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Release 142-2009  
[www.queensda.org](http://www.queensda.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2009

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**QUEENS MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER PLEADS GUILTY  
TO SEXUALLY ABUSING 14-YEAR-OLD STUDENT**

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that a 27-year-old public school teacher has pleaded guilty to the statutory rape of a 14-year-old student this past spring. The abuse occurred at MS/IS 8 in Jamaica, where the defendant taught and the victim was a student.

District Attorney Brown said, "As a teacher, the defendant's actions represent a disturbing betrayal of trust to the student, his parents and the school that employed her. A classroom should always be a safe place for a child, free of sexual predators who would betray and defile youngsters. The defendant's admission of guilt today not only ensures that she is held responsible for her actions but it also spares the young victim in this case the emotional trauma of having to testify at trial."

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Melissa Weber, 27, formerly of West Babylon, Long Island. Weber, who was employed as a social studies/homeroom teacher at MS/IS 8, located at 108-35 167<sup>th</sup> Street in Jamaica, Queens, pleaded guilty to second-degree rape before Acting Queens Supreme Court Justice Robert Raciti.

Sentencing was set for September 23, 2009, at which time Justice Raciti indicated he would likely sentence the defendant, who has been incarcerated since her arraignment on May 28, 2009, to time served, ten years' probation and order her to register as a sex offender for the next twenty years and to undergo sex offender counseling during the period of her probation. The defendant will also be required to inform the Probation Department of any and all Internet identifiers she may use, refrain from using any social network websites and not visit school grounds or any other places where children under the age of eighteen may be congregating.

District Attorney Brown noted that his office will notify the State Education Department that the defendant has been convicted of an offense requiring her to register as a sex offender, which will trigger an automatic revocation of her teaching license/certificate.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the criminal charges, Weber engaged in sexual intercourse with a 14-year-old male student in a second-floor classroom at MS/IS 8 on seven separate occasions between April 13, 2009, and May 14, 2009, and during the hours of 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. Weber told the victim, "Don't tell anyone. I could get arrested and I could lose my teaching license."

The District Attorney said the case came to light when the boy's mother, who is a member of the school's PTA, was told by sources at the school that a teacher was engaging in an inappropriate relationship with her son. The mother obtained the teacher's telephone number and then checked her son's cell phone and found hundreds of contacts between the teacher and her son over the preceding two months. One of the last texts from the teacher stated, "Erase your phone."

Assistant District Attorney Lauren R. Parson, of the District Attorney's Special Victims Bureau, prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Marjory D. Fisher, Bureau Chief, and Lucinda C. Suarez and Kenneth M. Appelbaum, Deputy Bureau Chiefs, and the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Charles A. Testagrossa and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

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Note to Editors: Press release e-version posted on [www.queensda.org](http://www.queensda.org)