

## **GENERAL LETTER ON THREATS/BULLYING SENT FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT ANNUALLY**

(Date)

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Our first priority is the safety of your child(ren). Children need to attend schools where they feel safe and can receive a quality education. We committed to doing our part to keep our schools safe and nurturing, but we need some help from you.

Threats, even those made as jokes, can disrupt the educational process and cause emotional trauma for students. Every year there are numerous stories in the national news about students bullying other students or about a student making threats that no one took seriously, but then resulted in violence towards others. In today's environment, we in the (name of school district) take these situations seriously. If a student is heard to be making violent threats directed at staff or other students, the district will punish the offending student accordingly.

Please inform your child(ren) about the consequences of what they say and do. Those consequences can, and have included expulsion from school and notification to the police. Additionally, please direct your child to notify his/her teacher or principal if anyone makes a threat against him/her or anyone else.

Bullying or making threats against other people is entirely inappropriate. Elementary school age children who decide to make a threat, even as a joke, may not understand that this isn't "pretend" or a television show. According to Dr. Mickey Garrison, a school safety and behavioral consultant from Roseburg, Oregon. "This is a critical time to convey to our children that parents and school staff are watching and working together to keep everyone safe."

Here are some tips suggested by national experts on school safety that you may wish to consider as you talk to your child(ren):

- ✓ Make sure your child understands the seriousness of things he/she says.
- ✓ Emphasize that when something bad happens at a school and the story is on the news, some children were killed and others hospitalized and can't go to school or be with their friends.
- ✓ Have children think of a time when they were hurt by something someone said or did and talk about how they felt.
- ✓ Consider what you as a parent say and do when you are angry, especially when driving.

- ✓ Words don't always lead to action, but let your child know that if he/she hears someone saying they will hurt someone else, this must be taken very seriously. Tell your child any and all threats need to be reported to a responsible adult. Talk with him/her about being socially responsible.
- ✓ Reinforce with your child the need to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive way.
- ✓ Seek help if you have concerns about your child's behavior, including changes in eating habits, dress, grades, interests, and friends.

Working together, we can provide a safe and nurturing environment for all children in the (name of school district). If you have any questions or concerns regarding what is happening in your child(ren)'s school, please do not hesitate to contact your school principal.

Sincerely,

(Superintendent name)  
Superintendent