



JONATHAN W. BLODGETT
District Attorney

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY FOR THE ESSEX DISTRICT
SALEM NEWBURYPORT LAWRENCE

Ten Federal Street
Salem, Massachusetts 01970

TELEPHONE
VOICE (978)745-6610
FAX (978)744-2049
TTY (978)741-3163

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CONTACT: STEVE O'CONNELL
(978) 745-6610, EXT. 5077

**FORMER METHUEN SCHOOL BUSINESS MANAGER
PLEADS GUILTY TO EMBEZZLEMENT AND LARCENY**

Former Methuen School Business Manager Joseph Salvo pleaded guilty today in Lawrence District Court to embezzlement by a municipal officer of municipal property, and larceny over \$250, for stealing from the school system by use of school credit cards to purchase items for personal use.

Judge Michael Brooks sentenced Salvo, 66, of Methuen, to six months in the House of Correction, 90 days to be served, the balance suspended for one year with probation. Restitution was not an issue because all items and materials were recovered.

The investigation into Salvo's crimes was conducted by the Office of Essex District Attorney Jonathan W. Blodgett, the Office of Inspector General Gregory Sullivan, the FBI Lowell Office, and the Methuen Police Department.

Essex First Assistant District Attorney John T. Dawley told the court that if the case had gone to trial the Commonwealth would have proved that Salvo used school department credit cards to purchase \$38,000 worth of goods which he never inventoried as school property, and kept for himself.

The scheme for which Salvo was convicted took place from November of 2005 through until his sudden resignation in 2008. Dawley said investigators believe there were more items purchased prior to November of 2005, but the statute of limitations had expired. Among the items Salvo purchased were two desktop computers, two high-end laptops, three scanners, four high-end cameras, a number of industrial hammer drills, two ladder systems, Italian bathroom tile, a fax machine, a miter saw, an air compressor, and a printer.

Essex District Attorney Jonathan W. Blodgett said, "This was an egregious breach of the public trust by a public official. In the midst of this depressed economy all cities and towns are facing severe financial challenges, and that makes this thievery even more despicable. This is just the latest of several white collar crime cases that we have prosecuted in the last few years, and we will continue to vigorously pursue any such crimes by public officials.

"I would like to thank the other agencies involved in this investigation for their diligent work in exposing this corruption and bringing Mr. Salvo to justice," said District Attorney Blodgett.

Inspector General Sullivan said, "I would like to commend District Attorney Blodgett for his persistence in the prosecution of people who betray the public trust."