



WAKEFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational High School Briefly Locked Down Due to Social Media Post

Post Was Actually Targeting School in Maryland

WAKEFIELD -- Police Chief Rick Smith and Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational High School Superintendent David DiBarri announce that a lockdown was briefly initiated at the school after a student observed a threatening message on social media and referred it to school administrators. The message was actually found to be threatening a school in Maryland, but the lockdown was initiated during the initial investigation.

At approximately 10:30 a.m. Monday, a student reported that she had seen a social media post that made threats against a school with a name similar to Northeast Metro. She brought her concerns to administration, and out of an abundance of caution, the school initiated its lockdown procedures and alerted the Wakefield Police Department.

It was quickly determined that the social media post observed by the student was actually referencing a school in Maryland. The Wakefield Police Department has since been in contact with authorities there about the threat.

Students were dismissed shortly before 1 p.m., once police made a final determination that there was no danger.



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"I want to emphasize that there is no threat and no danger to our school, but I am very proud that a student felt comfortable enough to bring her concerns forward and that the procedures we have in place worked as designed today," Superintendent DiBarri said.

As is the protocol in situations involving potential danger at schools, the Wakefield Police Department activated the NEMLEC STARS program, which is a highly trained and specialized group of police officers from around the region who specialize in school threats and safety.

"While this is a false alarm for Northeast Metro, we are proud of the student for not hesitating – if you see something, say something. This was in fact a threatening post, and we are working with authorities in Maryland, sharing the information that we have," Chief Smith said. "I am proud of everyone's response today, and I want to thank the school faculty and staff as well as the students and parents for their cooperation during today's police response."

ABOUT NORTHEAST METROPOLITAN REGIONAL VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL:

Northeast Metro Tech High School is a four-year public regional vocational high school serving approximately 1,250 students. The School District is comprised of 12 communities North of Boston: -- Chelsea, Malden, Melrose, North Reading, Reading, Revere, Saugus, Stoneham, Wakefield, Winchester, Winthrop and Woburn -- providing services and programs to meet students' needs in the areas of vocational, academic, physical, social, ethical, moral and emotional development. The school was founded in 1968.

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