

David C. Creswell
Superintendent

255 Stanley Avenue, Suite 100
Ventura, California 93001
T 805.641.5000
www.venturausd.org



For the future of every student

August 23, 2018

Dear Parents and Staff:

I'd like to begin by apologizing if the information we put out yesterday regarding a potential threat unnecessarily frightened anyone. There never was a credible threat to our students and staff, and we never felt they were in any danger. The district has safety plans and protocols to follow when we believe there is a credible threat.

Please allow me a moment to explain what has transpired. Ventura County mental health professionals and the Ventura County Sheriff's Department contacted a man who had made some unspecific threats regarding a school shooting. He was subsequently placed on a mental health hold and transferred to a mental health facility outside Ventura County. The Ventura County Sheriff shared this information in a document with other police agencies and responded to the man's known residence in Ventura and seized a firearm, a BB gun and an air soft handgun. This information was supposed to remain confidential in law enforcement circles because there was no reason to believe it was a credible threat. Police agencies share such information routinely.

However, a document based on the Ventura County Sheriff communication was released by the Santa Paula Police Department. The document lacked the background and context that I have provided to you and that is now available to us. Our district received calls from many worried parents who had seen the document put out by the Santa Paula Police Department. We put together a letter for parents trying to ease their fears. In retrospect, we put this letter together hastily and it did not contain enough background and context. We were trying to do the right thing by informing you of what we knew at the time.

But let me repeat: After consultation with law enforcement, we do not believe this person is a threat to the safety of our children and our staff. Law Enforcement and mental health professionals have interviewed and assessed the person and do not feel constitutes a threat at this time. However, they continue to monitor the situation.

Please be assured that our campuses are safe places for your children to attend school. As always at the beginning of the year, there is an increased presence of law enforcement on campus. I continue to work closely with the Ventura Police Chief. We also have counselors on campus who are available to talk to any students or staff who have been stressed by this situation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David C. Creswell".

David C. Creswell

Superintendent