



Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Jerry L. Clayton

Media Release

School Threat Arrest

Over the last three weeks, the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office has responded to nine threats towards local school districts. These incidents range from bomb threats written on a bathroom door to social media posts. This is a considerable increase in the number of school-related threats and requires a significant dedication of resources to investigate.

We take each of these cases seriously and use every resource possible to fully investigate their validity. Our goal is to ensure safety, and in doing so, we must make every effort to stay vigilant and not assume that these threats are just a common prank. However, with those investigations comes significant impacts to students, parents, teachers, and law enforcement officers. Each investigation takes a considerable amount of resources. Bomb-sniffing dogs are often brought in, numerous officers are needed in order to secure the scene, students are often evacuated or relocated, and ultimately the school day is disrupted. Locking down or evacuating an entire school can also be a traumatic and frightening experience for many of our young students.

Due to the significant community impact that these incidents are having, we are asking for parents and educators to help us in communicating to our students the severity of these "pranks" or social media posts.

In the event that we are able to identify the person responsible for the threat we will be seeking criminal charges where appropriate. In one case a middle school student wrote that "a bomb is going off at 1 p.m." and required the entire school to be evacuated. No arrests have been made in this case, but a middle school suspect has been identified. On March 5th Ypsilanti Middle School, Lincoln Middle School, Lincoln High School, and a local elementary all had some form of a school threat, none of which were substantiated. In the high school incident, a 25-year-old former student of the district was arrested for a social media post where he stated that "he may be the school shooter." As this release was being written a 15-year-old student was taken into custody for a bomb threat that she admitted to making.

Below are some of the possible charges. Of course, there are many other charges that can be considered depending on the facts of the case. In addition to these criminal charges, there is always the possibility of school discipline, including suspension or expulsion.

- False Report of a Threat of Terrorism (20 year felony and/or \$20,000)
- Computers-Using to Commit Crime (10 year and/or \$10,000)
- Computers-Internet-Communicating with Another to Commit Crime (Maximum imprisonment of 15 years or more or life)



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It is not our intention to arrest and charge every student where school discipline is appropriate, but in cases where crimes have been committed and where an arrest is warranted there is the possibility that those responsible may be charged.

It is also important to acknowledge the numerous students that have come forward and reported these threats as they have been posted on social media or written on school walls. We thank you and ask that you continue to make reports whenever a post is threatening. In doing so you are helping to keep our community safe.

For media inquiries contact Director Jackson at 734-891-2243 or jacksond@ewashtenaw.org