has been released, but we have not been officially notified that he will be living here,” Roberts said.

But Scott Steinhardt, a DCJS spokesman, said the Bethlehem Police Department had been notified. He also said that the arresting jurisdiction is notified when a convict is registered with the sex offender registry, but Monday afternoon, Marcelle Connor, a spokesperson for the Rensselaer County Sheriff’s Office, said that office had not been notified.

Superintendent Les Loomis of the Bethlehem Central School District said Monday he had not been notified of Heim’s release, but added that he trusted the Police Department’s judgment in deciding whether to alert the district.

Steinhardt confirmed that it is up to local authorities to notify the appropriate parties if a sex offender comes into town. “It is at the discretion of the local agency to notify the vulnerable populations in the community,” he said.

The sex offender registry for Heim notes that one of the conditions of his parole is that he is to have no contact with individuals under the age of 18 without the permission of a supervisor, and the contact can be made only in the company of an adult 21 or older. Heim must also complete counseling or treatment, participate in a sex offender program, forgo a driver’s license, abstain from alcohol use and undergo substance abuse tests.

Prior to his conviction in Rensselaer County, Heim pleaded guilty in Albany County Court to possession of obscene materials of a sexual performance of a child for downloading hundreds of pornographic images of children from the Internet onto floppy disks. He was sentenced to five years probation in May 2002.

Heim also served as a priest at St. Margaret Mary’s Church in Albany from 1968 to 1972. On Monday, Ken Goldfarb, spokesman for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany, said the diocese has not received any complaints of sexual abuse against Heim.