

## Teacher Charged With False Rape Claim

Police: Encounters Were Consensual

June 22, 2006 By DAN UHLINGER And JIM FARRELL, Courant Staff Writers

EAST HARTFORD — A teacher who had consensual sex with another teacher twice in the town middle school was arrested Wednesday, accused of falsely reporting to police that she had been raped during the sexual encounters, police said.

Angela Schmidt, 55, of 2 Red Stone Drive, Simsbury, was charged with one count each of falsely reporting an incident and making a false statement. She was released on a non-surety bond and will be arraigned July 10 in Superior Court in Manchester.

Wednesday was the last day of school and the warrant for Schmidt's arrest was served without incident about the time school ended, police said.

Police said Schmidt, a special education teacher at the middle school, called Cmdr. Robert Kenary March 29 and said she had been raped by a colleague, Steven Sandler, who teaches speech and language.

Det. Ellen Stoldt was assigned to investigate the allegations and met with Schmidt the next day. Police said Schmidt gave detailed accounts of the two encounters with Sandler earlier in the year, one time in a staff bathroom and another in a closet in the Burnside Avenue middle school.

An investigation later determined that Schmidt and Sandler were having an affair and the sexual encounters in the school were consensual, police said.

Schmidt was hired in September and was having difficulties adapting to the new job when she became friends with Sandler, police said. The friendship evolved into an intimate relationship and continued until Sandler told Schmidt that he wanted to end the affair, police said.

Schmidt became angry and told Sandler that she was going "to ruin his career," police said.

Schmidt would not comment Wednesday and Sandler could not be reached.

Superintendent Marion Martinez said school officials have been conducting their own investigation but would not comment because of personnel issues and the police investigation.

Karen O'Connell, president of the teachers' union, said the two teachers could face harsh disciplinary measures if it is proven that they were having sexual relations in the school.

"Ethically, in my opinion, if this did occur, I believe it could result in termination for both teachers," O'Connell said.

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