

Dearborn Heights School District No. 7

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March 9, 2018

Dear District 7 Families:

Most of us are aware of the abundance of school threats that are being made by students all over Michigan since the tragedy that happened in Parkland, Florida. Many of these threats have been highlighted on the news. Some of the threats have been identified as acts of terrorism and the responsible students are being charged. District 7 Schools have not been spared in this epidemic. Annapolis High School has been involved in three different incidents since the Florida shooting...none of which have been found to be credible. We have been very transparent about the situations that are happening, and we will continue to do so. Also, I want parents to know that we make a police report of every single incident that has any hint of a threatening tone toward our students, staff or facilities.

I would like to take this opportunity to dispel any rumors that may have been generated in the last few days regarding alleged threats to Annapolis High School. I will be as detailed as possible in my summaries of each incident.

- 1) After playing a review game called Kahoot in one of his classes, a student received an automatically generated email from the game that acknowledged how well the student did in the game that day. The automatic response also gives statements of encouragement, and the one that this student received said, "Better watch out tomorrow!" The student sent this email in a forward to one of his friends. In the forward, he said to his friend..."Kahoot sounds like a school shooter." No threat was made. A full investigation took place. The police made a report and made contact with the student and the parent. The student was disciplined.
- 2) A student made a very bad decision and told one of her friends that she had heard a rumor that someone was going to shoot up the school on Friday (today). The student she told then told another student. This second student to hear it, posted the rumor on his Snapchat and warned his followers to stay home from school on that day. Another student saw the post on Snapchat and then posted the same warning on her Snapchat. In all of this communication of a rumor that the first student completely made up (there never was an actual threat made), none of the students reported the rumor to a school official. All four students were disciplined.
- 3) This morning, a student discovered that someone had written on a bathroom wall: "APRIL 4th School Shooting". The police were called immediately and reported to the school. Pictures were taken and turned over to the police prior to cleaning the wall. We realized immediately that the date noted (April 4th) is actually during spring break when all District 7 schools will be closed, which immediately deems the threat as not credible. Administration began watching the cameras to identify everyone who had used the bathroom prior to the student who reported. As you can imagine, this created a LONG list of students to question about the incident. As expected, none of the students reported knowing anything about the writing on the wall, nor did any of them claim to have seen it while they were in the bathroom.

Educational Excellence and Lifelong Success

Even though the last of these incidents was not deemed credible, if we discover the student responsible for the writing, that student will face charges. A threat like that is considered terrorism and does carry a heavy consequence by law. Because of the seriousness of this, I'm asking that you continue to have conversations with your children about these fake threats. Please remind them that every incident is being fully investigated, reported to the police and appropriate discipline is being given.

I am aware that the reports of these fake threats are scary for our students and for parents. I have received many calls, emails and messages from concerned parents wanting to know what we are doing to stop these incidents from happening. Unfortunately, we can't control the decisions being made by our students. At the high school, our staff is talking to the students daily about these types of actions and the consequences that result from them. We are reminding the students of ways to report things (saysomething@dhsd7.net) that they see or hear and the importance behind that reporting. We are investigating every tip we receive regardless how small or insignificant it may seem. We are reporting every threat related incident to the police regardless of whether it is credible or not. We are giving appropriate consequences to every student connected to these potential threats regardless of the magnitude of their involvement. We truly are doing everything that we can to keep order at the high school despite these disruptions.

As always, I am happy to speak to any parent with additional questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Mast".

Jennifer Mast
Superintendent of Schools