

Somerville Public Schools

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
51 WEST CLIFF STREET
SOMERVILLE, NEW JERSEY 08876

DR. TIMOTHY TEEHAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
superintendent@somervilleschools.org

TELEPHONE (908) 218-4101
FAX (908) 526-9668
TWITTER: @Ville_Sup

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Dear Parents/ Guardians,

As you may or may not be aware, the high school community has had several stressful days. We are well aware that parents, students, and staff want specific information about the events that have unfolded. For those that may not be aware, I am taking this opportunity to share again the information about the four events that were discovered from Friday through Monday.

Event 1

Friday 11/30/18

Approximately 7:30 p.m.

Platform: Snapchat

SHS and District administrators were notified of a post and immediately contacted the Somerville Police Department. SPD determined that the post did not pose an immediate or potential threat to student or staff safety. Somerville High School administrators and district administrators then followed district policy and procedure, based on the nature of the post, and acted accordingly.

Note: There is no relation to events 2, 3, or 4 (outlined in this email).

Update 12/6/18: *Somerville Police Department continue to deem this a non-credible threat.*

Event 2

Saturday 12/1/18

Approximately 7:30 a.m.

Platform: Instagram

SHS and District administrators were notified of two (2) Instagram accounts that contained disturbing posts. The Somerville Police Department was immediately contacted to investigate. Throughout Saturday and Sunday, SHS and District administrators assisted SPD in the investigation. SPD conducted interviews of those individuals connected to the event. By Sunday evening, it was determined that the district policies and procedures would follow based on the nature of the posts and SHS was safe to complete a regularly scheduled school day. Although there was no immediate or potential threat, the district requested police presence at SHS for arrival to help make staff and students feel safe.

Note: There is no relation to events 1, 3, or 4 (outlined in this email).

Update 12/6/18: *Somerville Police Department continue to deem this a non-credible threat.*

Event 3

Monday 12/3/18

Approximately 11 a.m.

Platform: Phone Calls

SHS administrators received a report that multiple students had received a similarly threatening phone call on Saturday night and had reported it to Branchburg Police Department. SPD joined the Somerville High School administration, District administration, and the Somerset County Prosecutor's Office to investigate. There is no immediate or potential threat to student or staff safety.

Note: There is no relation to events 1, 2, and 4 (outlined in this email).

***Update 12/6/18:** Somerville Police Department continue to deem this a non-credible threat.*

Event 4

Monday 12/3/18

Approximately 11:30 a.m.

Platform: Instagram

An individual reported a post referring to "Somerville School." It was immediately investigated by SPD and determined to be non-credible. There is no immediate or potential threat to student or staff safety.

Note: This was deemed an unfounded reaction to events 1, 2, and 3 (outlined in this email).

***Update 12/6/18:** Somerville Police Department continue to deem this a non-credible threat.*

It is important to note that these four events have been investigated by the school, police, and Prosecutor's Office and continue to be deemed not credible. However, they will continue to investigate further if and when new information is provided.

Last night and this morning, two new rumors have been brought to our attention related to beliefs that specific students are being targeted along with a belief that a potential attack in the school on Friday will take place. Though there are several variations of these rumors, Somerville Police Department has determined that there is no potential threat.

Parents of the identified students have already been contacted. Police detectives have been conducting numerous interviews with the identified students and any individuals named as potential holders of information or evidence. To date, the claims have not been substantiated with any evidence besides students and parents hearing variations of the rumors. We would like to repeat, there is no evidence aside from students and parents stating that they heard something about these incidents from others. We are aware that rumors continue to be shared through social media, texts, phone calls, and conversations. Kindly refrain from sharing or re-posting unsubstantiated information since this complicates the active investigation. However, please contact school

administrators or the Somerville police directly and provide specific text messages, posts, screenshots, etc. that can be used to further the investigation.

Please be assured the safety of your children, our staff, and our community is our top priority. We will continue to keep you informed.

Sincerely,

Dr. Timothy M. Teehan
Superintendent of Somerville Public Schools