



Coatesville Area School District

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3030 C.G. Zinn Rd. Thorndale, PA 19372 | casdschools.org | 610-466-2400

October 14, 2022

Dear CASD,

The Coatesville Area School District administration has been in contact throughout the day with the Chester County District Attorney's office as well as other local law enforcement agencies, including Caln Township Police, regarding the tips and threats we have continued to receive this week. As you know, after consulting with law enforcement, we made the decision this morning to close the high school campus as a result of a threat. Student and staff safety and welfare must always be our priority.

I want to take a moment to explain that the [Safe2Say](#) tip line is a mandated state program that each school district in Pennsylvania is responsible to support. This is not a program unique to Coatesville, nor is it one that we can shut down as a result of false threats. It was a result of Act 44 under state law.

The District is committed to supporting student mental health. We want to remind you that we have in place a student assistance program, school counselors, and mental health workers. If any students are aware of a peer who is struggling, the Safe2Say line can be used to notify someone that a young person may need support. We have also encouraged students to use the line to report threats they may have seen or heard; however, we also request that they provide as much information as possible. We do not want to discourage use of the line, however, false threats meant to disrupt the school day will be taken very seriously.

We understand that these threats and closures are extremely frustrating. They have been increasing this year across our region, state, and even nationally. We are working with the District Attorney's office to ensure that each one is closely investigated. We urge you to read the press release from the District Attorney's office that follows this note.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Richard F. Dunlap, Jr., Ed. D.
Interim Superintendent
Coatesville Area School District

Interim Superintendent: Richard F. Dunlap Jr., Ed. D.

Chester County District Attorney's Office

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NEWS RELEASE

For more information contact Michelle Bjork, Director of Communications, at mbjork@chesco.org or 610-344-6820.

Oct. 14, 2022

MULTIPLE THREATS MADE TO COATESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

The Chester County DAO and Caln Twp Police are working with Coatesville Area School District (CASD) to investigate numerous threats made to Coatesville Area High School (CASH) in the past week. Tips about threats are coming in through Safe2Say and direct calls to CASH.

CASH was put on lockdown on Oct. 13, 2022, after three separate Safe2Say tips were received from the Attorney General's Office about a possible weapon that could be used in an act of violence. CASD police investigated; the Chester County Sheriff's Dept. searched the school for weapons along with other law enforcement agencies and a canine unit. No weapons were found, and students were safely dismissed.

A subsequent threat was received through Safe2Say on Oct. 14, forcing CASH to cancel school. Caln Twp Police and Chester County Detectives are investigating.

DA Deb Ryan said, "Any person who makes a credible threat to a school in Chester County is on notice that law enforcement takes these extremely seriously and will investigate each one. The safety of students, teachers, and staff at school is of utmost concern, especially given the school tragedies at Uvalde, Parkland, Sandy Hook, and far too many others. We have no choice but to err on the side of caution to ensure everyone's safety.

If we determine a threat was made to disrupt school as a joke, we will hold those accountable for their actions and prosecute them. These false reports have caused tremendous hardship and trauma to our students, parents, staff, and law enforcement, and it must stop now.”

CASD Interim Superintendent Rick Dunlap said, “While we want students to use the Safe2Say Tip Line for legitimate concerns and reports, it’s important that our students and parents understand that anyone who makes threats on this tip line for the purpose of disrupting school will be disciplined and possibly face criminal charges. This simply will not be tolerated.”

Caln Twp Police Chief Joseph Elias said, “No threat toward our community and schools will ever be ignored or treated as a mere prank. Law enforcement will continue to thoroughly investigate each and every one of these unfortunate acts, and make decisions collectively with school officials that are in the best interest of public safety.”

On Oct. 7, CASD was forced to cancel the Homecoming football game between CASH and Downingtown West High School after online threats of violence were made and deemed credible by law enforcement. CASH dismissed students early from school as a result of the threats.

These types of school threats are happening with more frequency across Chester County, Pennsylvania, and the country.

We urge parents to monitor their child’s social media. If anyone sees a post that causes concern for school safety, screenshot the post and immediately notify law enforcement, call 911, or make a report to Safe2Say. Do not re-post.

Approved for release by Deborah Ryan, District Attorney