

Teacher facing child porn charges out on bail



Photo: Christopher Teague who faces child pornography charges.

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A Middle Island junior high school math teacher emailed child pornography, and investigators found images on his home computer of minors engaged in “lewd, explicit” sexual conduct, Suffolk police and prosecutors said Thursday.

Christopher Teague, 34, was arrested at his home in Coram Wednesday evening and arraigned Thursday in First District Court, Central Islip, on one felony charge each of possessing and promoting child pornography. He was released Thursday night on \$25,000 bail.

Teague, of 21 Hayes Lane, was also placed on administrative leave and removed from classroom duties Thursday at

Longwood Junior High School in Middle Island, pending the outcome of the criminal justice process. Suffolk Police Det. Sgt. John W. Sumwalt, commander of the police computer crimes unit, said there’s no indication Teague had inappropriate involvement with Longwood students or accessed child pornography at the school.

With his head bowed and hands cuffed behind his back in court, Teague pleaded not guilty.

Outside the courtroom, his lawyer, Michael J. Brown of Central Islip, maintained Teague’s innocence and said he has an excellent reputation as a teacher. Brown said he would not comment on allegations that police found pornographic images on the teacher’s computer, but said, “I don’t know if someone else had access to the computer.”

At an afternoon news conference, Sumwalt said police made the arrest after an Internet provider reported to authorities that child pornography had been sent from Teague’s email.

A preliminary examination of computers and devices used to store photographs and video seized from Teague’s home found images of “pre-pubescent” children engaged in sexual contact and conduct, Sumwalt said.

Investigators also found evidence that Teague used Skype on his own computer to talk with others about exchanging child pornography, prosecutors said.

Members of Teague’s family attended the arraignment, his lawyer said, identifying them as his parents, an aunt and a cousin who is a New York City Police Department officer. They held each other as they walked out of the courtroom and did not speak with reporters. Brown said Teague’s brother and another cousin are also NYPD officers.

Brown said in court that Teague had attended St. Joseph’s College in Suffolk County, and earned a master’s degree at Long Island University. Teague started teaching in the Longwood School District 12 years ago, Brown said.

Longwood Superintendent Allan Gerstenlauer said in a prepared statement, “Mr. Teague . . . will not have any contact with students pending the outcome of a criminal investigation.” Sumwalt said the investigation is continuing and asked that anyone with additional information contact the Computer Crimes Unit at 631-852-6279.