

As A Visalia School Board Member, Villegas Voted For An \$8 Million Settlement Given To A Victim Of Sexual Abuse To Quote, “Keep The Community In The Dark Forever.” The Perpetrator In This Case Was Previously Fired From The School District For Quote, “Very Serious Misconduct” But Was Re-Hired By The School District, Nonetheless.

Despite Running On A Platform Of Increasing Public Transparency At The Visalia Unified School District (VUSD), Villegas Was Involved In Approving Multiple Legal Settlements Between Student Victims And Employees Of The School District That Cost Taxpayers Nearly \$15 Million

As A Candidate For Visalia Unified School District School Board In 2022, Villegas Touted That He “Pushed For Transparency” And “Public Access” To School Board Meetings. “My name is Randy Villegas and I’m running for VUSD School Board to ensure that all students have the resources they need to succeed. A graduate of public schools, I was raised in the Valley and was the first in my family to graduate from a university. Today, as a professor at College of the Sequoias, and trustee for VUSD, I will continue to work tirelessly for our students. When a vacancy occurred on the board last December, I didn’t hesitate to step up and serve our community. During this time I’ve: Advocated to align graduation requirements with A-G, so our students are college and career ready. Pushed for transparency, supporting a policy to grant the public access to meeting recordings. Voted to refinance Measure E, leading to a savings of \$6 million dollars for our taxpayers. Increased funding for Music/Visual and Performing Arts Programs. Supported the hiring of more counselors and psychologists for students’ mental health.” (Lauren Jennings, “Election 2022: What Would Visalia Unified School Board Candidates Do If Elected?,” [Visalia Times-Delta](#), 10/21/22)

The Los Angeles Times HEADLINE: “Public In The Dark About Some Schools’ Big Sex Abuse Payouts.” (Matt Hamilton and Harriet Ryan, “Times Investigation: Public In The Dark About Some Schools’ Big Sex Abuse Payouts,” [Los Angeles Times](#), 12/9/25)



(Matt Hamilton and Harriet Ryan, “Times Investigation: Public In The Dark About Some Schools’ Big Sex Abuse Payouts,” [Los Angeles Times](#), 12/9/25)

Between February 2023 And March 2025, VUSD Settled Five Sex Abuse Cases For Nearly \$15 Million. (Matt Hamilton and Harriet Ryan, “Times Investigation: Public In The Dark About Some Schools’ Big Sex Abuse Payouts,” [Los Angeles Times](#), 12/9/25)

Sex abuse cases against California school districts

The Times reached out to more than 930 school districts in California and submitted public records requests seeking information about all sexual misconduct suits and claims filed against districts and copies of settlement agreements for all sexual misconduct suits since Jan. 1, 2020. Click on the expand icon to see details for settled cases including court documents and settlement agreements.

District	Open cases	▼ Settled cases	Settlement amount	Details
Visalia Unified Tulare County	2	5	\$14,420,000	

Case information is up to date as of March 1, 2025, although some cases may have since settled and are not reflected. Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District refused to turn over any records. Los Angeles Unified only provided a list of AB218 cases as of June 2024, and settlements executed through January 2025. See something missing or incorrect? Contact tips@latimes.com.

Gabrielle LaMarr LeMee LOS ANGELES TIMES

(Matt Hamilton and Harriet Ryan, “Times Investigation: Public In The Dark About Some Schools’ Big Sex Abuse Payouts,” [Los Angeles Times](#), 12/9/25)

- **Among The Five, The Earliest Settled Case Was In February 2023; Case Information Was Up To Date As Of March 1, 2025.** “Case information is up to date as of March 1, 2025, although some cases may have since settled and are not reflected. Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District refused to turn over any records. Los Angeles Unified only provided a list of AB218 cases as of June 2024, and settlements executed through January 2025.” (Matt Hamilton and Harriet Ryan, “Times Investigation: Public In The Dark About Some Schools’ Big Sex Abuse Payouts,” [Los Angeles Times](#), 12/9/25)

CASE NUMBER VCU313685

In 2025, VUSD Approved A \$8 Million Settlement In A Case Of Sexual Abuse Perpetrated By A Former Coach At Mount Whitney High School

