

PHS Parents

I wanted to provide everyone with a quick update of today's early release at PHS. Yesterday, a few students received menacing and anonymous Snapchat messages that were non-threatening. However, rumors took over today and some 'copy cat' activity began ultimately leading to a threat message. We had been working with the Piqua PD since yesterday with all leads up to this point and felt it was best to do an early release for the safety of the students and to provide us time to pay more close attention to the leads we had without more rumors developing within the school setting. Within 15 minutes of finding the threat message, I sent the following Instant Connect Message out to PHS parents.

Hello, this is Dwayne Thompson superintendent of Piqua City Schools. I am contacting all PHS parents at this time to announce an early release from the Piqua High School. Buses will be here for us to begin releasing students at 11:50. Yesterday I announced that some Students received Snapchat messages, but at that time there were no threats being made. The messages simply indicated that the sender knew information about the students and it would be revealed. Today Rumors circulating about the Snapchat posts made yesterday have resulted in multiple rumors of threats from multiple sources that need to be further assessed. In the interest of student safety during these assessments we are going to dismiss students early. Thank you for your cooperation with this process.

At the same time, PHS staff worked hard to contain all students in a lock down mode to ensure everyone was safe.

The PHS staff, Piqua Transportation department, cabinet members, and the Piqua Police did an AMAZING job of keeping students safe and orderly through this whole situation! I cannot praise this team enough for their attention to detail and for putting student safety first!

As I was debriefing with the police chief, I began to get messages from people indicating they heard that a shooter was in the building with a gun. THIS WAS NOT TRUE AT ALL. There was no gun present and the early release, again, was precautionary. I sent the following message to the district as a result to squelch the rumor.

Hello this is Dwayne Thompson superintend of Piqua City schools. Today we released Piqua High School students early. There have been non- threatening Snapchat messages sent to students over the past two days. These have resulted in a number of rumors that needed further assessment by the Piqua Police Dept. Rumors continue to be spread at this point about a person with a gun at the high school. This is just a rumor and not true. The early release today was a precautionary release only and not the result of anyone having a gun in the school setting. I repeat, there was no gun present at the high school today. All students have been safely released at this time. Thank you for taking this message.

While Mr. Messick and his staff was meeting to debrief, it came to my attention that some parents did not receive the first call I sent out - causing some confusion with parents who were responding to only rumors at this point. I immediately sent the following message out to clarify what was happening.

Hello, this is Dwayne Thompson superintendent of Piqua City Schools. I am contacting all PHS parents at this time because it is my understanding that some parents did not get my initial call that went out shortly after 11:00 today. At that time I announced the early release and indicated that some Students received Snapchat messages yesterday, but at that time there were no threats being made. The messages simply indicated that the sender knew information about the

students and it would be revealed. Today rumors circulating about the Snapchat posts made yesterday have resulted in multiple rumors of threats from multiple sources that need to be further assessed. In the interest of student safety during these assessments dismissed students early. I apologize if you did not get this initial message and greatly appreciate the cooperation of all students and parents. We will continue to work with the Piqua Police and send out an update later today. Thank you.

We continue to be in contact and work closely with the Piqua Police Dept. to hand over all evidence and leads we have surrounding this situation. I want to reassure everyone that we are making great strides with the information we have.

In order for us to make sure all students continue to be safe and false rumors do not continue to distract from the investigation, Police Chief Jamison and I feel it is best to cancel school for Piqua High School students tomorrow, 12/1/2017. This will ensure us time to engage in an investigation that will lead us to some positive conclusions.

I GREATLY appreciate everyone's patience and communication today. I sincerely apologize to anyone that did not receive a phone message that was sent out earlier today. It truly was our intent to keep all parents informed as we worked through this process. Please know that we are working closely with Instant Connect to better understand why this happened so we can prevent it from happening again.

If anyone has information that may be helpful to the Piqua Police, or if you know of anyone that may have information to help, please report it to the Piqua Police:

Submit a Tip

Residents can anonymously provide the Piqua Police Department with information via the Crime Stoppers Line by calling 937-615-TIPS (8477). The caller may record information concerning ongoing investigations or criminal matters. These tips are then forwarded to the proper investigating section of the Piqua Police.

Thank you!

Dwayne A. Thompson
Superintendent
Piqua City Schools