

July 29, 2026

Cheltenham Community -

Today, Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin Steele announced charges against individuals for committing crimes within our football program.

Cheltenham School District's thoughts remain with the victim and their family. No student should ever experience violence or fear in a school-related setting. While no legal outcome can erase the harm that was experienced, we appreciate that after nearly a year, charges have been announced and those responsible are being held accountable through the criminal justice system.

Throughout this highly sensitive investigation, the district's guiding priority was, and remains, the safety and well-being of every student. Every report brought to the district's attention was addressed based on the information available at the time. As the full facts were being investigated, the district made decisions to suspend the 2025-2026 football program and later cancel the upcoming 2026-2027 football season. The district also separated from every member of its football coaching staff. These decisions were not made lightly; rather, they reflected the district's commitment to protecting the safety and well-being of students while investigations unfolded. Throughout this time, the district also cooperated with law enforcement and made the appropriate referrals to law enforcement and ChildLine.

The findings of the grand jury, statements by the district attorney and significant time taken to conclude the grand jury investigation reflect what the district has known for some time and what has made addressing this situation challenging; individuals did not cooperate with the investigative process. Fortunately, the tools law enforcement and the grand jury has, like the ability to issue search warrants and compel sworn testimony, brought information to light and allowed the district attorney to hold those responsible through the filing of criminal charges.

The district supports the recommendation to expand the Child Protective Services law to include hazing as a mandatory reportable offense for school officials. However, the district encourages state officials to consider whether this change goes far enough, since “hazing” requires a finding that the conduct was committed “for the purpose of initiating, admitting or affiliating a minor or student into or with an organization, or for the purpose of continuing or enhancing a minor or student's membership or status in an organization,” as defined by 18 Pa. Cons. Stat. § 2802(a) which is not always immediately recognizable in reports of student-on-student assaults. We look forward to working with our local elected officials - State Senator Art Haywood and State Representative Napoleon Nelson - to push for these reforms as they have always been advocates for our students and their safety and wellbeing.

As the new school year approaches, please know that we are committed to the safety and well-being of every student. During the remaining weeks of the summer, we will continue to review, strengthen, and reinforce our safety protocols and operational procedures to ensure our schools are prepared to provide a safe, secure, and supportive learning environment for all students.

Respectfully,

Dr. Brian W. Scriven
Superintendent of Schools