

October 30, 2007

Hon. Joel I. Klein
Chancellor
New York City Public Schools
Department of Education
52 Chambers Street, Room 314
New York, NY 10007

Re: Mario Quinones
SCI Case #2007-2862

Dear Chancellor Klein:

An investigation conducted by this office has substantiated that 58-year-old Mario Quinones, a teacher at Robert F. Wagner, Jr. Secondary School for Arts and Technology (“RWSSAT”) located in Queens, engaged in sexual intercourse and other sexual activities with a female RWSSAT student (“Student A”) which continued after the girl graduated.¹ In addition, we found that Quinones engaged in sexual acts with a male former RWSSAT student (“Student D”) after the boy had graduated from the school. Moreover, Quinones engaged in inappropriate behavior with a male RWSSAT student (“Student C”) when the teacher and Student C smoked marijuana and drank beer at Quinones’s apartment in Manhattan.

This investigation began in July 2007, when Student A contacted the Office of the Special Commissioner of Investigation for the New York City School District (“SCI”) and reported that while she was a student at RWSSAT and after she graduated from the school, Quinones engaged in sexual intercourse and other sexual activities with her.

For SCI investigators, Student A confirmed her complaint and provided additional details. According to Student A, she attended RWSSAT from 1994 to 1998, when she graduated. Student A stated that Quinones was a teacher at the school and she first met him there when she was 14-years-old. Student A explained that when she was about 15-years-old Quinones often took her to restaurants and when she turned 16-years-old Quinones began taking her to his apartment in Manhattan. Student A continued that Quinones would often say, “At 17-years-old, you’re going to be legal.” Student A

¹ Quinones was not reassigned during this investigation.

informed investigators that when she turned 17, and was still a student at RWSSAT, she frequently met Quinones at his Manhattan apartment where they had sexual intercourse.²

Student A provided the details of one of her visits to Quinones's apartment after she had graduated from RWSSAT. According to Student A, Quinones told her that he had a present for her and she later learned that Student D was the gift. Student A explained that on that occasion she, Student D, and Quinones engaged in sexual acts together. Student A stated that Quinones's sexual interaction with her continued until March of 2002.

Investigators spoke to Student C who stated that during the 1995-1996 school year, when he was a senior at RWSSAT, he went to Quinones's apartment and on approximately five occasions he and Quinones smoked marijuana and drank beer.

SCI investigators spoke to a number of current RSWWAT students all of whom denied any inappropriate behavior by Quinones. In addition, Student D denied the interaction described by Student A and admitted to by Quinones.

In an interview with investigators, Mario Quinones admitted that he had a relationship with Student A which became sexual when the girl was a 17-year-old senior at RWSSAT.³ Quinones asserted that he knew that having sex with Student A was morally wrong but he emphasized that he knew his conduct did not constitute a crime. Quinones admitted that he had intercourse with Student A 5 or more times. In addition, Quinones acknowledged that he engaged in oral sex with Student A. Quinones also admitted that he, Student A, and Student D engaged in sexual acts together. According to Quinones, he continued to engage in sexual conduct, which included intercourse and oral sex, with Student A for approximately two years after the girl graduated from RWSSAT.

We credit the information provided by Student A and Student C. It is clear that Mario Quinones has no place in the New York City public school system. It is therefore the recommendation of this office that his employment be terminated, that he be placed on the DOE's ineligible list, and that this matter be considered should he apply for any position in the New York City School System in the future.

Although Quinones cannot be prosecuted for his actions detailed herein, we have forwarded our findings to Queens County District Attorney Richard A. Brown and Manhattan District Attorney Robert Morgenthau for their information.

² According to Student A, in addition to sexual intercourse, she and Quinones engaged in oral sex and anal sex.

³ Quinones wrote a statement in which he admitted that he engaged in sexual intercourse with Student A. Quinones verbally denied smoking marijuana and drinking beer with Student C.

We are forwarding a copy of this letter and of our report concerning this investigation to the Office of Legal Services. We are also sending our findings to the State Education Department for whatever action it deems appropriate. Should you have any inquiries regarding the above, please contact Eileen Daly, the attorney assigned to this case. She may be reached at (212) 510-1407. Please notify Ms. Daly within 30 days of the receipt of this letter of what, if any, action has been taken or is contemplated against Mario Quinones. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

RICHARD J. CONDON
Special Commissioner
of Investigation for the
New York City School District

By:

Regina A. Loughran
First Deputy Commissioner

RJC:RAL:ECD:gm

c: Michael Best, Esq.
Theresa Europe, Esq.