



# PRESS RELEASE

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**CONTACT: LAWRENCE ROBERT**

**323-236-9992**

## **LAUSD PAYOUTS IN TELFAIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MOLESTATION CASES TOP \$30 MILLION**

Attorneys representing 11 victims of child sexual harassment, molestation and abuse by a Telfair Elementary School teacher announced a **\$24 million** settlement with the Los Angeles Unified School District. This brings the total payout in the Telfair molestation case to more than **\$30 million**.

The teacher, Paul Chapel III, is currently serving a 25-year prison sentence for molesting 13 children including the plaintiffs.

“These cases are more examples of the disturbing pattern of misconduct by administrators and teachers at LAUSD,” said victims’ attorney John Manly. “Teachers like Chapel with a history of sexual abuse allegations have been assigned to poor minority schools where they continue to prey on the most vulnerable kids. It is encouraging that LAUSD spared the victims in this case the additional pain and suffering of a trial by agreeing to a settlement.”

The suit alleged that Chapel sexually abused and molested **NUMBER** girls and **NUMBER** boys who were his students at Telfair Elementary School in Pacoima, California.

The suit further alleged that LAUSD allowed Chapel to continue as a teacher after they knew or should have known that he was a child molester. Chapel had previously been suspended from his teaching post when he was arrested for molesting an 8 year-old child in Simi Valley. That case ended in a hung jury and Chapel was then reassigned to Telfair Elementary School as a third grade teacher.

Last October Manly, Stewart & Finaldi won a \$6.2 million jury verdict on behalf of two other victims of Paul Chapel.

LA Unified had accepted liability for their negligence in that case but argued that the trauma suffered by the victims was partially caused by their tough Pacoima neighborhoods, their learning disabilities and the deaths of family members rather than sexual abuse.

An expert witness hired by the District, Janine Shelby, Associate Professor at the Harbor UCLA Medical Center, told jurors that research suggests that half of trauma victims recover within three months. The victims testified that they have suffered flashbacks and nightmares for years.

Manly, Stewart & Finaldi is California's leading law firm representing child victims of sexual abuse. The firm has represented more than 150 victims of clergy sexual abuse in California and hundreds of others throughout the United States. The firm also represented plaintiffs in the \$140,000,000 settlement against LAUSD in the Miramonte case, the largest sex abuse settlement against a School District in the US.

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