

STATEMENT BY FELLOWSHIP DAY SCHOOL

March 9, 2019

On the afternoon of Thursday, March 7, 2019, Special Agents from Homeland Security and the State Bureau of Investigation appeared at Fellowship Day School and informed the School's Executive Director that an employee of the School was being investigated by those agencies. The investigation relates to whether an employee of the School had acted inappropriately as to five children at the School. Fellowship Day School operates both pre-school and after-school programs.

Special Agent Charles Cook of the Department of Homeland Security has stated that the investigation does not involve inappropriate physical contact with the children. Special Agent Cook has also stated that the investigators have no reason to believe that the alleged conduct involved more than five children or that any person associated with the School was involved in or had knowledge of any alleged misconduct, other than the employee in question.

The contact by the Special Agents on March 7 was the first notice to the School that any issues or concerns existed regarding this employee. The School had performed a background check on the employee in question before hiring, and that background check did not show any reason for concern. The employee had worked at the School for over five years without any concerns or red flags being raised, prior to March 7.

Upon this first contact with the investigating Special Agents, the School's Executive Director immediately contacted leadership for Fellowship Presbyterian Church, which operates the School. The employee in question was promptly suspended from her employment and has been barred from School and Church premises. It is our understanding that the employee in question has been interviewed by law enforcement but has not been arrested.

The staff of the School was informed by the Executive Director of these events early on the morning of Friday, March 8, and parents of all students were informed in a general meeting in the late afternoon of Friday, March 8. The Session (i.e., the governing body of the Church) was informed on the morning of Saturday, March 9.

The identities of the children in question obviously will not be revealed by anyone associated with the School. It is our understanding that the parents of each of the five children have been informed that their child was potentially involved.

The School is cooperating fully with law enforcement. The School is committed to full transparency with all parents at the School, limited only by the requirements of protecting the privacy of families and the need to avoid any interference with the ongoing investigation.

Prior to March 7, Fellowship Day School had operated without any incidents since its founding in 1997. The School places a strong emphasis on protecting the safety of all of its children, and the School and its staff, and the leadership of the Church, are devastated by the allegations that have come to light over the past two days. At the request of the investigating officers, we cannot comment further at this time. We ask that everyone pray for the children, parents, and staff of the Fellowship Day School as we deal with this terrible situation.

Any further questions can be directed to Special Agent Charles Cook at the Department of Homeland Security: 336-631-5357 or charles.n.cook@dhs.gov. You may also direct questions to Bob King, who is a member and Elder at the Church and is assisting the School with this matter. Mr. King can be reached at 336-601-1231 or 3rking3@gmail.com. We ask that the parents and staff at the School not be contacted as we deal with this situation.