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News

Clawson schools, police clamp down on security

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By Elizabeth A. Katz, Daily Tribune Staff Writer

Measures taken after bomb threat is reported by student.

CLAWSON — The Clawson school district prohibited students from bringing backpacks, large bags and purses to Clawson High School and Clawson Middle School on Friday after a bomb threat put officials on high alert.

A student found the words BOMB 11/14 carved into the side of a desk at the high school after school let out on Thursday afternoon. The student informed a teacher and school officials called police at 4 p.m.

"We gated off the high school and the middle school," said Detective Lt. Scott Sarvello.

Police requested bomb-sniffing dogs from the Michigan State Police and the Oakland County Sheriff's Department. The dogs detected nothing in either school, which are located next to each other on John M Street.

School officials determined they would hold classes on Friday and that entrances to the high school and middle school would be restricted. Children were not allowed to bring in large bags.

Sarvello said authorities are investigating who carved the words into the side of the desk.

If a suspect is identified, punishment could vary, he said, ranging from expulsion from the school district to stricter penalties.

"A lot of things can happen, depending on their history," Sarvello said. "Someone who communicates a bomb threat, that's a felony."

Clawson High School isn't the only school to deal with bomb threats last week. Staff from Lamphere High School in Madison Heights dealt with two bomb threats, one on Wednesday and another on Thursday, and released students early both days.

Sarvello isn't certain when the message was written at Clawson High, but commented that many resources have to be used to clear the threat, not to mention psychological repercussions a threat has on students.

"It wastes a ton of resources, from the schools to the police to the community," Sarvello said. "It puts a lot of fear in people with anxiety issues."

He added that the bag prohibition was effective just on Friday. Should another threat be found again though, he said security measures will get more intense.

"If it continues, the kids may only be allowed to carry their books," he said.

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