



NEWS RELEASE

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Police Charge Teacher with Long-Term Sexual Abuse of Student

Howard County police have charged a Mt. Hebron High School teacher with sexually abusing a 17-year-old female student over a period of two years. Robert Douglas Johnston, 61, of 4421 Brittany Drive in Ellicott City was arrested last night after turning himself in to police. He has been charged with sexual abuse of a minor, third and fourth degree sex offenses and obscene telephone misuse.

Police were notified of the inappropriate relationship when a school official received an e-mail that contained copies of e-mail exchanges between Johnston and the victim. While the e-mails were not sexual in nature, they indicated a close personal relationship between Johnston and the student. The school notified police immediately.

Detectives contacted the victim, who will not be identified by police, and after interviews and investigation, believe Johnston had been sexually abusing the girl inside the school since she was 15.

Johnston is being held on \$350,000 bond at the Howard County Detention Center. The sexual abuse charge carries a penalty of up to 25 years in prison.

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