



Columbus School for Girls

December 24, 2017

Dear Members of the CSG Community,

I write to share important information about Ron Nocks, CSG's (now former) German teacher. On Thursday, December 21, 2017, we learned that Mr. Nocks was accused of two instances of illegal sexual contact with male minors while teaching at Westerville City Schools. The alleged incidents occurred approximately 50 years ago. Upon learning this information, I placed Mr. Nocks on administrative leave immediately and had him escorted off campus.

During its investigation, the Westerville Division of Police reported to me that Mr. Nocks admitted to allegations by one of his alleged victims. When this was confirmed to us, on Saturday, December 23rd, CSG terminated Mr. Nocks' employment and instructed him not to enter CSG property, absent written permission by me, or to have contact with any members of the CSG community going forward.

Let me stress that, at this time, we have **absolutely** no indication that Mr. Nocks ever engaged in any inappropriate behavior with CSG students or staff.

I have no doubt that this news is as shocking to you as it was to me. However, we acted as soon as we learned of the above allegations by placing him on leave and by terminating his relationship with CSG once we learned of his admission. Such behavior, regardless of when it occurred, makes Mr. Nocks unfit to teach at CSG.

As you know, ensuring the safety of the students entrusted to us is the foundation of all we do at CSG. Our policies and practices reflect that priority. Our hiring process involves thorough reference checks as well as an FBI background check, which Mr. Nocks passed when we hired him ten years ago. He passed a second FBI background check in 2013. We have regular trainings for all faculty and staff that include explicit discussions of healthy and clear boundaries between students and faculty, and in any instance in which those boundaries are crossed, we act swiftly and decisively to protect the children in our care. Our Faculty and Staff Handbook, which is required reading for all faculty and staff, makes clear our expectations for appropriate behavior as well as prohibited behavior for all adult members of our community.

Furthermore, as we support every one of our students in the development of her voice, we have multiple avenues for them to share any concerns, including concerns about faculty members and staff. A robust advisory program, as well as the expectation that our faculty is available all day for their students, fosters an environment in which students readily share concerns with trusted adults whenever they deem it necessary. Our counseling program includes not only confidential one-on-one access to our school counselors, but it also provides programming that educates our students about such things as healthy boundaries, offering a safe place to share concerns should they arise.



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Again, while we have no indication that Mr. Nocks acted inappropriately toward any CSG student or staff during his tenure at CSG, it is our intention to be thorough and to exercise an overabundance of caution as we take next steps with regard to Mr. Nocks' time at CSG. We will continue to cooperate fully with the Westerville Division of Police as they conduct their investigation. We intend to reach out to the CSG community to attempt to learn if Mr. Nocks had any inappropriate contact with our students or staff. In doing so, we aim to demonstrate our desire to support our students and staff—present and past—completely. You will receive a follow-up letter outlining the results of that investigation in due time.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to reach out to me should you have any questions or concerns about this matter and, in particular, if you are aware of any alleged inappropriate behavior by Mr. Nocks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Ciccarelli".

Jennifer Ciccarelli
Head of School