

# NEWS

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United States Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney, District of New Jersey  
970 Broad Street, Seventh Floor  
Newark, New Jersey 07102

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***Christopher J. Christie, U.S. Attorney***

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Former Paterson School Facilities Director Gets 43 Months  
in Prison for Taking Bribes, Home Improvements from Contractors

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(More)

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NEWARK – The former director of facilities for the Paterson Public School District was sentenced today to 43 months in federal prison for taking a total of \$47,000 in cash and free construction work at his home from two contractors doing business with the school district, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

U.S. District Judge Jose L. Linares ordered James M. Cummings, 60. of Sparta, to surrender to the federal Bureau of Prisons by Jan. 8 to begin serving his prison sentence.

Cummings pleaded guilty on Feb. 6, 2006 to two counts of soliciting and accepting corrupt payments. He admitted that he took the money and free construction work from contractors with the intention of exercising his official influence and decision-making authority in favor of the contractors, Paint Smart Contractor, Inc, of Nutley, and Olympic Windows of Hawthorne and Paterson.

Cummings was arrested by Special Agents of the FBI on Sept. 21, 2005, on an Indictment charging him with accepting bribes from the contractors, which combined had millions of dollars in contracts with the Paterson school district.

As director of facilities from 1998 to about March 2003, Cummings had the authority to approve and recommend the renewal of contracts with the school district. In 2000-2001, Paint Smart billed the school district in excess of \$250,000 for painting and related services. Olympic Windows billed the school district approximately \$2.7 million for construction work and services it claimed to have performed during the same period.

Cummings admitted that he accepted \$25,000 on Sept. 27, 2000, from Charles Paraboschi and Jose Logrecco, the vice-president and president, respectively, of Paint Smart. He also admitted that in March 2001, he accepted the furnishing and installation of sheetrock valued at approximately \$22,000 at his Sparta residence, from Carl Babb, the principal operator of Olympic Windows.

Babb, of Elmwood Park, pleaded guilty on April 14, 2005, to mail fraud and making corrupt payments. Babb admitted then that he gave concealed payments and benefits to two School District officials, including Louis Milone, the director of maintenance and custodial services. At the time of his plea hearing, Babb did not identify the second school official. Milone pleaded guilty on Feb. 17, 2005, to one count of accepting corrupt payments.

Judge Linares today ordered Cummings to make \$750,000 in restitution to the school district. The judge entered the same restitution order for Babb when he was sentenced, and both defendants are jointly liable for the restitution.

Paraboschi and Logrecco pleaded guilty on June 9, 2005, to making corrupt payments to

an employee of the Paterson school district. The employee of the school district was not identified at the time of their pleas.

Christie credited Special Agents of the FBI, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Leslie Wisner, Jr., with the Paterson schools investigation.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jeffrey S. Chiesa of the U.S. Attorney's Office Special Prosecutions Division in Newark.

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Defense Counsel:  
Jeffrey Garrigan, Esq.     Jersey City