

PRESS RELEASE

Sept. 20, 2019

Investigation Reveals Dr. Howard Student Injury Accidental

On Monday, Sept. 16, 2019, Champaign Police responded to the Carle Hospital Emergency Department following a report of an injured female student from Dr. Howard Elementary School. Upon arrival, officers discovered the student had sustained a serious laceration to her abdomen.

The incident was assigned to Champaign Police Detectives. The preliminary investigation revealed the injury occurred in a school bathroom while a group of students were voluntarily engaged in playful, yet aggressive behavior. The injury was initially reported as accidental with no immediate indication of bullying or a weapon present. However, police began receiving conflicting accounts into the incident with some suggesting the injury was the result of a malicious attack. Further complicating this matter was the presence of false and inaccurate information that was being widely circulated throughout the community.

After obtaining victim and witness statements and a review of all available video footage and evidence, the investigation has determined the student's injury was accidental and the result of her colliding with a locking device on a bathroom stall door. No other student was involved in the accident.

Although students were engaged in voluntary, aggressive behavior at the time of the injury, the investigation revealed no evidence of an involved weapon, bullying, criminal intent or a student being held against her will.

Champaign Police take all school safety concerns extremely seriously and worked thoroughly and expeditiously to investigate the cause of the student's injury.

Since no criminal conduct occurred regarding the injury, and to protect the privacy of the involved students, Champaign Police will have no further comment on this matter.

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