

ORCHARD VIEW SCHOOLS

35 S. SHERIDAN DRIVE
MUSKEGON, MICHIGAN 49442
www.orchardview.org

February 7, 2023

Dear Orchard View Community,

Early this morning I was made aware of a "threat" made last night while students were playing a video game. The child who made the threat lives in New Hampshire and allegedly he threatened to blow up the school of another child playing the game. The other child is a student at Orchard View Middle School. Police officers in New Hampshire reacted immediately when they were informed, and by early this morning the threat was considered "**not credible**". Police officials in New Hampshire were in contact with officers at Muskegon Township throughout the night. Early this morning, I was contacted by School Resource Officer Chad Wilson, and told the threat was not credible and it was safe to hold classes throughout the district as normal. It was discovered this morning around 9:00 am that a message had been left on a voicemail connected to the athletic office, consistent with what we heard from officers in New Hampshire. We appreciate our partners at Muskegon Township Police Department and those in New Hampshire who began immediately to address this school threat.

I want to take this opportunity to share a prior statement from Muskegon County Prosecutor D.J. Hilson:

"Any threat, real or implied, against a school, staff, or students is a felony. A criminal threat can be verbal, written, or posted online. It is not a defense to claim that the threat was a joke or was not going to be acted upon. We encourage parents to be extra vigilant in monitoring their children's online activities and their electronic devices to ensure the material being posted or disseminated is not threatening in any way. We have been made aware of verbal or written threats being made against schools in other communities, and we are asking our parents to help us prevent such threatening communication from occurring in our community. We are also working with area schools to help spread the message to our kids that jokes about violence against schools are no laughing matter and carry significant consequences."

Please take some time this evening to have a conversation with your children about situations like this. Help them understand the lifelong consequences that social media threats can have. Please also use this opportunity to show them how some individuals did the right thing to keep our community and schools safe and encourage them to do the same if they see something. Please remind children if they see something, say something!

If you have questions or concerns please call me at 231-760-1300 or email me at jim.nielsen@orchardview.org.

Sincerely,

Jim Nielsen

Jim Nielsen, Superintendent
Orchard View Schools

It's a Great Day to be a Cardinal!