

May 2, 2008

Dear Elk Grove High School Parents and Guardians:

This is Nancy Holman, Principal. I am writing to update you on the recent incident involving a threat that was written on a bathroom stall in our school. After extensive evaluation and analysis by the police, our own internal investigation, and consultation with outside experts, we view the recent threat as NOT credible and view our school as safe and secure. I want to thank our parents, students and staff for all that you did to cooperate and assist in reducing the anxiety level in the last several days.

School was conducted normally on Thursday and Friday of this week. On Thursday, approximately 300 students were excused from school by their parents. By Friday our attendance was not only back to normal, it was slightly better than usual. Friday school went on without interruption. All after school and evening events both Thursday and Friday were conducted according to schedule. Thursday night we conducted an Honors Award assembly celebrating the exceptional academic achievements of over 300 students. We ended our week with an outstanding pep assembly celebrating the achievements and continued efforts of our spring athletic teams, clubs and other school groups.

Our investigation of the incident of April 30th continues. We continue to receive very helpful information from parents and students. **The identity of those giving us information will be protected. Your information will assist us in identifying and charging the person(s) making the threat. We need your help.** Anyone with information about this incident is encouraged to speak to a member of our administrative team, or you may contact the anonymous Tip Line at Elk Grove High School at this phone number - 847-718-4416.

We have received calls from parents asking for more details regarding the status of the investigation and the nature of the threat. Since this is a criminal investigation we cannot provide you with those details.

We want to make it clear to all parents/guardians and most importantly to our students that we take any threat regarding the safety of our students, staff or to our facility very seriously. There is absolutely zero tolerance for these actions. Our response to any threat will be very aggressive, both in terms of school and criminal consequences including:

- maximum suspension and a recommendation to the Board of Education for expulsion
- an arrest by our local police department followed by a request on the behalf of Elk Grove High School for criminal charges to be filed to the maximum allowable by law
- prosecution to the fullest extent of the law

We will ask that these consequences be applied to any person who engages in threats, makes inappropriate connections to a threat, extends or makes a reference to a threat made by another, attempts to mimic a threat, or extend the connection to any existing threat in any way. It is also important to note that we will respond with the consequences noted above regardless of whether the threat implies engaging in a threatening or unsafe action on the EGHS campus or beyond our campus environs against an EGHS student, staff member, or a threat of damage to our facility.

In addition, our response to this incident revealed a problem we have with our automated phone system. Our families were informed of the situation by an automated phone message and by email. There are two things we learned in this process. First, we were operating with the information that our Elk Grove High School's automated phone message system would take 60 - 90 minutes to complete all of its calls, just as it does on snow days. We started the automated message system at 4:45 a.m. on Thursday morning with the thinking that by 6:15 a.m. all parents would be contacted. We learned Friday that some parents received their automated call as late as 8:50 a.m. We consulted with our central office technology department and learned that on a snow day, calls are made by the central automated system at the District office, which works much faster than the message system that we have at EGHS. In the future, when we need to speed the calling process, we will have the District's central system with its more extensive capabilities make our calls to EGHS families. We apologize to those parents who received the later calls on Thursday. In addition, we sent an email to all parents on Thursday who provided us with an email address as part of your student's registration information updating them on the April 30th incident. We only have emails for about 1400 of our 2010 families. At the end of this message, I will provide additional information as to how to update our school with your most current email or phone information. In addition, it is important to note, that we have posted information pertaining to this incident on our school web site, <http://eghs.d214.org>

Thanks again for your support and patience during this past week. I am most grateful for the hundreds of emails I have received from parents expressing their support of our school's no tolerance attitude and response to this situation. I would also like to thank the Village of Elk Grove, the Village of Des Plaines, the Elk Grove Police Department the Cook County Sheriff's Department, and School District 59 and 54 for their continued support and collaboration with regard to this matter. And a special thanks to our parents, students and staff for the part each of you continues to play in ensuring that all members of our community understand that we simply cannot and will not tolerate threats to the safety of our children and for your willingness to help us ensure that those who engage in such behaviors will be identified swiftly. In so doing, we will prevent this from happening again at any of our local elementary, junior high or high school campuses.

With gratitude and appreciation,

Nancy M. Holman
Principal Elk Grove High School

P.S. If you did not receive an email message and /or the automated phone message from us on Thursday night, please email Cindy Sunagel, our Data Processor with your correct email information. She can be contacted at this email address cindy.sunagel@d214.org Ms. Sunagel needs your name, your student's name(s), student's ID number, and your email address. Anytime you change your email address or phone, Ms. Sunagel needs to be notified. Thank you!