The Fresno Bee HEADLINE: “Former Visalia High School Student To Receive \$8 Million In Molestation Lawsuit.” (Robert Rodriguez and Nick Fenley, “Former Visalia High School Student To Receive \$8 Million In Molestation Lawsuit,” [The Fresno Bee](#), 11/1/25)

Former Visalia high school student to receive \$8 million in molestation lawsuit

(Robert Rodriguez and Nick Fenley, “Former Visalia High School Student To Receive \$8 Million In Molestation Lawsuit,” [The Fresno Bee](#), 11/1/25)

- **A Former Student At Mt. Whitney High School In Visalia, California Was Received An \$8 Million Settlement After Suing The School District Due To Alleged Molestation.** “A former Mt. Whitney High School student will receive an \$8 million settlement after she sued the Visalia Unified School District alleging she was molested by a school staff member. The plaintiff, who was a 15-year-old sophomore at the time, alleges that during 2022-2023 school year she was groomed and sexually assaulted by Dejaun Jones, a former campus supervisor.” (Robert Rodriguez and Nick Fenley, “Former Visalia High School Student To Receive \$8 Million In Molestation Lawsuit,” [The Fresno Bee](#), 11/1/25)

VUSD Meeting Minutes From September To November 2025 Show That Villegas Was Involved In Closed Session Meetings Pertaining To The \$8 Million Settlement Case

VUSD Board Member Meeting Minutes From September-November 2025 Show That Villegas Was Involved In Closed Session Meetings Pertaining To Case Number

VCU313685. (VSUD Board Of Education Minutes, [9/9/25](#); VSUD Board Of Education Minutes, [9/26/25](#); VSUD Board Of Education Minutes, [10/7/25](#); VSUD Board Of Education Minutes, [11/18/25](#))

During The September 9, 2025 VUSD Board Meeting, Case Number VCU313685 Was Discussed By Board Members. (VSUD Board Of Education Minutes, [9/9/25](#))

2.	CLOSED SESSION (May reconvene after the public meeting, if necessary)
2.1	RECOMMENDED EXPULSIONS (Education Code Sections 48900, et. seq.)
2.2	RECOMMENDED SUSPENDED EXPULSIONS
2.3	PUBLIC EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE / DISMISSAL / RELEASE / COMPLAINTS (Government Code Section 54957)
2.4	CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR (Government Code 54957.6) 1. Agency Negotiator: Ben Dhillon, Assistant Superintendent of HRD 2. Employee Organizations a. VUTA b. CSEA
2.5	CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – EXISTING LITIGATION (Government Code Section 54956.9(a)) • Tulare County Superior Court, Case No. VCU 302405 • Tulare County Superior Court, Case No. VCU 313685 • Tulare County Superior Court, Case No. VCU 305320

(VSUD Board Of Education Minutes, [9/9/25](#))

• **Villegas Was Present For The Meeting.** (VSUD Board Of Education Minutes, [9/9/25](#))

ATTENDANCE
Board Members Present:
Paul Belt
Kenneth DeJonge
Jacqueline A. Gaebe
Walta S. Gamoian
Todd Oto, Ed.D.
Randy Villegas, Ph.D.

(VSUD Board Of Education Minutes, [9/9/25](#))

November 18, 2025 Minutes Acknowledge That The Board, Including Villegas, Twice Voted To Approve Settlements Between VUSD And Unnamed California School Employees Association (CSEA) Employees. (VSUD Board Of Education Minutes, [11/18/25](#))

*On a motion by Trustee DeJonge, **seconded** by Trustee Villegas, the Board agreed to approve a settlement agreement between the District and CSEA classified employee EID#24993.*

Motion carried 6-0 (1 absent).

Vote:

Ayes: Belt, DeJonge, Gamoian, Naylor, Oto, Villegas

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Gaebe

*On a motion by Trustee Belt, **seconded** by Trustee Naylor, the Board agreed to approve a settlement agreement between the District and CSEA classified employee EID#17299.*

Motion carried 6-0 (1 absent).

