

KEYSTONE SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Office
451 Huston Avenue
Knox, PA 16232

Phone: 814-797-5921
Fax: 814-797-2382



October 30, 2017

RE: School Safety and Misuse of Social Media

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Keystone SD considers school safety and emergency preparedness to be one of our most important responsibilities. Your child's safety is paramount and we take that duty very seriously. As I stated in a "School Safety/Emergency Preparedness" letter sent home in late August, social media issues continue to cause significant problems within our school district and across the Commonwealth.

Keystone Junior-Senior High School administration was made aware of a social media post today, during the school day, which presented with concerning song lyrics and caption. The issue was investigated immediately and found to be a tasteless, thoughtless action—not a credible threat. At no point were any members of the school community in danger.

While we have worked hard to educate students on the effects and consequences caused by social media, we continue to address tasteless jokes, ambiguous comments/emoji, popular song lyrics or pictures that portray dark/concerning meaning. Any threat (direct or implied) to the health, safety or welfare of students, staff or the Keystone SD community as a whole will be addressed swiftly and without hesitation. Anyone who breaks the law with respect to the misuse of social media—cyber bullying, making threats—will be prosecuted to the fullest extent possible.

Social media has most certainly changed the shape of our social landscape. I'm often told "*Kids will be kids*" or "*It was just a joke*". In today's society, red flag statements result in red flag responses (and consequences). We have a responsibility to investigate each report of social media when the school or students are involved—directly or implied. Even comments such as "*I'm going to get you*" among two friends is enough to cause concern among other social media users. Keystone SD administrators utilize threat assessment procedures and involve law enforcement agencies when appropriate. Regardless of the intent or spirit of the comments (or age of the students), we activate responsive procedures and enforce the Discipline Code accordingly. Student and staff safety is our first priority; all procedures are designed for their protection.

It's my hope that together we curb the misuse of social media with sustained education and awareness. We deeply appreciate your commitment, continued efforts and support of our students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shawn Algoe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mr. Shawn Algoe
Superintendent