

## POSSIBLE SCHOOL THREAT INCIDENT

Today, February 23<sup>rd</sup> 2018, the Berkeley Heights Police Department was made aware of an anonymous school threat that has been circulating via social media. After seeing a re-post of a screenshot image of a school threat, a concerned Berkeley Heights student shared the post with a school administrator. Another student contacted their parent this morning about the same post. That parent in turn contacted our police department and set into motion an immediate investigation. The investigation included locating and speaking with a number of juveniles in three separate area school districts. The police department, in consultation with the school administration, agreed that “shelter-in-place” and other security measures were appropriate during the investigation. Multiple law enforcement agencies responded to assist in securing our school facilities as well.

After speaking with the students and through further investigation, it was determined that the “BHS” reference in the post was unrelated to Berkeley Heights public schools. The social media post in question was originally created by a student in Belen, New Mexico, who made a threat against their Belen High School “BHS”. Law enforcement agencies in New Mexico determined the underlying threat to be unfounded, and the 16-year-old student was arrested on February 22<sup>nd</sup> in New Mexico for the post. However, since this threat has been shared multiple times via social media, it has made its way to our area.

Once it was determined that the security measures were no longer necessary, the conclusion of the investigation was shared with the school community. The Berkeley Heights Police Department and the Berkeley Heights Board of Education take these situations very seriously, and want to reassure our community that this particular threat does not involve Governor Livingston High School or any other school in our district. The Berkeley Heights Police Department and Board of Education have a very close partnership, and will continue to work together to make school safety a priority. We commend the concerned students and parents for sharing information with law enforcement; and we encourage all information sharing of this type in the future.