



**PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
prepared & empowered

Oct. 14, 2021

Dear members of the Portland Public Schools Community,

This past weekend, we informed Ocean Avenue Elementary School families about an incident involving a school employee. We can [now confirm](#) that Ben Conroy, an educational technician in the Beach program at that school, has been arrested and has also been charged with a count of sexual exploitation of a minor, a count of dissemination of sexually explicit material and a count of possession of sexually explicit material.

We have learned that these charges are related to the victimization of one of our students in the Beach K-1 classroom. Mr. Conroy, who has been employed by Portland Public Schools since this past summer, was placed on administrative leave by the district this past weekend. He has been ordered not to come to the school or have any contact with any of our students or their families.

We have been communicating directly with the families whose students were in the classroom with this staff member. I am communicating with the entire PPS community now to keep everyone informed.

I want you to know that what we understand has occurred is contrary to our top priority of ensuring all of our students are in a safe and supportive environment at all times when they are in our care. In addition to assisting law enforcement with their investigation, we are conducting our own internal investigation to determine what occurred and to understand any changes we should put in place. We are committed to conducting a full review and doing everything in our power to ensure that nothing like this will happen again.

We recognize how frightening and unsettling this is for parents. We are committed to providing any and all necessary support to students and families who were in the classroom with Mr. Conroy. We are actively working with community agencies to set up additional support for families, students and educators.

Sincerely,

***Xavier Botana, Superintendent***