

From: Kevin T. Anderson, Board Chair and Doreen C. Kelly, Head of School system@mail1.veracross.com
Subject: Important Information
Date: October 4, 2019 at 9:25 AM
To: jennifer.davis@ravenscroft.org



RAVENSCROFT
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All,

In May, we announced the separation of a long-term employee, Band Instructor Bill Pendergrass. At the time, in deference to a specific request by law enforcement, we were limited in the amount of information we were able to share with our community. We are now able to share more information with you.

In late April 2019, Ravenscroft received a highly detailed written complaint about Mr. Pendergrass related to a report of conduct that occurred more than 30 years ago in the context of his prior employment. While the complaint pre-dated his time at Ravenscroft, in consultation with legal counsel, we immediately reached out to the complainant, placed Mr. Pendergrass on leave and contacted law enforcement officials to share the information we had received. He was subsequently terminated in May in conjunction with other unrelated factors.

Late yesterday, Wake County law enforcement officials informed us that Mr. Pendergrass will be charged with six felonies; one count of statutory rape, two charges of statutory sex offenses and three charges of indecent liberties with a child.

We have worked cooperatively with local law enforcement pending the outcome of their investigation. We respected their request to not take any steps that might impact the integrity of their investigation. At the same time, we took action to ensure the safety of our current students by removing Mr. Pendergrass' access to campus or our students.

We understand that this is very difficult news for our community and wanted to share this information with you as soon as we were able to do so. We are deeply committed to the care, safety, and well-being of our children, past, present and future. It is our highest priority.

While at this time we have not received any reports that Mr. Pendergrass engaged in illegal behavior at Ravenscroft during his time of employment, we are sharing this news with our community to provide the opportunity for other individuals to come forward if they have had similar experiences.

Given the news of his arrest, we understand, additional information may come to light and we encourage students, parents and alumni to contact the school or local law enforcement directly.

You may contact Detective K.T. Hubard of the Raleigh Police Department at (919) 996-1646 to report information related to potential criminal activity. You may contact the school with questions or concerns about this matter. Please know that the school will share any information that relates to suspected abuse or neglect of minors with child protective services and law enforcement.

In addition, Ravenscroft has been working with child protection professionals since April to ensure the highest level of care. Gina Maisto Smith and Leslie M. Gomez, of Cozen O'Connor, lead the Institutional Response Group, a practice devoted to preventing and responding to child abuse and sexual and gender-based harassment and violence. They have worked with many schools in the Raleigh-Durham area and are known for their commitment to child welfare. You may also contact them at gmsmith@cozen.com (215) 665-5540 or lgomez@cozen.com (215) 665-5546 to share information or concerns.

We will continue to maintain communication with law enforcement, to provide our community with support and care, and to identify resources to assist our families. In particular, we understand you may have questions about whether and how to share this information with your child(ren) and how to talk with them about sensitive issues or similar concerns. Our on-campus school counselors are available to you and your children.

Please know we are committed to working in partnership with our students, parents and families, and believe open and direct communication about issues of significance is an important part of that partnership. If you would like to schedule a meeting with Doreen as we navigate these difficult circumstances, please let us know.

In partnership for the care of our children,

Kevin and Doreen

Kevin T. Anderson
Ravenscroft Board Chair

Doreen C. Kelly
Head of School

