

Social Media Threats: Sample Statements & Letters

MESSAGE OPTION #1: Potential Threat/Public Concern

[School District] has been notified of a post on a local Facebook site with school names **similar** to our district that suggests a list of school violence targets. This posting is not in reference to our district or any of our buildings.

As always, please contact any of our schools with information of potential threats. Thank you for partnering in keeping our [mascot] safe!

MESSAGE OPTION #2: Potential Threat/Public Concern

[School District] is aware of several social media rumors circulating. The district was made aware of a general transient social media post yesterday. The post has been thoroughly investigated, and it is not a credible threat.

It is believed the post originated in the **XX** area where a student was also arrested in relation to the post. Separately, someone posted today on another local social media page that our school was under threat and in lockdown. This is also false information.

Please know that if there is any kind of threat, we will work directly with our district team and the local police department to investigate the threat immediately. We investigate every threat regardless of the source or level of credibility. We are grateful when a concern is reported so we can investigate the incident.

Thank you for your continued support in keeping our students safe!

MESSAGE OPTION #3: Potential Threat/Public Concern

Our district is reaching out due to public concern because of a threat in a neighboring district. The alleged threat came as a social media post was directed at schools in another state. The words “targeted” and “school” were used in the post.

While this instance appears to hold no merit and directly impacts a neighboring district rather than ours, we at [school district] want to assure our public that we are vigilant in watching what is going on in and around our campus to ensure the safety of our students, staff, and community always.

We are grateful when citizens report a concern and our practice it to investigate all safety matters. Thank you for your continued support in keeping our schools safe!

MESSAGE OPTION #4: Incident Occurred

Dear **DISTRICT** Family,

I am reaching out asking for your help and support. In the last few days, we have had two separate incidents related to threats at **[campus locations]**. These incidents cause stress on our students, families, and staff. The threats also disrupt the learning environment.

We are appreciative of our administrators and local law enforcement partners who work quickly and thoroughly to investigate threats, and we are thankful these threats were deemed not to be credible.

We ask that you talk to your child about the seriousness of making a threat. Please help us emphasize to all students that making a threat against a public school, whether it occurs on social media, in conversation, or in any other form has serious legal and disciplinary consequences.

As a district, we process all incidents in accordance with our district's policies with support from local law enforcement.

Please also talk to your child about reporting any threatening post or communication to our school staff and police. We continue to encourage an environment where students, staff, and families feel empowered to report anything that might be suspicious or out of the ordinary; prompt reporting is important in helping us be proactive in maintaining a safe school environment.

If you see a social media threat, please don't forward or repost it. Instead, take a screenshot and share it with school administrators and police. Sharing the post makes it harder to determine who created it and hampers the investigation.

Additional requests:

- Do not seek answers on social media. If you have a question, please contact us directly.
- Help us stop the spread of rumors. Many times, the story spread by rumors is far from the truth. We want to protect our students' lives and character.
- Our commitment to you is to do all we can to keep our students and staff safe. We have multiple safety protocols in our schools including, but not limited to, our secure entrances where visitors must show ID and cannot access the building without going through the main office; the Raptor screening system for all visitors; School Resources Officers at [school campus locations]; a strong partnership with the Police Department; the use of Gaggle (or similar) - the software used to monitor student online activity and document creation on our district Chromebooks for keywords and phrases; solid student-teacher relationships; district and building emergency plans; and drills to practice our response in emergencies.

Please assure your students that we are doing all we can to keep them safe.

We are committed to providing you with as much information as we can. However, specific information about the incident, student names, and disciplinary action cannot be publicly shared.

We will also communicate with you consistently, but please know that our priority is ensuring our students and staff are safe. We will then need to investigate the matter to ensure any information we provide is accurate.

Once these steps have taken place, we will communicate with you directly using email, phone or text. The emergency level and time of day will determine how we send messages.

We truly appreciate our partnership with our families in all we do. If you have questions or concerns, please reach out.

MESSAGE OPTION #5: Incident Occurred

The [City] Police Department was recently contacted by many parents regarding public concerns over one of our schools being targeted for violence. Officers and detectives swiftly responded. Through the investigation, it was determined that a young student saw a video on TikTok that identified several schools that were targeted for violence, including one in in our district. Another student shared the Snapchat Story and the post

went viral within our community. Detectives spoke with the student and learned that the video had since been deleted.

During this investigation, we learned that several TikTok videos show lists of hundreds of “targeted” schools. Many of these lists contain multiple schools that ranged from K-12 schools to universities located across the United States. During the investigation, we found no specific credible threat to any [our district] schools.

We have also received several screenshots from posts of Snapchat stories that talk about the potential for violence at one of our schools. Each of the original people who posted on their Snapchat Stories about this have been interviewed. Detectives learned that they didn’t have any information regarding a specific threat but were only posting out of fear and concern for their safety and the safety of their friends. There have also been many others who are sharing unconfirmed rumors which has added to fears.

Please know that this is an open investigation. All leads are being aggressively investigated by a team of officers and detectives. If you have any information you are encouraged to call the police department at NUMBER.

Dear [DISTRICT] Families,

You may be aware of the increase in social media threats against schools across the state this week. Early this morning, both SCHOOL and SCHOOL were mentioned in threatening social media posts. While we do not believe these threats to be credible, we are working with local law enforcement to investigate and bolster security; therefore, you will see an increased police presence at all campuses this morning.

These incidents cause stress on our students and families, as well as our staff. They also disrupt the learning environment. We appreciate our administrators and local law enforcement partners who work quickly and thoroughly to investigate these threats. However, if it’s age-appropriate, we ask that you talk to your student about the seriousness of making a threat. Please help us emphasize to all students that making a threat against a public school whether it occurs on social media, in conversation, as writing on a bathroom wall, or in any other format has serious legal and disciplinary consequences. As a district, we will process all incidents in fulfillment of our district’s policies with support from our CITY Police Department and our local juvenile office. Please also talk to your student about reporting any threatening post or communication to our school staff and police. We will continue to encourage an environment where students, staff, and families feel empowered to report anything that might be suspicious or out of the ordinary; prompt reporting is important in helping us to be proactive in

maintaining a safe school environment. If you see a social media threat, please don't forward or repost it. Instead, take a screenshot and share it with our school administrators and police. Sharing the post makes it harder to find out who started it and slows down the investigation. A few additional requests: Do not seek answers on social media. If you have a question, please contact us directly. Help us stop the spread of rumors. Our commitment to you is to do all we can to keep our students and staff safe.

Sincerely,

NAME

DISTRICT Superintendent