



# Phoenix-Talent Schools

## Excellence For Everyone

March 1, 2018

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As you know, there have been a number of tragedies and loss of life at schools in our nation over the last couple decades. The recent shooting in Florida has had an impact on all of us and we want to make sure we do everything we can to keep students, staff and families safe and informed. I want to update you on the recent events at Talent Middle School and discuss ways we can work together to help our children through this difficult time.

A quick summary of recent events: On Tuesday, February 27th, we had a report of a student potentially wanting to procure a weapon (not that he had one, and certainly not that he had one here at school). It was fairly non-credible, but out of an abundance of caution we contacted the police and we jointly initiated an investigation. There was no substantiated cause for concern at that time.

During the course of the investigation, there was additional information received (unrelated to the initial report) by police that a student had a threatening message on a social media site. This was quickly investigated by police and discovered that a message had been posted, so police took action and arrested the youth responsible for the post. According to the police departments, neither the initial report nor threat was credible. That is all the information that I can share at this time, but please know that safety of students and staff was never compromised. We take every threat seriously and we are erring on the side of caution, as are our partners at the police department. I want to thank staff and both Talent and Phoenix Police Departments for all the work that went into keeping students and adults safe and informed.

Safety, security and an enriching learning environment is something we can all support. We are in this together! As we move forward and work to ensure the safety of all, I ask that you do a couple things.

First, please talk to your children about the impact and consequences of making threats on social media, verbally, written form, etc.

- Kids are being arrested and charged for crimes of disorderly conduct.
- First degree disorderly conduct means the student knowingly created a risk or circulated a report, knowing it to be false, of a hazardous substance on site, or some other impending "catastrophe or other emergency."
- We can help deter this behavior and action by educating our kids on the impact of threats.
- Making threats is not a joke and our kids need to understand this.

Secondly, we rely on the information that we receive from students and families.

- In the Talent Middle School case, **students** were the ones that came forward.
- Please do not hesitate to contact us and/or encourage your child to contact us, if you have information that may threaten the safety of our students and staff.
- Phoenix-Talent Schools now participates in the SAFE OREGON program and citizens/students/families can call in an anonymous report to inform authorities of any situation that compromises the safety of students and staff. To access, call or text 844-472-3367 or go to [safeoregon.com](http://safeoregon.com).

Finally, if your child is displaying signs of depression or withdrawal, being bullied or harassed or needing someone to talk with, we can help. Please contact us.

Thank you for all your support and partnering with us to ensure the safety of all!

Brent Barry, Superintendent

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