

Court papers: Girls reported bathroom video incident

Teacher

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When the 10-year-old girl changed into her pajamas in the teachers' bathroom on "Pajama Day" at State Road Elementary School in Webster, she noticed a stand in the corner of the bathroom with baskets upon it. The girl then spotted a cellphone "propped up on its side on the stand," according to court papers. The girl allegedly recognized the phone as belonging to a fourth-grade teacher, Terrance P. Hoctor. She saw it was recording.

Acting calmly, the youngster "did not want Hoctor to know that she had seen the phone, so she propped the phone back up where she had found it," the federal court records say.

Hoctor was arrested in March and charged with two counts of unlawful surveillance, a felony, and two counts of endangering the welfare of a child, a misdemeanor. Police alleged that he had videotaped two female students at the elementary school as they changed clothes.

Police then revealed some details of the alleged incident that prompted the arrest, but many of the specifics were left unsaid about the actions of the girls.

"It took a lot of courage for these young children to come forward and say something," Webster Police Chief Joseph Rieger said in March.

However, a search warrant unsealed Wednesday in federal court details what prefaced the arrest, and reveals how the two alleged victims in the case — a 10-year-old girl and a 9-year-old girl — reacted calmly when they suspected they were being videotaped as they changed clothes.

The search warrant application for various computers and Hoctor's cellphone was filed in March and unsealed just last week. In an affidavit, FBI Special Agent Carlton Turner writes:

- » March 3 was "Pajama Day" at the school, and the two alleged victims did not come in their pajamas but were allowed to change during the day.
- » The two girls were leaving class to change and Hoctor allegedly directed them to the teachers' restroom because it "was cleaner than the student bathroom." He allegedly told them not to immediately go into the restroom.
- » Hoctor went into the restroom first to "check it." While he was inside, the 10-year-old girl heard a "ding" that she "recognized as the type of noise that a phone makes." Inside, she spotted the phone; upon leaving the restroom she tried to tell the other girl "not to go inside." She started to

whisper to her classmate, but Hocter allegedly told her to return to class.

» The 9-year-old girl was undressing when she too noticed the phone. She said she recognized it as Hocter's "because she sees him with it daily." She quickly

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Terrance P. Hocter

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dressed and left. She then allegedly saw Hocter go into the restroom, pick up the phone and return to class.

The 10-year-old later told her parents, who notified Webster police about the incident. The two girls were first interviewed at the Bivona Child Advocacy Center, while Webster Police Investigator Jeffrey Webster and Turner interviewed Hocter.

Hocter allegedly said he sometimes leaves the phone in the bathroom, and he may have "bumped" it, causing it to record. After school officials removed computers and the cellphone from Hocter's class, Hocter again asked to speak to the investigators. He allegedly asked if he was going to be arrested, and was told that his arrest was likely. He allegedly responded, saying, "I'm going to get what I deserve," "I'm ashamed" and "I feel bad for my family." Webster asked how many videos of students would be on the phone, and Hocter allegedly replied, "one, maybe two."

The now-public court records do not reveal what, if anything, was found on the telephone or computers, which were seized to search for possible images of children.

Authorities said earlier that the case would be presented to a grand jury. Hctor has not yet been indicted.

Hctor's attorney, Stephen Sercu, declined to comment.

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