

To the Aurora and Naperville Communities:

As leaders in the cities of Aurora and Naperville, we take our responsibility for the safety of our communities very seriously. As part of this obligation, we feel the need once again to publicly address the topic of threats against our school communities.

In recent weeks, our community has been the victim of several threats involving our schools in Naperville District 203 and Indian Prairie District 204. This is highly concerning. These threats have caused significant disruptions to our learning environments, diverted substantial resources to investigate, and eroded parents', students' and staff members' confidence in their schools being safe environments.

While we continue to actively investigate these incidents, we are also asking for the community's help. Parents, please take a moment to discuss the topic of school threats with your child in an age-appropriate way and pledge as a family to both report threats to the proper authorities and refrain from sharing rumored threats and unverified information with others.

Start an Open Dialogue

We acknowledge that not all threats against our schools originate locally, as is the case with the Oct. 15 threat against Naperville North High School, which has been traced to a juvenile in New York. However, some threats do start with our own students. We encourage parents to have open and honest conversations with their children about the seriousness of making threats against an individual or a school community. Children need to understand that there is no such thing as "joking" about bringing a weapon to school, planting a bomb, initiating violence against another, or causing general chaos.

As the agencies responsible for the safety of our schools, Aurora and Naperville Police Departments will thoroughly investigate any threats, the DuPage and Will County State's Attorneys' Offices will aggressively pursue legal action against perpetrators, and School Districts 203 and 204 will invoke severe discipline, up to and including expulsion.

Report Threats of Violence

Every member of a school community is responsible for its safety. We encourage everyone to "See Something, Say Something" and ask anyone with information about a threat of violence to bring it to the attention of school administrators and law enforcement.

You may be wondering what constitutes a threat. A threat is any expression of intent to harm another. Threats can be spoken, written, communicated using technology, or expressed in other means, such as gestures or body language. Threats can be made directly to the intended victim, communicated to third parties or expressed in ways ranging from verbal threats on phones, writing on public property, in notes, on social media or over text messaging.

Fact Check Before Sharing Rumors

We understand how unsettling it is to think that the safety of your child or your school community is threatened. However, spreading rumored or unverified information has the potential to cause great confusion and anxiety.

We strongly encourage parents and students alike to refrain from posting or sharing rumors about threats of violence on social media. Instead, fact check before forwarding or responding to rumors on social media. This can be done by calling your school's office or your local police department's non-emergency number to ask if they are aware of a rumored threat of violence. We may be limited in what we can say while an investigation is ongoing, but we ask for your trust that our agencies are doing everything in our power to keep our students, staff, and school communities safe.

Especially after the tumultuous few years our students have had navigating remote learning because of a global pandemic, we want nothing more than safe and stable environments for our students to learn and grow in. We are hopeful that by working together, we can reduce the frequency of threats against our schools, calm general anxiety about school safety, and refocus community dialogue on more positive topics, like the growth and education of our students.

Thank you for your attention to this topic,



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