



**Office of  
Superintendent of Schools  
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Dec. 3, 2021

Dear GPPSS Families,

Yesterday was an incredibly difficult day for our community. I want to begin by thanking our staff and families for supporting our students. Our kids needed love and care and our staff provided that. I also want to thank our local public safety departments. The information and guidance they provided was not only tremendously beneficial to us all, but reassuring to me as a superintendent charged with making these difficult decisions.

Yesterday evening we decided to cancel all school activities for today, Friday, December 3rd, due to threats specific to GPPSS that were posted in various social media outlets. While these threats appeared to be copycat-style threats intended to cause disruption or spark a response, in speaking to the police we felt this was the best course of action. We've seen many other communities receive similar threats and respond in a similar manner. As parents and guardians, you can help us by ensuring our students understand the severity of posting online threats. Online threats, even those intended to not be serious, are dangerous. Students or individuals who make these types of threats risk criminal and school consequences including incarceration, legal penalties and school expulsion. The two specific threats from yesterday that identified today as a day of potential violence continue to be under investigation by our local public safety departments.

After communicating with our local law enforcement leaders earlier today and reviewing the current safety situation, the threats posed yesterday would not impact our schools directly on Monday. Therefore, we plan to open all of our schools on Monday, December 6th. Weekend events scheduled for Saturday and Sunday will occur as planned. Schools will remain closed for all activities today.

On Monday we will again have an increased police presence in and around our buildings. Our public safety leaders also have asked for your support ([click here](#) for a message from local law enforcement).

You can help our students have an emotionally and physically safe day in the following ways:

- If you or your students see or encounter something that makes you feel unsafe, please report the incident or item to both the police and school administration.
- If you encounter or see something online that is a safety concern, after reporting the item, please do not forward or share the item further on social media.
- When talking to your child about being in school, use language that reinforces that our schools are safe. Young people are adept at picking up on the anxiety of adults.
- Those looking for information about how to talk to and support your children can visit these online resources for families: [The National Association of School Psychologists](#) and [this page of mental health resources](#) from the State of Michigan.

GPPSS will continue to ensure the safety of our students and staff by doing the following:

- Partnering with local law enforcement. We have a special meeting with all of the chiefs of police scheduled for early next week to discuss next steps in terms of safety.
- We will review with our staff the safety measures that have been installed in buildings including secured vestibules, cameras, and door locks.
- We will remind staff that classroom doors should be closed and locked during the school day.
- We will remind students that our mental health professionals are available to help as needed and provide resources.
- During 2016 we had a full security audit conducted by a third party. GPPSS is reviewing those materials (many of their recommendations became the basis of our safety updates in recent bond construction). We will identify another outside firm to conduct a safety audit of GPPSS facilities and practices, including student and staff training.
- We will remind staff of the existing language we use when locking our buildings down and managing safety situations.

We know that ensuring student and staff safety is the first step that any school district must take. We will continue to review our practices, provide training and information for our staff, and partner with our local police forces to keep our students and staff safe.

We will keep you informed if more information becomes available over the weekend.

Take care,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Jon Dean', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Dr. M. Jon Dean  
Superintendent