(VSUD Board Of Education Minutes, [11/18/25](#))

According To The Lawsuit That Was Ultimately Settled, VUSD Was Accused of “Negligent Hiring” Of The Accused Perpetrator, One DeJuan Jones, Who Was Fired By The School District In 2013 For “Very Serious Misconduct” But Was Ultimately Rehired In 2022

The Lawsuit Alleged That Visalia Unified School District Is “Faulted For Negligent Hiring, Lack Of Supervision Of An Unfit Employee And Failure To Report Suspected Child Abuse.” “In the lawsuit, the school district is faulted for negligent hiring, lack of supervision of an unfit employee and failure to report suspected child abuse.” (Robert Rodriguez and Nick Fenley, “Former Visalia High School Student To Receive \$8 Million In Molestation Lawsuit,” [The Fresno Bee](#), 11/1/25)

- **The Alleged Perpetrator, DeJuan Jones, Was Described As A “Textbook Predator” Who “Victimized Minor Females Essentially Everywhere He’s Gone In His Life.”** “Attorney Brendan Gilbert from Taylor & Ring represented the victim, who was recently awarded \$8 million in a sexual abuse case against the Visalia Unified School District. ‘He’s a textbook predator. He’s victimized minor females essentially everywhere he’s gone in his life at different jobs,’ said Gilbert. He said 40-year-old De Jaun Jones worked at Mount Whitney High School as a campus supervisor in Visalia when he was accused of exchanging nude photos with a 15-year-old girl and touching her inappropriately in 2023.” (“Former Visalia Unified School District Employee Faces Felony Sexual Abuse Charges,” [ABC 30](#), 11/5/25)
- **DeJuan Jones’ Mugshot:**



(“Former Visalia Unified School District Employee Faces Felony Sexual Abuse Charges,” [ABC 30](#), 11/5/25)

Jones Was Released From Employment At The Same School In 2013 “For A Very Serious Misconduct,” But Was Rehired In 2022. “Gilbert said Jones previously worked for the high school in 2013 as the girls track and field coach. But he was let go after accusations surfaced that he was sending inappropriate messages to members of the team. Nearly a decade later Jones applied to return to the high school as a campus supervisor and was hired, Gilbert said.” (Robert Rodriguez and Nick Fenley, “Former Visalia High School Student To Receive \$8 Million In Molestation Lawsuit,” [The Fresno Bee](#), 11/1/25)

- **After Nearly A Decade, Jones “Applied To Return To The High School As A Campus Supervisor And Was Hired.** “Gilbert is now representing a second teen who has also accused Jones of abuse. ‘He should not have been rehired by the district in 2022, given that they had released him 10 years before for a very serious misconduct,’ said Gilbert. Gilbert said Jones has also been accused of similar behavior while working at Monache High School in Porterville Unified and at an In-Shape gym.” (“Former Visalia Unified School District Employee Faces Felony Sexual Abuse Charges,” [ABC 30](#), 11/5/25)
- **Allegations Levied Against Jones Include Grooming Female Athletes To Send Nude Images Of Themselves To Jones And Sexual Assault Of Victims In His School Office.** “‘He would weight train them and he would have them send photographs of their body, before and after,’ Gilbert said. ‘But really, he just wanted to have inappropriate pictures sent to him. So he, I mean, he truly hit the ground running in 2022 and did the same exact thing targeting various female athletes in different sports.’ Additional accusations by students The alleged victim met Jones during her sophomore year. He approached her, like he did with the others, with an offer to make her a better athlete with weight training. Soon, Jones started to engage in inappropriate conversations with the alleged victim, asking her what type of underwear she wore. It quickly escalated to touching and private meetings in his office. ‘It was at this point that Jones’s grooming of Plaintiff achieved its singular purpose: He began having inappropriate relations with her,’ according to the lawsuit.” (Robert Rodriguez and Nick Fenley, “Former Visalia High School Student To Receive \$8 Million In Molestation Lawsuit,” [The Fresno Bee](#), 11/1/25)

NOTE: *The four other settlement cases pertained to allegations of abuse that occurred within the Visalia Unified School District in the 1980’s and 1990’s.*