



SOUTH WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP
POLICE DEPARTMENT
Office of the Chief
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Media Release
Social Media Threats at "Parkland"

10 September 2021

Through collaborative efforts between the Parkland School District and South Whitehall Township Police, the initial source of the threatening post has been determined to be directed at Parkland High School in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, NOT Parkland High School in South Whitehall Township, Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, the original Facebook post was located during a random search for PARKLAND and spread throughout this area, rightfully causing alarm within the district. Investigators are confident that this initial post was not an intended threat toward our Parkland Students, and it was, and is safe to send your children to school.

This has been a good example of the importance of notifying school officials and law enforcement of any suspected threats of violence. There are many methods to make such notifications, such as the Safe2Say application, contacting school officials, and police. Timeliness is imperative in any and all threats of harm to our community. I urge parents and students to be vigilant with monitoring social media, but to also use social media responsibly. Sometimes, good intentions of spreading posts to make others aware can create unwarranted alarm.

I want to thank the Parkland School District, Upper Macungie Township Police Department, Pennsylvania State Police, Lehigh County District Attorney's Office, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for their assistance with this investigation. This has been a true collaborative effort among everyone involved to ensure the safety of our students.

Original Release of Information – 7th September 2021

On September 6, 2021, at approximately 8pm, the South Whitehall Township Police Department was contacted in reference to a social media post that made threats, referencing a shooting to occur at "Parkland" on September 7, 2021. The South Whitehall Township Police and the Parkland School District immediately began to investigate the origins of the post and initiated risk mitigation efforts. The Pennsylvania State Police and Upper Macungie Township Police Department were contacted due to Parkland Schools being located within

their jurisdiction. A plan was established to have an increased police presence at all schools in the district on Tuesday, September 7, 2021.

The investigative efforts began immediately after receiving information and are still ongoing. The initial investigation has revealed the photograph utilized in the initial post was a stock internet photograph, rather than a photograph by someone who may be in possession of an actual weapon. Several individuals involved in a group Snapchat thread who located the initial post were contacted by investigators. All of those individuals were high school students from outside of the Parkland School District and had no direct knowledge of any threat or the origins of the initial post. At this time, there is no tangible evidence that indicates there is an immediate threat to any student within the Parkland School District. Law Enforcement presence will continue to be increased at all schools until the conclusion of the investigation.

This investigation is ongoing, and there is a coordinated effort between Law Enforcement and the Parkland School District to ensure the safety of every student within the Parkland School District. If the person responsible for this threat is identified, the South Whitehall Township Police intends to prosecute to the fullest extent within the guidelines of the law.