

JH teacher resigns; faces sexual assault charges

Written by Brenda Johnson Brandt

Holyoke Junior High social studies teacher Kevin Asbury, 46, has been charged with sexual assault on a child by a person of trust and sexual assault on a child by one in a position of trust demonstrating a pattern of sexual abuse.

He was arrested by Holyoke Police Department (HPD) Friday, April 23, and was advised of the charges Monday, April 26. Bond has been set at \$50,000, with Asbury's next court hearing scheduled Monday, May 10.

Asbury resigned his position in the Holyoke School District, where he has taught JH social studies since 2001. He has also served as a sponsor for JH Student Council, cheerleading and rocket club.

School board members held a special meeting Saturday, April 24 to accept his resignation, effective at the end of the current school year. Supt. Bret Miles pointed out Asbury will be on administrative leave for the remainder of the school year.

A 25-minute executive session started Saturday's meeting. The closed session was called for discussion of Asbury's resignation and for discussion of individual students where public disclosure would adversely affect the person or persons involved.

First becoming aware of the allegations against Asbury Tuesday, April 20, the school district immediately referred the matter to HPD.

Within hours of the initial report, Asbury was placed on administrative leave until allegations could be investigated thoroughly. Supt. Miles emphasized administrative leave assumes neither guilt nor innocence. It serves as a necessary precaution for students, the school district and the employee.

Letters were sent home to K-12 parents to make them aware of the situation.

Police Chief Phil Biersdorfer said HPD received information from school district administration Tuesday afternoon about 4 p.m. It regarded a report alleging inappropriate conduct of a male

JH teacher resigns; faces sexual assault charges

Written by Brenda Johnson Brandt

JH teacher towards a 15-year-old female student.

Investigation led HPD to seek a warrant for Asbury's arrest. The warrant was reviewed by the District Attorney's office and signed by a judge Friday, April 23 at about 5:45 p.m.

The warrant alleged Asbury committed the crimes of sexual assault on a child by a person of trust and sexual assault on a child by one in a position of trust demonstrating a pattern of sexual abuse.

Both are Class 3 felonies and if found guilty, could result in imprisonment of between 2-24 years and a fine of \$3,000-\$750,000, according to Biersdorfer.

Asbury was held over the weekend without bond until he was advised of the charges Monday.