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INGHAM COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

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Dear Parents:

December 6, 2021

Few events hit home for students and families like a school shooting. They are terrifying and tragic. When students learn of these events on television or on social media, it is natural for them to worry about their own school and their own safety. Unfortunately, some students see these tragedies as an opportunity to gain notoriety and make threats against their schools, teachers, and classmates.

We are all aware of the notable rise across the nation, in our state, and in Ingham County of threats made to our schools and the students, teachers, and other professionals working to educate our children. Although many of the students that have created these situations claim they were just joking or did not think it was a big deal – **it is a big deal**. That is why the sheriff, local law enforcement chiefs, school superintendents, and I are reaching out to you. These threats are not viewed as a joke and these acts will be addressed by the school, law enforcement, and the prosecutor's office.

These types of threats could lead to criminal charges including: Threat of Terrorism, False Threat of Terrorism, Intentional threat to commit an act of violence against a school, and Use of a Computer to Commit a Crime, and firearms possession/school zone cases. The most serious of these crimes carries a potential maximum of 20 years in prison.

While the punishments dictated by the school and criminal justice system are significant, students may also face additional consequences, including:

- Loss of scholarships and federal aid
- Denied college admission
- Being required to disclose pending cases or criminal convictions on job applications
- Denied entry into the military

**We urge you** to talk to your children about the appropriate use of social media, and the lasting consequences of making threats against our schools. Please stress that there is nothing humorous about threatening to shoot up a school, and there is no such thing as a joke involving the threat of mass murder.

**All threats will continue to be taken seriously and may be prosecuted under Michigan law.**

By working together, we can provide our children the safe schools they deserve.

Respectfully,

*Carol A. Siemon*

**Law Enforcement:**

Sheriff Scott Wriggelsworth (Ingham County Sheriff's Office), Interim Chief Ellery Sosebee (Lansing Police Department), Chief Kim Johnson (East Lansing Police Department), Chief Marion Lynch (Michigan State University Police Department), Chief John Joseph (Lansing Township Police Department), Chief Jim Wolf (Williamston Police Department), Chief Evan Bennehoff (City of Leslie Police Department), Chief Johnnie Torres (Stockbridge Police Department), Chief Don Hanson (Mason Police Department), Chief Ken Plaga (Meridian Township Police Department), F/Lt Dietrich Speights (Michigan State Police Post 11), Chief Daryl Gaines (Lansing Community College Police and Public Safety)

**Superintendents:**

Amy Hodgson (Dansville Schools), Scott Powers (Leslie Public Schools), Andrew Smith (Webberville Community Schools), Dori Leyko (East Lansing Public Schools), Ron Drzewicki (Mason Public Schools), Adam Spina (Williamston Community Schools), Steve Cook (Haslett Public Schools), John Hood (Okemos Public Schools), Jason Mellema (Ingham Intermediate School District), David Hornak (Holt Public Schools), Brian Friddle (Stockbridge Community Schools), Ben Shuldiner (Lansing School District), Kelly Blake (Waverly Community Schools)