

The law firm of Wright, Pichon and Gray is representing the family of a minor child who was the victim of ongoing sexual battery while a student at Homer A. Plessy Community School. Attorney Rachel Meese explains that the victim is a female student, who will remain anonymous. According to the victim and witnesses, after reporting the sexual battery to school officials, the student was sent back to the recess yard, where the perpetrator remained, while an investigation was conducted by the administration of the school. After the investigation confirmed the student's account of the incident, the student was summoned to the counselor's office, where she was then placed in that office with no adult supervision. At that time, the student was able to text and call her parents to inform them of the incident and request their presence at the school. It was over two hours after the school was notified of the sexual battery, when the victim's mother was arriving at the school due to her child's text message, that Homer A. Plessy Community School called to inform the parent that there had been a sexual battery against her child.

Attorney Meese reports that there has reportedly been an ongoing pattern of sexual harassment and sexual battery by the alleged assailant both to the victim and other girls from the school. She alleges that Homer A. Plessy made several missteps in handling this incident, beginning with not properly addressing the prior complaints. According to the victim's family, students had reported a lack of supervision at Cabrini Playground long before this incident. The second misstep was not notifying the victim's parents immediately. The school further failed to call the police, despite being a mandated reporter, until three days after the incident and only after the student requested an emergency safety transfer from the Orleans Parish School Board. The alleged assailant has had no discernable punishment from the incident and is still attending the school.

Wright, Pichon and Gray is assisting the victim with obtaining psychological treatment and support, as the long-term effects of sexual battery include PTSD and other mental trauma. "If there is one place our girls—our *children*—should be safe from sexual harassment and battery, it is in school," Meese stated. "I took this case because there is simply no excuse for a school to ignore warning signs, shirk its legal duty to protect our children, and allow the students in its care to suffer the indignity and abuse that this child suffered."

Homer A. Plessy Community School is currently requesting an expansion of the school in order to take over Joseph A. Craig Charter School, which was recently announced to close at the end of the school year.