

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 8, 2009

Ex-Business Administrator and Superintendent at Delaware Valley
Regional High School Sentenced to 12 Months for Embezzlement

(More)

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CAMDEN – A former business administrator and then superintendent at Delaware Valley Regional High School in Hunterdon County was sentenced today to 12 months in federal prison for embezzling more than \$90,000 from the school district, Acting U.S. Attorney Ralph J. Marra, Jr. announced.

U.S. District Judge Renee Bumb also ordered Robert P. Walsh, 43, of Forks Township, Pa., to make restitution in the amount of \$117,951 to the school district, which incorporates the amount embezzled plus some of the district's legal fees and costs of investigating the theft.

Judge Bumb also said Walsh must send a formal letter of apology to the board of education. She also went further, suggesting that Walsh request permission to apologize in person to the students and district as a whole. How or if that would occur will be left for the school district to decide, the Judge said.

"The conduct of this defendant is hard to fathom," said Marra. "Here we had a well-paid high school superintendent who could have continued to command the respect and attention of his students, the community and school board. Yet he threw that all away for what was literally the lunch money he stole from the cafeteria. He does indeed owe a lot of people an apology."

Walsh must surrender to the federal Bureau of Prisons on a date to be determined by the BOP. In the meantime, he remains free on a \$100,000 bond. There is no parole in the federal system. With good-conduct credit, inmates generally can reduce their sentences by 15 percent.

Walsh pleaded guilty on Jan. 8 to a one-count criminal Information charging embezzlement. At his plea hearing, Walsh admitted embezzling funds totaling more than \$90,000, between September 2005 and September 2007, from the Delaware Valley Regional School District while he was serving as the school's business administrator and later as superintendent. The high school is based in Alexandria Township and receives students from several mostly rural municipalities.

Walsh admitted that he embezzled the funds in three different ways. First, Walsh admitted that he embezzled approximately \$68,000 from the school by diverting checks made payable to the school's general bank account and depositing those checks into the school's food services account to conceal cash amounts he stole from the cafeteria and kept for his personal use.

Walsh also admitted that he embezzled funds from the school by collecting reimbursements for unauthorized personal expenses including home improvements. In addition, Walsh admitted that he embezzled more than \$19,000 from the school by

receiving tuition and life insurance premium reimbursements that exceeded those authorized by the high school district.

Walsh admitted that he embezzled the funds during his tenure as Delaware Valley Regional High School's business administrator and later as the school's superintendent. Walsh admitted that, while serving in those positions, he was responsible for managing the finances of the school, included approving reimbursements and endorsing checks to be deposited into Delaware Valley Regional High School bank accounts.

Marra credited the FBI, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Weysan Dun, with the investigation of Walsh. Marra also thanked the Hunterdon County Prosecutor's Office, under the direction of Prosecutor J. Patrick Barnes, for initiating the investigation and working with the FBI to its completion.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jenny Kramer and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney William McGovern, who is on assignment from the Hunterdon County Prosecutor's Office for purposes of this case.

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Defense Counsel: Joseph Afflitto, Sr., Esq., Wayne.