

# ***HUNTINGDON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT***

## ***Administrative Office***

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**Jennifer Mitchell**  
**Superintendent**

**Christopher Evans**  
**Director of Pupil Services**

**Matthew R. Gibson**  
**Business Manager**

December 16, 2021

Dear Families and Guardians,

School safety is extremely important to the district administrative team. Recently there have been some school safety concerns nationally and in our state.

We have received notification that there are warnings of school shootings and bomb threats on social media, specifically TikTok. The messages warn of the existence of such threats, but do not contain specific threats, schools, actors, or locations. There are currently no known credible threats to schools in Pennsylvania.

This situation serves as a good example of why it is important to avoid sharing posts online that refer to school safety threats. Even if they are not credible threats, they can cause a great deal of stress and anxiety for our students, families, and staff. We ask our families to monitor their children's social media activity and speak with them about proper behavior online.

All threats and concerns about school safety should be reported to school administration. The best way to do so is through The Safe2Say Something program. This program is available for anonymous reporting at Safe2Say at (844) 723-2729, or [info@safe2saypa.org](mailto:info@safe2saypa.org), or online at [www.safe2saypa.org](http://www.safe2saypa.org) 24 hours a day.

We have noted an increase in both our high school and middle school buildings of students saying or doing actions that could jeopardize the safety of our students. It is our responsibility to investigate all incidents and ensure the safety of everyone. Young adult learners may not fully understand the repercussions of their comments and actions on the greater community. All threats must be investigated and require extensive time and energy of our administrative and mental health teams. This all takes away from focusing on learning. Officer McBride will be conducting informational sessions with student groups as necessary.

The purpose of this communication is to clearly define our threat assessment process and potential consequences for making threats to ensure we are stopping substantial threats and reducing non-genuine or sustainable (transient) threats. Please review this information with your child.

First, a threat is an expression of intent to harm someone that may be spoken, gestured, or communicated in some other form, such as via text messaging, email, or other electronic means. An expression of intent to harm someone is considered a threat regardless of whether it is communicated to the intended victim(s)

and regardless of whether the intended victim is aware of the threat. Threats may be implied or stated in an indirect manner if a recipient would reasonably regard the behavior as a threat.

Second, a threat assessment will be conducted by the administration. The administration will make a preliminary determination of the seriousness of the threat. The student will be removed to a safe location in or outside of the school to conduct threat assessment.

Transient Threat-Not serious

Parent will be notified

Notify School Resource Officer as needed for assistance

Reprimand and/or discipline assigned

Refer if needed to the Student Assistance Program

Substantial Threat-Serious

Take immediate precautions to protect the potential victim(s)

Notify the School Resource Officer and consult with law enforcement as potential credible threat is established and related charges filed as necessary

Notify the potential victim(s) and parents

Discipline the student as appropriate to the severity of the situation

Referral for mental health support

School messenger communication will be sent if necessary to communicate the situation and actions taken in general to ensure safety for all. Again, please do not rely on social media posts not generated from the school district.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Mitchell

Huntingdon Area School District Superintendent