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PRESS RELEASE

Owen J. Roberts High School Teacher Charged With Institutional Sexual Assault of a Minor

The Chester County District Attorney's Office and Pennsylvania State Police announced the arrest Stephen Eric Raught, for institutional sexual assault, corruption of minors, endangering the welfare of children and related offenses for an assault that occurred on March 16, 2020. The defendant is a teacher at Owen J. Roberts High School in South Coventry Township, Chester County. He has been placed on administrative leave.

District Attorney Deb Ryan stated, "A teacher who violates his duty of care and protection of a minor will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. We expect our children will be safe at school. The District Attorney's Office, along with law enforcement, will remain vigilant in protecting children. We thank the Pennsylvania State Police for their swift response and the Owen J. Roberts School District for their full cooperation."

The allegations from the criminal complaint¹ are as follows:

On March 24, 2020, the Pennsylvania State Police were contacted in reference to a ChildLine report involving a sexual assault by a teacher of a 17-year-old student at the Owen J. Roberts High School at 981 Ridge Road, South Coventry Township.

The victim was interviewed on March 26, 2020. She stated that she is a student at the high school and that she would spend time with the defendant after school in his classroom. She also reported that she would discuss personal matters with him and he would often hug her.

¹ A criminal defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in court.

She related that she went to school on March 16, 2020, to retrieve items at school with permission. She later observed the defendant on school grounds and they went to his classroom together. Once inside the defendant's classroom she stated that the defendant hugged her and kissed her on the lips. She indicated that he took her to another location in the room that was out of view from the door where he engaged in further sexual conduct.

The victim stated that the defendant briefly stopped and told her, "I really wish I could take you home with me. But we both know that would be very bad and I wouldn't be able to help myself." The defendant then proceeded to perform additional sexual acts. He later told her, "Too bad we have quarantine, or else you'd be in my classroom every day after school. But I'd be late to baseball practice every day and chances are someone would walk in and see something." Video surveillance footage shows the defendant and victim together at the school.

The defendant is 53 years old.

The defendant was arrested on May 7, 2020, and arraigned via video before Magisterial District Judge John HIPPLE, District Court 15-3-01. Bail was set at \$50,000 cash. RAUGHT was remanded to Chester County Prison unable to post bail.

This case was investigated by the Pennsylvania State Police and assigned to Assistant District Attorney Emily Provencher from the Chester County District Attorney's Child Abuse Unit. Anyone with information regarding these or other incidents involving the defendant should contact the Pennsylvania State Police, Embreeville Station at (610) 486-6280 and ask to speak to a Criminal Investigator.

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Approved for release:

Deborah Ryan
District Attorney

