

German teacher loses battle against pupils' web rankings

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Picture shows a student viewing the logo of the German website "spick.mich" in Berlin in 2008. A German teacher, who sued to shut down the website, lost her battle before the federal supreme court in Karlsruhe, southern Germany.

A German teacher who had sued to shut down a website where pupils rank their instructors according to competence and "coolness" lost her battle in court Tuesday.

The Federal Supreme Court, Germany's top civil tribunal, rejected the claim of the teacher, Astrid Czubayko-Reiss, that her right to privacy was violated by the site, spickmich.de, (loosely translated, checkmeout.de) where she received a mediocre rating from students.

"The right of students to exchange opinions and communicate freely outweighs the right of the teacher suing to determine information

available about her," the court in the southwestern city of Karlsruhe said.

The website allows students to turn the tables on [teachers](#) by anonymously grading them in categories including "cool and funny", "popular", "motivated", "relaxed" and "teaches well".

Czubayko, a German teacher from the western state of North Rhine-Westphalia, had received an overall grade of 4.3, or a "D". She had also lost her case before lower courts and appealed to the federal tribunal.

The German Teachers' Association criticised the ruling.

"It is inexplicable that the BGH values the personal rights of teachers less than an anonymous assessment of teachers by [students](#) on the Internet," Association president Josef Kraus said, referring to the federal court.

Kraus said his organisation hoped the case would be overturned by the country's highest tribunal, the Federal Constitutional Court.

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