

# MSAD #51

*The Schools of Cumberland and North Yarmouth, Maine*

**Jeffrey Porter**, *Superintendent of Schools*

**Scott Poulin**, *Director of Finance, Human Resources & Operations*

**Julie Olsen, Ed.D.**, *Director of Instructional Support*

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**Carla Fancy**, *Assistant Director of Instructional Support*

**Dirk Van Curan**, *Director of Technology Services*



May 19, 2022

Dear MSAD 51 Parents and Guardians,

I am making you aware of an incident that took place at GHS this morning and was witnessed by several students. There was a threat related to a student who was alleged to be in possession of a gun. GHS administrators and Officer Owen, the school's on-site resource officer, responded. The student was immediately detained and no gun or weapon was located on school grounds. During this brief period of time, a 'hold in place' for the school was called until the situation was safely under control.

The Cumberland Police has opened an investigation into the matter and the school has taken appropriate disciplinary measures. The investigation is ongoing and we are still gathering all the details. The primary concern was addressing the possibility of a weapon in the school.

Given the continuing tragedies occurring in the nation involving safety in public places, the quick actions taken by school staff and police this morning were a necessary precaution and an important reminder that we must take threats to the safety of the school community very seriously.

It also underscores the importance of adopting the most current safety protocols and procedures that are researched-based, responsive, and preventative in nature. As such, the district's Safety and Security Committee previously recommended, and the Board of Directors has subsequently adopted, a new safety approach called A.L.I.C.E. that will be introduced at the beginning of the new school year in September. This approach is used across the country by many school districts and is aligned with research findings on the safety of public places, as studied by various law enforcement agencies and the US Secret Service. Additionally, the Cumberland Police Department has endorsed A.L.I.C.E. as the approach for MSAD #51 to use in best protecting the safety of our schools. More information about the A.L.I.C.E. approach will be forthcoming.

I know the information in this letter may be unsettling for some. Please know that school safety has long been a priority in MSAD #51 and that our district's Safety and Security Committee, Leadership Team, Board of Directors, and faculty/staff are committed to a learning environment that is responsive to any and all safety concerns that arise.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'J. Porter'.

Jeffrey J. Porter  
Superintendent of Schools

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