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GERING, Neb. <January 28, 2021> - Today, a criminal report is being publicized stating that a former Gering Junior High staff member was charged in relation to a November incident of inappropriate contact with a student at GJHS. The district immediately reported this incident to law enforcement, who began their own investigation. We collaborated with law enforcement to ensure we had a safe learning environment and also conducted our own investigation into the matter as required by law.

To protect the privacy rights of everyone involved, we cannot and will not disclose any additional information or comment further regarding the incident. However, we do want to confirm that the school has been in contact with all individuals involved and their parents and has taken all steps to ensure students are safe. This individual is no longer employed with the district effective the reported date of incident.

While the school district does not comment on personnel matters, we do want to affirm that the well-being of every student is a paramount priority in our schools. As a district, Gering Public Schools takes any report of inappropriate relations from a student seriously with the immediate protection of students in mind.

In today's world, it is unfortunate, but necessary for schools to implement policies and procedures that proactively address and outline protocols regarding inappropriate communications and relations between a staff and student. Gering Public Schools is proud to promote a culture where students feel secure in reporting concerns about their personal safety or any uncomfortable situation.

In addition, district leadership prioritizes ongoing action steps such as requiring all staff receive professional boundary training each year, the completion of required pre-employment background checks and drug screening, and annually reviewing and strengthening relevant policies.

As always, it is Gering Public Schools philosophy to be open and honest with families about situations when students are actively at risk. If incidents do occur and a student is directly impacted, Gering Public Schools communicates with the families directly involved so they are notified and informed.