



December 12, 2018

Dear Valued Members of our School Communities:

At Lamoille North Supervisory Union, safety is always our highest priority. We do our best to protect the students and staff, and to sustain a supportive learning environment. When there is a threat made, we respond as quickly as possible to eliminate any potential danger to the school community.

There is likely to be a story in the News and Citizen as early as tomorrow. It will describe an incident at GMTCC that involved a student threat of violence. Although Federal privacy laws prohibit me from disclosing specifics about the student or the incident, I can assure you that there are procedures that we ALWAYS follow when safety concerns arise.

The first of those steps is to immediately separate the student from other students, even if we don't yet know whether the threat is credible. We almost always also remove the student from campus. At the same time, we contact law enforcement so that the police can be involved. We cooperate with the police, collaborating with them to assure safety. Sometimes, mental health screening is included and other agencies may become involved. We will not let the student making a threat back on campus until we have a risk assessment that indicates it is safe to do so. We are assured that our procedures are appropriate.

Some of you may have heard that there has been increased police presence at the campus. This is entirely unrelated to the safety incident involving the GMTCC student. We are in the final phases of upgrading our security systems and have invited law enforcement to see our progress and make any comments and suggestions they may have from their expert perspective. In addition, we have had "service dog handlers" (law enforcement personnel and their dogs) enter our school to give presentations in several of our classrooms on the work they do as this has been an area of interest for many of our students who are looking into various career paths. I inform you about this because sometimes there are misunderstandings when people observe police at school.

As a mother of two, I don't think there is anything more important than ensuring the safety of our children. Please feel free to call me directly if you need more direct reassurance. My number is 851-1174. Thank you.

My best to you,

Catherine Gallagher, M.Ed.
Superintendent of Schools