

Karen Carson
Knox County Board of Education, District 5

Memo

To: Farragut High School Families

From: Karen Carson, District 5 School Board Member

Date: April 22, 2016

Re: Follow-up from Community Meeting

Farragut Families,

I wanted to provide a brief follow-up to our community meeting regarding the threats we've experienced this year at the school. I truly appreciate you taking the time to attend, as well as providing valuable input during the meeting. Below is a brief summary of what was discussed. If I've missed anything, please feel free to email those details to me at karen.carson@knoxschools.org.

- Parents expressed an interest in having more detailed and timely communications regarding threats, evacuations, lockdowns, etc. School system officials and law enforcement explained the process for communication and the importance of taking care of children first, assembling the facts that are accurate and releasable to the public, and then deploying the information. Regarding the need to receive more detail, law enforcement and school security officials explained that providing too much detail could compromise the investigative process and lead to "copycat" threats.
- Parents suggested an idea of designating a community person to assist the school/school district in disseminating information (perhaps a PTA/PTO/PTSO person). The school district will look into this suggestion further.
- Parents expressed a desire for more coordinated communications between Farragut Intermediate, Middle and High Schools when incidents occur, as all 3 schools share the same campus area.
- Parents suggested providing timely follow-up to students and parents when law enforcement/school officials have given the "all clear" on lockdowns, evacuations, etc.
- School system officials reminded attendees of the anonymous text-a-tip line (text 274637, which spells CRIMES). This mechanism has been in place with the Knox County Schools for approximately 4 years. School system officials committed to an effort to re-publicize this

valuable tool through poster re-prints, business card re-prints, social media and messages through the traditional media outlets, all of which has been happening since our meeting

- School system officials committed to having principals hold grade-level meetings with students to discourage making threats and stress the importance of providing information to officials if there is a known threat/message about a threat found.
- In order to assist the school system, parents were asked to talk to their child(ren) about the disruption and consequences of making these threats (it is a crime, serious school discipline, takes away from time for learning, etc.)
- Parent and students expressed concern that it appeared the Farragut staff had little information regarding the threats at the school as the incidents were unfolding. The school administration, along with the district, is taking measures to remedy this, which include making sure that staff members receive the automated call/email along with families.
- Parents and students suggested enhanced training for substitutes who may be in the building during a crisis situation. The school district will examine ways to better orient substitutes on emergency procedures.
- Finally, you heard from law enforcement officials at the meeting that the investigation had led to the identification of a Farragut High School student who had been responsible for these false threats. This student will be subject both to the criminal justice system and the Knox County Schools disciplinary process.

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