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MISD Safety Measures and Community Support Following Hamas Global Threats

1 message

Fred Rundle <communications@mercerislandschools.org>

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Reply-To: communications@mercerislandschools.org

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Fred Rundle, Ed.D, Superintendent

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Dear Mercer Island Students, Staff, Community, and Friends,

If you have not already, you might hear about threats from Hamas calling for violent acts to be brought against Jewish people globally on October 13, tomorrow. These threats have heightened already growing concern within our community, which is especially impacted because of our large Jewish population, multiple synagogues, and Jewish gathering places. It also raises concerns for Muslims within our community who may face unjust violence and backlash as a result of the actions of Hamas, an extremist terrorist organization whose actions are not representative of their beliefs or values.

October 13 Safety Measures in Addition to Our Typical Procedures

At this time, we are unaware of any direct threat targeting our schools. However, we are in ongoing contact with the MI Police and will continue to be vigilant.

- Our School Resource Officer (SRO) will be stationed at MIHS to begin the day and will also go to IMS.
- MIPD will periodically patrol the parking lots of our schools and facilities and assist us with more support.
- During school arrival and pick-up, staff will maintain a visible presence around school premises.
- We plan to have extra support to ensure our MIHS Homecoming parade and football game tomorrow is without incident.

Mental health is an excused absence in our school district. If your child is impacted by this threat such that they do not feel comfortable attending school tomorrow, please notify the school just as you would typically do.

Ongoing Community Support:

Our community is deeply interconnected with the ongoing conflict, acts of violence and war in Israel. The emotional toll that this has had on staff, students, and community members cannot be quantified.

To support our students, staff, and families, we will lean into conversations, listen, and take cues from those in need. If you or someone you know requires assistance, please reach out to our school teams or community partners. My [message on Monday](#) included resources to

help students, educators and families during this difficult time. We have also compiled additional resources [on this page](#).

Acknowledgement of Feedback

I appreciate the feedback that I received from our community after my message on Monday. My intent was to acknowledge the complex and distressing events unfolding and to extend meaningful support to our community, which is profoundly affected. My goal was to ensure that each of our students and families felt seen and supported.

After learning my intent did not match the impact for some community members, I sought counsel from leaders in the Jewish community as well as perspectives from Muslim families. One of the takeaways I had was a clearer understanding that this conflict between Hamas and Israel is simultaneously complex and simple. The complexity is tangled in history and politics. The simplicity is acknowledging that the atrocities that began on Saturday are inhumane and morally wrong.

Thank you for your grace as we all attempt to navigate this crisis at the personal, community, country, and global level. I hope that we can continue to look out for one another and demonstrate what it is to be one community, even in the most difficult of times. When others are down we shall pick them up, and in return count on the same kindness and generosity when it is us who are hurting.

Sincerely,

Fred Rundle
Superintendent

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