

Crowe: Dupo School District Employee Accused of Embezzlement

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
April 17 2024 2:21 PM



EAST ST. LOUIS – U.S. Attorney Rachelle Aud Crowe on Wednesday, April 17, 2024, announced that a Waterloo woman is facing multiple federal charges after being accused of embezzling money from 2020-2022 as an employee at Dupo Community Unit School District #196.

Crowe said a grand jury charged Linda J. Johnson, 57, with three counts of theft from federally funded programs. If convicted, Johnson could face up to 10 years' imprisonment and/or \$250,000 in fines per count.

“When individuals steal funds from school districts, they selfishly place themselves above the students, faculty and community as a whole,” said U.S. Attorney Rachelle Aud Crowe.

According to court documents, Johnson worked an administrative role in the superintendent's office for Dupo Community Unit School District #196. In this role, Johnson oversaw the district's activities account with funds for student athletics, clubs, and extracurriculars.

The indictment charges that Johnson received control over cash and checks intended to be deposited into the district's activities account. She would prepare bank deposit slips reflecting the correct amount of cash and checks received, but later she prepared a second set of fraudulent deposit slips that only accounted for the checks, while she kept the cash. The loss to the school district is estimated to be more than \$100,000.

“The FBI has a solemn responsibility to investigate allegations of public corruption and the abuse of power by any public servant,” said Acting Special Agent in Charge Joe Rodriguez. “We would like to thank the Dupo Police Department for their assistance and proactive efforts in this investigation.”

An indictment is merely a formal charge against a defendant. Under the law, a defendant is presumed to be innocent of a charge until proved guilty beyond a reasonable doubt to the satisfaction of a jury.

The FBI Springfield Field Office and the Dupo Police Department are leading the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorney Steve Weinhoeft is prosecuting the case.