



STUDENT ARRESTED FOR MAKING SOCIAL MEDIA THREAT DIRECTED AT A LOCAL SCHOOL

August 30, 2022 – At approximately 11:00 AM, Menifee Police Officers responded to Callie Kirkpatrick Elementary School regarding a school threat investigation. A staff member received an email from an unknown source advising there was a threat of violence at the school. Although the staff member was unsure who sent the email or what the intent of the email was, the school was placed on lock down out of an abundance of caution.

Officers quickly arrived on scene and were able to view the email which contained an image of a gymnasium from a social media account. Through their investigation, officers were able to determine the picture was taken from Bell Mountain Middle School. Officers were immediately sent to Bell Mountain Middle School where they found the school to already be on lockdown.

Approximately 20 officers and detectives, including our local Post-Release Accountability Compliance Team (PACT), responded to the schools. While several officers worked to deem both campuses safe, detectives worked to identify the person responsible for posting the threat. Within approximately an hour, detectives were able to identify the person responsible for posting the threat as a 12-year-old male student at Bell Mountain Middle School.

As officers were clearing both campuses, they encountered the 12-year-old male in a classroom of Bell Mountain Middle School. He was detained without incident. Upon deeming both schools safe, the lockdowns were lifted.

The investigation revealed the 12-year-old male acted alone and did not have the current means to act on the threat; however, due to the nature of the threat and method of dissemination, the 12-year-old was arrested for making criminal threats related to a school by a person under the age of 18. He was booked into custody at Riverside County Juvenile Hall. His name is not being released because he is a juvenile.

Although law enforcement has seen an increase in these types of posts around the region, MPD wants the public to know all threats, whether specific, implied, or otherwise, that cause fear in our community will not be tolerated. MPD is committed to using all available resources to ensure we hold the person(s) responsible for such threats accountable for their actions.

Parents, we encourage you to have conversations with your children regarding the severity of these types of threats and the importance of being responsible when using social media.

Ed Varso

Chief of Police

