



Rick Staly, Sheriff
FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

NEWS RELEASE

Date: November 8, 2024
Prepared by: Public Affairs Office
Email: PAO@flaglersheriff.com
Release #: 2024 – 202

Flagler County School Employee Arrested for Striking a Student with Disabilities

BUNNELL, Fla. — On November 7, an Indian Trails Middle School employee, Cheryl Andrews, 69, of Palm Coast, was arrested for Child Abuse without Great Bodily Harm following more than a month-long investigation.

On September 25, the Flagler County Sheriff's Office was notified by the Department of Children and Families that Andrews had struck a student inside the school's cafeteria. The school's CCTV footage shows Andrews walking behind the student and then striking him. The student is seen rubbing the back of his head and pointing at Andrews. Andrews immediately walks back to the student, aggressively shoving his head, then pulls his head backward towards her chest while placing another hand around his face. The employee was immediately suspended when the Flagler County Public School District was notified of the incident.

FCSO's Major Case Unit began its investigation on October 4. During the investigation FCSO learned the student is nonverbal. Detectives determined there was no further immediate danger to the student and ensured there was no further contact with Andrews, and the victim, and the child's family while detectives continued their investigation. FCSO received assistance from the University of Florida's First Coast Child Protection Team who interviewed the victim with the parent's consent.

A witness was also interviewed, who told detectives Andrews is "very aggressive towards all the students" and her actions against the victim were unprovoked.

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Andrews was also interviewed and admitted to striking the child unprovoked and told detectives she “didn’t know why she did that.” Andrews also acknowledged she is aware the victim is a student with disabilities.

FCSO detectives arrested Andrews, and she was transported to the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility. She was later released on bond. On November 8, during Andrews' first appearance before a judge, a Flagler County judge ordered Andrews to have no contact with anyone under the age of 18.

“I want to thank the Major Case Unit for a thorough investigation to ensure all facts were known while protecting the student from further assault,” said Sheriff Rick Staly. “School employees have a difficult job in today’s environment, but this was an unprovoked assault, and the school district took immediate action to safeguard students from this aggressive employee. We will not tolerate attacks on a student regardless of who commits it. The District and the Sheriff’s Office are committed to ensuring a safe learning environment for everyone.”

The Flagler County Public School District released this statement, “The employee is on paid administrative leave pending further investigation.”



Cheryl Andrews (Flagler Co. Jail Mugshot)

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