

Teacher pleads not guilty to DWI

BY CANDICE RUUD

candice.ruud@newsday.com

A high school teacher and former Stony Brook University star quarterback pleaded not guilty yesterday to a felony DWI charge stemming from an arrest in Long Beach last week.

██████████, 38, who teaches at Eastport-South Manor Junior-Senior High School, was charged with felony driving while intoxicated, resisting arrest, fleeing from police, reckless driving, operating his car without a court-ordered interlock device and driving with a suspended driver's license after, police said, he resisted arrest during a July 25 traffic stop.

██████████ has been a social studies teacher at Eastport-South Manor Junior-Senior High School for 14 years and had been named teacher of the year several times, said William Petrillo, ██████████'s attorney.

Eastport-South Manor school

district officials did not comment on whether they were aware of ██████████'s previous convictions.

"This personnel matter is currently under investigation, and we are taking this situation very seriously," the district said in a statement. "The district plans to pursue any and all remedies available under the law."

In 2008, ██████████ was arrested in Suffolk County and charged with fleeing police, resisting arrest, reckless driving and felony DWI. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 90 days in jail and 1 year of probation, as well as a \$1,000 fine.

Records also show that in 2004, ██████████ was convicted of a misdemeanor DWI charge in Nassau County and was ordered to pay a \$500 fine.

Police said ██████████, of Long Beach, fled in his gray Acura on July 25 when they attempted to pull him over for talking on a cell phone while driving. He drove

away, abandoned his car on East Fulton Street and took off on foot. It took several officers to subdue him, officials said. City Manager Charles Theofan said police officers "had to struggle to subdue this individual."

Petrillo said Long Beach police used "excessive and unnecessary force," causing ██████████ to permanently lose vision in his right eye, which is swollen shut.

Yesterday, ██████████ appeared in Long Beach City Court and pleaded not guilty. After Petrillo asked for a bail reduction so his client could go home to his fiancée and 5-month-old son, City Court Judge Roy Tepper reduced bail from \$100,000 to \$25,000 cash.

██████████ was a quarterback for Stony Brook, then a Division III school, in the 1990s. He set school records, and he was named an All-American in 1995. He was the team's most valuable player three times.

With Gary Dynski

██████████, who teaches at Eastport-South Manor Junior-Senior High, has twice before been convicted of DWI.