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L.A. CITY ATTORNEY ROCKY DELGADILLO SECURES CONVICTION OF FORMER MIDDLE SCHOOL VICE PRINCIPAL FOR ABUSING STUDENT

LOS ANGELES – Los Angeles City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo, the City's chief prosecutor, today announced his Office's Special Trials Unit has secured a jury conviction and strict sentencing of a Wilmington-area vice-principal following an incident involving inappropriate touching of an underage student.

William Harberts, 61, was convicted of one count of battery following a five day jury trial in April. On May 29, Judge Arthur Jean ordered Harberts to serve five years of probation and 60 days of Caltrans work or 480 hours of community service as well as one year of psychological counseling. As a condition of his probation, Harberts must also surrender his state teaching credential and is prohibited from employment in any occupation involving minors, including teaching, coaching, or counseling, and was ordered not to associate with, or go to places frequented by, minors.

An investigation against Harberts began following an incident in March 2007 at Wilmington Middle School where he had been employed as a counselor and vice-principal. According to reports, Harberts had placed a 14-year-old male student on his office desk, put his arms around the student's waist and inserted his hands underneath the student's clothing. A inappropriate touching followed. Another counselor who had witnessed the incident made a report to the principal and the police. During the course of the investigation, the student admitted there were several other incidents of inappropriate touching involving Harberts.

Results of the investigation were forwarded to City Attorney Delgadillo's Special Trials Unit for prosecution by Deputy City Attorney Matthew St. George.

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