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Stanton County High School Principal To Get New Trial Date

A new trial date has been scheduled in Johnson County District Court for the Stanton County High School principal charged with aggravated burglary, arson and criminal damage.

A trial on the felony charges against Craig D. Butler, 36, initially set for Jan. 4, has been rescheduled for March 8, according to Johnson County court records.

The criminal charges against Butler were filed Aug. 28, 2008, about a year before he was hired as principal of Stanton County High School this summer, court records show. The high school is in Johnson City in southwestern Kansas, about 80 miles southwest of Garden City.

According to Johnson County District Attorney Danetta Mendenhall, the charges against Butler arose from a domestic situation involving Butler's wife, Tracy Butler.

The complaint against Butler alleges he burglarized a home on Aug. 24 or 25 in the 600 block of South Grant in Olathe while Tracy Butler and another woman were present.

He's also accused of setting fire to Tracy Butler's 2007 Toyota Camry and damaging some of her property, including furniture and electronics.

Paul Morrison, the Olathe-based attorney representing Butler, has filed a motion in the case stating Butler will claim as his defense "a lack of mental state due to mental disease or defect."

Both Morrison and Butler, who began his job as Stanton County High School principal in August, have declined to comment on the allegations.

School officials said they didn't know about the pending criminal charges when Butler was hired, but they point out that at this point they are simply allegations and that Butler's job performance has been acceptable.

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