



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF TULARE

Tim Ward, *District Attorney*

PRESS RELEASE

8/29/19

FORMER HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER SENTENCED FOR STALKING STUDENTS

Today in Department 22 of the Tulare County Superior Court, South County Justice Center, Judge Anthony Fultz sentenced Orlando Benitez, age 31, of Lindsay, to 4 years and 4 months in prison for stalking female students while employed as a teacher and coach at Lindsay High School. On June 18, 2019, Benitez pleaded no contest to three felony counts of stalking.

The crimes occurred between May of 2015 and May of 2018 against three minor females ages 14 to 17 at the time of the crimes. According to investigative reports, Benitez would text the females his sexually charged thoughts and would corner them at school when they would attempt to cease contact. During such requests, Benitez would threaten to harm himself and lay the blame on the victims. He would also become angry if he learned that the girls had relationships.

Benitez did not possess a prior criminal record; however, in addition to his sentence, Benitez must register as a sex offender for life.

The case was prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Katie Denson of the Special Crimes Division and investigated by Officer Adriana Nave of the Lindsay Department of Public Safety and Criminal Investigators Martha Rodriguez and Jeff Gilbert of the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigations.

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