



VAN BUREN COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Where Kids Come First

April 8, 2024

Van Buren County Schools' Families,

Thank you, as always, for your patience during the campus-wide soft lockdown this morning.

Transparency is so important. We want to be able to share information with families and with the community as quickly as possible, however, it often takes a bit of time to understand the entirety of the situation.

This morning, around 9:00 a.m., two anonymous reports were sent to school administration through the StopIt safety reporting app. The first report indicated that a named student had made a statement this morning about planning a threat to the school. The second report indicated that an unnamed student had "thrown a gun" into the ceiling of a bathroom.

Upon receiving these reports, the entire campus immediately went into lockdown. Law enforcement immediately arrived on campus to aid in the process. The named student was isolated, searched, and questioned. There was no indication that this student had possession of any weapon and the student denied having made any threats. Multiple students were questioned that were around the named student and no student was able to confirm that any type of verbal threat was made. All high school and middle school bathrooms were thoroughly searched.

Through questioning, it was discovered that another student had batteries from an airsoft gun in their backpack. This student was also isolated, searched, and questioned. This student told administration and law enforcement that they did not have the airsoft gun at school. The student described its location at home to law enforcement and they were able to confirm the student's story.

Another report was submitted around 1:40 p.m. regarding the same situation and was again investigated with no indication of any further threat. The anonymous reporters have not provided any further information. We always encourage students to report information to us that will help keep our school campus safe. It should be cautioned though, that all reports are taken very seriously and false or misleading reports are detrimental to the success of the reporting system.

Thank you to our school staff and law enforcement for the help and cooperation during today's event. Thank you to our students for remaining calm and being patient as we went through the process. Thank you to our families and community for the love and care you show our schools and students.

Sincerely,

Jared Copeland
Director of Schools