On Tuesday, September 15th, 2020 at approximately 7:15AM the Cumberland Police Department learned from the Greely High School administration that a threat to kill students had been posted on the social media platform Instagram. The Police Department’s investigation into this crime has been successfully completed. Late last week, the individual who posted the threat was identified as a minor residing in the state of Tennessee. Yesterday, this department transferred our case file to law enforcement in Tennessee so the crime can be prosecuted in the jurisdiction where the minor resides.

The successful handling of this case can be attributed to several factors:

1. The threat was immediately reported by multiple students to GHS administration, which allowed action to be taken to protect the safety of students and so an investigation could begin.
2. MSAD #51 and CPD officials including School Resource Officer Kirk Mazuzan worked seamlessly to close GHS, lockdown the other schools on campus, and divert the arriving GHS students. Officers provided overwatch to the campus for the remainder of the day.
3. Detective Benjamin Burnes worked aggressively to ensure that digital evidence was preserved, and that the evidence could be secured for our review through the issuance of a search warrant to Instagram and a subpoena to the minor’s phone carrier. Lieutenant David Young assisted by reviewing a huge amount of digital evidence and by coordinating with Tennessee authorities and ultimately the minor’s parents.
4. The investigative process was accelerated by cooperation with – and assistance from - the Cumberland County District Attorney’s Office, Westbrook Police Detective Ryan Close, and Yarmouth Detective Roger Moore.

The nature of the threat, combined with the connection to the Greely High School, constituted a threat to commit violence dangerous to human life, which is a violation of the Terrorizing statute, and is classified as a Class C Felony. The threat caused great concern among MSAD #51 students, parents, faculty and staff – and disrupted the learning environment at a crucial time as students transition back to school amid the pandemic. I am extremely pleased that our talented team was successful in rapidly determining there was no immediate threat to students and in identifying the person responsible for this crime so appropriate action can be taken. Investigations like these often take many days or weeks, and it is a testament to the skill, drive and determination of those involved that in less than 48 hours, investigators were able to provide assurance to the school that no threat existed. The Cumberland and Greely communities should be very proud.