



ARLINGTON CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Brendan Lyons, Ed. D., Superintendent of Schools

144 Todd Hill Road • LaGrangeville, NY 12540
Phone 845-486-4460 • Email blyons@acsdny.org

December 5, 2019

Dear Arlington Community,

I wanted to update you on the lockdown that occurred at approximately 1:40 PM at Arlington High School on Tuesday, December 3, 2019. First, however, I want to thank a group of unsung heroes that I neglected to recognize on Tuesday. Thank you to our phenomenal Arlington bus drivers and transportation employees, many of whom went above and beyond on Tuesday to make sure that students felt safe and supported on their ride home.

Since Tuesday, we have been working with law enforcement and our technology providers to determine what triggered the automated lockdown alarm. We have established that the alarm was caused by a technology error. We are working closely with our technology providers to gain assurances that the issue is resolved. The alarm was not activated in response to any threat or incident in the building and it was not pulled as a prank.

We are all relieved and grateful that students and staff were safe, but we understand how frightening this incident was for students, faculty, staff, and parents. When an alarm goes off, we must respond with the assumption that there is a threat until law enforcement concludes that the building is safe. We were able to determine that there was not a threat in the building by approximately 3:30 PM on Tuesday, and the lockdown was released. Once buses were finished with the elementary runs and returned to the high school, we began dismissing students at approximately 4:45 PM.

I would also like to address some of the rumors that were circulating during and after this incident. First, there was a fight during period 3. However, there was not a gun involved, there was no mention of a gun, and the fight was not related to the lockdown that began period 7. Second, the man who was seen running into the building with a gun was a law enforcement officer responding to the scene. Third, no one was taken out of the high school in handcuffs. Any images circulating on social media of a student leaving the school in handcuffs were not from Tuesday, nor were they related to this lockdown. Some of these rumors stemmed from a false social media post by an employee who was not inside the high school on Tuesday.

The situation on Tuesday highlights the importance of being cautious about what you see, read, or post on social media. Rumors and misinformation spread rapidly and cause undue panic and speculation. Parents, please remind your children to use caution when posting or sharing information on social media. Some students may be making assumptions that are not accurate, while others may find it entertaining to post information that is false to scare others. Inaccurate information on social media causes a distraction and can slow down an investigation.

We understand that when situations occur, parents want information as soon as possible. Communication with parents during an emergency is critically important, but our first concern is the

safety and well-being of our students and staff in the school. Please be patient and understand if we are unable to respond to you as completely and quickly as you would like. We work closely with law enforcement officials and are often limited in what we can disclose during an active investigation.

Again, I commend law enforcement, as well as Arlington administrators, faculty, staff and students on how they handled themselves during this lockdown. As always, we will be analyzing what occurred and learning from this situation moving forward.

I have received some questions on our safety plans and procedures. As a reminder, our [District-Wide Safety and Emergency Management Plan](#) is available on our website.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brendan Lyons". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brendan" and last name "Lyons" clearly distinguishable.

Dr. Brendan Lyons,
Superintendent

Our mission is to empower all students to be self-directed, lifelong learners, who willingly contribute to their community and lead passionate, purposeful lives.