

ATLANTIC COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

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NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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MAYS LANDING— A former Greater Egg Harbor Regional School District employee was sentenced to three years in prison today for stealing \$24,000 in school funds to purchase technology equipment that he sold on E-Bay, according to Chief Assistant Prosecutor James McClain of the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office.

Joseph R. Filinuk, Jr., 38, of Mantua, entered a guilty plea in March to one count of second-degree official misconduct with the sentencing in the third-degree range. The state argued at sentencing that the defendant should be sentenced to four years in prison with a period of parole ineligibility of 18 months. But Superior Court Judge James E. Isman sentenced Filinuk to a year less with no period of parole ineligibility, according to Chief Assistant Prosecutor James McClain.

The Judge noted today that in fashioning this sentence, he took into account several things, including the fact that Filinuk made full restitution to the district and the impact a mandatory minimum prison term would have had on the defendant and his family, all of whom suffer from health problems. The judge said the statute for official misconduct is more directed to address and deter elected officials who exercise a good deal of power, rather than public employees in general, and an imposition of a mandatory minimum prison term would in this case, be a serious injustice, McClain said.

Filinuk was charged on July 9, 2008, as a result of a joint investigation involving the Hamilton Township Police Department and the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office. He was released on a summons. He was indicted in July of 2008, McClain said.

Anyone with information involving serious crimes is asked to call the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office at 609-909-7800 or go to the Prosecutor's Office Web site at <http://www.acpo.org/tips.html> and provide information by filling out the form anonymously on the Submit a Tip page. People can also call Crime Stoppers at 609-652-1234 or 1-800-658-8477 (TIPS) or visit the Crime Stoppers Website at <http://www.crimestoppersatlantic.com/>. Crime Stoppers offers cash rewards for information leading to the arrest and indictment of those who commit crimes in Atlantic County.