



# TOWNSHIP OF FRANKLIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

3228 COLES MILL ROAD  
FRANKLINVILLE, NJ 08322  
[www.franklintwpschools.org](http://www.franklintwpschools.org)

*Troy Walton, Superintendent*  
*Frank Domin, Interim SBA/BS*

*Telephone: (856) 629-9500*  
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March 1, 2018

Dear Parents/Guardians:

On Thursday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, we had the misfortune of dealing with threatening emails that were received by staff members. The emails contained statements that were initially deemed a potentially credible threat. Through early morning discussions with the Franklin Township Police Department, the decision was made to close schools until an investigation could determine the origin and credibility of the email. This decision was made to ensure the safety of all students.

The Franklin Township Police Department, in cooperation with personnel at both Google and Comcast, were able to obtain the computer's IP address and subsequently identified the physical address of the computer where the emails originated.

As a result of the investigation, we were able to identify a Township of Franklin School student as the creator of the emails. The Franklin Township Police Department has deemed this as a non-credible threat to the district but will hold the student accountable for making threatening statements and causing community alarm.

I want to take a moment to thank the Franklin Township Police Department for their diligence in handling this situation. I also want to thank our staff members who acted quickly and provided relevant information to assist during the investigation.

**The school district will resume normal operations tomorrow. As a precaution, we will have police presence at all three schools.** The principals will prepare age-appropriate information sessions to present to the students. They will use this as an opportunity to address the incident, assure our students that they are safe, discuss the potential dangers of inappropriate email/social media use, and reinforce the seriousness of making threatening statements.

## **What can parents do?**

When it comes to social media and internet use, our parents are the first line of defense. Many of the issues we deal with are a result of activity that occurs outside of school hours. Please use the list below as a resource of topics to discuss with your children.

- **No such thing as anonymity.** We can identify any individual on email or social media by tracking the IP Address. In this case, the individual created a fictitious email account, which we eventually tracked to the original owner. With cooperation from law enforcement, once a subpoena is obtained, it was only a matter of time before we were able to identify the anonymous individual.
- **Parents must monitor the use of email and social media.** If you don't do this now, please begin to monitor your child's email account and/or social media activity and address inappropriate behavior immediately. It only takes one regrettable post for your child to lose a lot of privileges here at school.



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- **Report suspicious activity.** Anytime you see suspicious activity or potentially threatening comments, please report them to law enforcement immediately. If comments are geared toward the bullying and/or harassing of other students, please report those comments to the school principal immediately.
- **Think before you post.** As parents, we model the behavior our children replicate. Unfortunately, too many adults engage in inappropriate behavior when using social media themselves. Keep in mind that our children see this behavior and often act similarly while on social media. Parents who model appropriate social media behavior help to teach our children how to conduct themselves respectfully.
- **Social media is not a reliable source of information.** If you have questions regarding your child's school, please go to the website for more details. You can also call your child's principal for accurate information. Too often we see comments on social media attempting to address or clarify a school-related issue that are often inaccurate, misleading, and/or irresponsible. If you want to know, call us, we are always happy to provide accurate and reliable information.

## **Moving Forward**

We are happy to announce that our School Resource Officer will begin his assignment in our district on Monday, March 5, 2018. We will work closely with him as he becomes familiar with our district. We will continue to work closely with law enforcement and conduct drills on a regular basis. As an administrative team, we continue to evaluate our safety and security measures. In light of this recent incident, we will convene as a team and investigate how we can improve upon these measures. I can also tell you that we take all threats seriously and will not tolerate any behavior that harms the safety and welfare of our students.

In closing, I thank you for your patience and cooperation. Should you have any additional questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at your convenience.

Yours in education,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Troy Walton'.

Mr. Troy Walton  
Superintendent of Schools