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Statement of the Bender JCC on the Arrest of Michael Sherman

On Friday, April 25, 2025, the Bender JCC learned of the arrest of the now-former teacher, Michael Sherman. The arrest had no connection to any conduct that took place at the Bender JCC. The incident occurred in the State of Virginia, and Sherman has now been charged with Online Solicitation of a Minor. Michael Sherman's employment was immediately terminated, and he is prohibited from returning to the Bender JCC in any capacity.

Michael Sherman worked at the Bender JCC in several positions. He was most recently employed as a preschool teacher. Sherman had no previous allegations made against him at the time of his hire. As standard practice for all employees, the Bender JCC conducted regular background checks and screenings during Michael Sherman's employment that did not yield any prior misconduct.

The Bender JCC notified parents of children enrolled in the Bender JCC Early Childhood Center within 90 minutes of his arrest on April 25th, and the Bender JCC administration has also met with school parents and provided support and resources for them to have conversations with their children.

The Bender JCC is fully committed to providing a safe environment for children and youth and has had an ongoing partnership with the Center for Hope of LifeBridge Health, which provides regular staff training and review of its child protection policies.

Any person who has reason to believe a child has been subjected to sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect, must make a report to child protective services or law enforcement as soon as possible. Maryland's Child Protective Services' Hotline is 1-800-91-PREVENT (1-800-917-7383). DC's Child and Family Services' Hotline is **202-671-SAFE (202-671-7233)**.