

September 12, 2019

Dear EBRPSS Parents/Guardians,

The East Baton Rouge Parish School System is committed to providing students with a top-notch education in a safe learning environment. Our goal is to create schools where kids thrive; a place where they feel respected; and an environment where they are challenged, loved, and most of all, safe.

Ensuring the safety and security of all students and staff are my highest priorities. In order to maintain a safe and productive educational space, a culture of fear cannot prevail. Unfortunately, we have seen a string of 'copycat threats' circulating the internet. These threats aim to create disruption and a sense of unease within schools. Please know and rest assured, we are taking a strict stance against anyone who attempts to spread terror. Our school system has zero tolerance for threats of any nature. Whether a student makes a threat while on school premises or off, via any medium, they will face expulsion and appropriate legal consequences.

It is likely that students often do not realize the severity of their actions, but we must help them to understand and to realize they are accountable for their words and actions. With funding made available by Governor John Bel Edwards, the district is taking steps towards implementing additional school safety technology throughout our school system in order to improve reporting and response times.

Anyone who sees or suspects a threat is encouraged to immediately contact law enforcement, or your local school administrator. We also discourage the inadvertent spread of panic which often occurs by sharing online threats or on social media posts of this nature. Across the nation, systems and law enforcement agencies are allocating critical resources to investigate these anonymous threats. As a result, Louisiana State Police shared the following information to help educate Louisiana residents of the dangers of sharing threats online.

*"[...] In the event you or a family member receives information pertaining to a threat, please carefully assess the information. For example, if the threat were time sensitive and viewed as an imminent danger, you should immediately call 911. If there is suspicious activity that may warrant further investigation or something that does not seem right, report this information to local law enforcement.*

*The sharing of unsubstantiated threats through social media could add chaos and panic to our school systems and further burden the facility, staff, and student body. Threats made to our schools, churches, and public institutions will be expeditiously investigated with every available resource. People who choose to make threats against others, be they real or not, can face serious charges in Louisiana. The terrorizing law in Louisiana is a felony and states that people who intentionally communicate information of a crime of violence, which causes the public to be in sustained fear for their safety, causes the evacuation of a building, or other serious disruption to the general public can be arrested and fined up to \$15,000 and/or imprisoned for up to 15 years." – Louisiana State Police*

Please help us in educating your children about the consequences of making or sharing threats and equally important, how to communicate knowledge of them to the relevant and appropriate authorities. We want to continue to maintain a safe space for your children, and to provide families with the peace of mind that we are doing everything in our power to keep their children safe.

Sincerely,



Warren Drake, Superintendent

**ONE TEAM, ONE MISSION**

The East Baton Rouge Parish School System and all of its entities (including Career and Technical Education Programs) does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, religion, national origin, disability or gender in its educational programs and activities (including employment and application for employment), and it is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of gender by Title IX (20 USC 168) and on the basis of disability by Section 504 (42 USC 794). The Title IX Coordinator is Andrew Davis, Director of Risk Management (ADavis6@ebrschools.org) - phone (225) 929-8705. The Section 504 Coordinator is Elizabeth Taylor Chapman, Director of Exceptional Student Services (ETaylor@ebrschools.org) - phone (225) 929-8600.

A SACS/CASI Accredited School District

*Building the Future of Baton Rouge*

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