

NEWS

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hurt0522.rel

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 22, 2007

Jersey City Man Gets 41 Months for Bilking New York
Private School and Hoboken Housing Authority

(More)

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NEWARK – A Jersey City man who embezzled from a Brooklyn, N.Y. Montessori school and, before that, from the Hoboken Housing Authority, was sentenced today for both crimes to 41 months in federal prison, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

Eric D. Hurt pleaded guilty on Aug. 16, 2006 to embezzling \$111,083 from the housing authority between 2001 and 2004, when he was the accounting manager for the authority. Then on Nov. 28, 2006, Hurt pleaded guilty to embezzling \$157,085 from the Brooklyn Day Montessori School, when he was employed there between 2005 and 2006.

U.S. District Judge Harold A. Ackerman today also ordered Hurt to pay restitution to the school and the authority. Hurt is free on \$100,00 bond and must surrender to the federal Bureau of Prisons by July 16 to begin serving his prison sentence.

Hurt, 39, of Jersey City, admitted last November in front of Judge Ackerman that when he was with the school, he issued salary and bonus payments to himself from the school well in excess of his authorized salary; made unauthorized wire transfers of money from a school bank account to himself; and used the school's ATM card to make unauthorized cash withdrawals from a school bank account for his personal benefit.

Hurt also admitted that from his office at the school in Brooklyn, he would telephone representatives of the school's payroll company in Piscataway to issue salary and bonus payments to himself in amounts far in excess of his authorized payroll amount

In August last year Hurt had admitted before Judge Ackerman that he embezzled Hoboken Housing Authority funds by writing 34 checks to himself. To conceal that embezzlement, Hurt admitted that he falsely reported to the Housing Authority that the payees on the checks were various vendors doing business with the Housing Authority by entering them that way in the general operating fund check register. Hurt, at that time, also pleaded guilty to one count of subscribing to a false federal income tax return for tax year 2003.

Christie credited Special Agents of the FBI, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Pedro Ruiz; Special Agents of the Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Inspector General, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Rene Febles; and Special Agents of the IRS Criminal Investigations Division, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge William P. Offord, with the investigation of Hurt's fraud at the School.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney James Nobile, chief of the U.S. Attorney's Office Special Prosecutions Division in Newark.

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Defense Counsel: Brian Eyerman, Esq., Fort Lee