



Binghamton City School District

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September 21, 2021

Dear BHS Families,

I would first like to address the school's response to the Murray Street incident on Monday afternoon, and the district's decision to engage in remote learning today. Shots were fired on Murray Street, near the high school, at approximately 2:50 p.m., shortly before Binghamton High School's 3 p.m. dismissal. School and district officials were not made aware of the incident until after students had left the building. Please know that the safety of our students, faculty and staff is our highest priority. Had administrators known about the active situation before dismissal, a shelter in place would have been put into place immediately, with notification going out to families. We will strive for better and faster communication with law enforcement, and with our school community, going forward.

The decision to engage in remote learning was not due to any concerns of a continued threat, but rather, to support the ongoing police investigation nearby. There was no gun found at BHS. By going remote, pedestrian and vehicle traffic was greatly reduced in that area, allowing law enforcement to do their jobs with minimal disruption. The building is safe, and many of our staff members were present today.

The day of remote learning also provided administrators the opportunity to evaluate and strategize how to make our schools, and school events, safer. As Dr. Thompson stated in her message to Binghamton families today, there have been a number of confrontations involving students since the beginning of the school year. We know that the events of the past 18 months have been detrimental to the social and emotional wellbeing of our students, making the return to in-person learning very challenging for some, and more challenging than we ever could have imagined. Unfortunately, this is consistent with reports we are hearing from across the state.

Our schools must be positive, inclusive, comfortable places where our children can learn, grow, and thrive, and we need the support of our entire school community to make that possible. Our children, and our employees, deserve that.

Tomorrow, Wednesday, Sept. 22 - All students will remain on fully remote instruction. Classes will follow a 2-hour delay schedule and begin virtually at 10 a.m. More information regarding the rest of the week will be sent out Wednesday afternoon. We are asking students to remain on remote instruction as we bring staff back in the building to implement a reentry plan for all students.

Thank you for your patience and understanding throughout this process as we bring our students back to school and help them forge a path to personal and academic success.

Sincerely,

Kevin Richman
Binghamton High School Principal

Educating, empowering, and challenging all students to become productive, global citizens through innovative approaches to learning.