

Chuo University, affiliate tainted by entrance exam scandal

Kyodo

YOKOHAMA — A junior high school affiliated with Chuo University in Yokohama accepted an applicant related to a friend of the chairman of the university's board in February even though the applicant scored poorly on the entrance exam, officials from the Kanagawa Prefectural Government said Wednesday.

The applicant is a grandchild of an acquaintance of Chairman Shuji Hisano, who informed the principal of Chuo University Yokohama Yamate Junior High School that the student would take the exam on Feb. 2, the officials said.

The student was accepted the next day.

The favor came to light after a whistle blower's report triggered an investigation by a third-party panel at the university, which demanded a rescission. The junior high school invalidated the result on March 8.

The applicant, who did not know such a favor had been worked out behind the scenes, had already completed enrollment by then.

Hisano and Koichi Tanaka, the principal of the junior high school, visited the offices of the prefectural government on March 13 to report on the incident and said they would deal with the issue in a cordial manner.

The school subsequently apologized to the student.

At a press conference on Wednesday, Tanaka admitted that he let a student who did not meet the school's standards pass the entrance exam.

"Our school became an affiliate of the university very recently, and I had considered the fact that we received a lot of support for that," Tanaka said.

Hisano's acquaintance, a graduate of Chuo University, is reportedly a significant donor to the school.

Hisano said he was sorry for his involvement in the incident but denied asking the principal to pull some strings.

"I informed the principal of the name of the applicant in mid-January, but I did not ask him to grant special favors," Hisano said.

Chuo University Yokohama Yamate was formerly a girl's school. It became an affiliate of the university in 2010 and has been co-ed since the school year started in April.

Chuo University's governing board decided to demand that Hisano "voluntarily return" 30 percent of his pay for three months and that the dean of the university, Tadahiko Fukuhara, give up 10 percent of his salary for three months. What will happen to Tanaka hasn't been decided.

Kanagawa Prefecture provided about ¥79 million in subsidies to Chuo University Yokohama Yamate last year but said it will consider reducing the amount.

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