

SOUTH BRUNSWICK TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Scott Feder
Superintendent of Schools



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Dear South Brunswick Families,

I believe it would be fair to say that emotions and concerns continue to run high following the recent tragedy in Parkland, Florida and the loss of 17 lives. I want to take a moment to address one specific area in regard to safety and security and how our families can assist.

In the last week, we have had 2 instances that were brought to the district's attention. This included verbal statements, as well as reports of a weapon on school grounds. Although none of the instances resulted in an actual threat, it is of extreme importance that all are fully aware of the necessity to address every security concern brought to our attention.

The school and the police can be reactive to such concerns, but it is the proactive behaviors that will make the most difference. I am reaching out to you to ask that each family join the schools in discussing the importance and the serious nature of what it means to make a threatening statement (whether in person, on social media, through phone or any electronic communication). This includes a full understanding as to what can be characterized as "joking" and what **will not be** characterized as such. The district will be taking an active role in being proactive as we continue to educate our students on safety and responsibility as it relates to this.

South Brunswick School District, in conjunction with our Police Department, will continue to investigate all incidents and formal/serious consequences will be rendered. Any statements made that appear to suggest a threat to the school or a person will be acted upon. Excuses such as "I did not mean anything by it" or "I was only joking" will not suffice as an acceptable rationale. Rather, threats of any nature may result in charges filed and/or serious implications at the school level. Making a threat for the purpose of scaring another is never a joke, funny, or acceptable.

Furthermore, we are asking you to help us in this effort by reporting any concerns. This past week, both parents and students chose to report something that was concerning to them. This remains a key component to safety in schools and elsewhere. The "See something, say something" motto is real and while it is not the complete answer to safety, it certainly is an important component and one we value. This includes anything seen on your child's social media accounts as this is the most popular mode of communication for our society and often the first place students will go to share. We want our students to understand the value in reporting threats and danger as a way to protect themselves and very often, the person at the root of the issue. Our students are learners, and if the schools, the families and the police provide a clear message in the need to report, it can be a key factor in South Brunswick's continued work to prevent potentially dangerous situations. **So please encourage your students to notify an adult with anything that concerns them and allow the adults to make a determination as to what next steps are necessary.**

While there are debates on how to best secure schools, I hope we can agree on one thing: working together as a team, we can best support our youth. I thank you for your support and for guiding your children.

Sincerely,



Scott Feder
Superintendent of Schools