


From: Brittany Sutton Brittany.Sutton@dvusd.org 
Subject: Re: IR 2300 [REDACTED]
Date: February 17, 2023 at 8:58 AM
To: Heather Trask [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]

Mrs. and Mr. Trask,

I am sending this to clarify the situation based on the first information you received from BCHS regarding the fight at the park. While we absolutely do not support this behavior, we have no control or jurisdiction over the park, which is why we have encouraged law enforcement's involvement. While the statute does say we *may* discipline, in this specific case, we cannot. We do not support students parking at the park or congregating at the park because it is not a place in our care where we can supervise or support. Anthem Park is a half mile away from campus. While I understand that Holden parks there per your permission, it is not a place that is in his direct path to/from school. He is listed as being a bus rider to your home in Desert Hills per all of our records. I am certain for most or all of the students in the video, the park is not in their direct path to/from school. This is why MCSO is the entity that is investigating and determining consequences, which could be far more substantial than anything the school could do. Our support of MCSO's investigation has been to provide the information you have shared with the school and the statements we have gathered from students regarding the fight. Police investigations do take time, and I understand that may feel like nothing is happening. I know that is not the case based on my interactions with our campus resource officer and other Deputies that have come to campus throughout this week.

Additionally, we have gone substantially beyond our typical involvement in this situation to be proactive to not have incidences on campus between any of the students involved and also to support Holden's safe return to campus. I know this may not seem enough, but it is what we can do in this situation. I cannot disclose further information about any specifics with students. This is always tough for parents to hear because they want to know that there is some form of conduct carried out. We are legally bound to Federal privacy laws to protect students (FERPA), so that can never be disclosed. Any time that social media or information is shared widely, the rumor mill runs quick and fast. Students boast, people share what they have heard from here or there, and we have to sift through information that is not viable to support this situation such as hearsay and rumors. Like I have said before, we are reviewing all information and sharing viable pieces with MCSO. We continue to investigate and to talk to students that may have been in the area or involved so we can provide that information to MCSO. Your videos and pictures are a part of that. The repeated acts in the community that you have heard about are not happening at BCHS nor have we any concrete information about these acts including children involved or even what they are. This would be something that MCSO has to investigate.

In my last email, I shared the safety measures and plan to support Holden's return. I know this is hard for Holden and your family. We are here to support as a school. I am happy to meet to help Holden get back to BCHS.

Sincerely,
Brittany Sutton

Brittany M. Sutton, M.Ed
Principal
Boulder Creek High School



Deer Valley Unified School District
623-445-8604

brittany.sutton@dvusd.org

Twitter: @bchs_dvusd

Facebook: @BoulderCreekHighSchool

Instagram: @bouldercreekhigh

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>>> Heather Trask [REDACTED] 2/16/2023 12:53 PM >>>

Good Afternoon Brittany,

Thank you for your email. I understand the need for witnesses to come forward with statements, and evidence which is why I am working with the community and encouraging them to take action by reporting appropriately.

The videos and photos I received and sent in are somehow disqualified? I don't understand. I have been working hard to collect evidence from the community and what I am submitting from what has been shared can't be substantiated? Please clarify the point of reference you are needing?

I would like to know specifically what you are doing to assist in further identifying the assailants not yet names by the community. I would like to know specifically what you are doing to assist the MCSO. I am not asking for details or names of individuals.

What are you doing to encourage witnesses to come forward on campus? What are you doing to ensure that they feel safe coming forward with the things they are hearing, "hearsay"? What are you doing to deter this behavior campus wide?

This incident is having a **significant impact on campus**.

May I remind you of the district and school policies applicable here - you tell us if you are doing **enough** based on these articles:

A.R.S. 15-342

CONDUCT OFF CAMPUS

Per A.R.S. 15-342, students may be disciplined for disorderly conduct on the way to and from school. Additionally, students may be disciplined for conduct that occurs off campus (after the student arrives home, on the weekend, etc.) that has a significant impact on campus.

Do you think a "Non-Violence Agreement" signed by a few of the assailants is adequate?

Or how about your Bullying policy, Brittany - I know it states "repeated" acts - how many times does a student need to be beaten by a gang of your students to qualify for protection and action taken against the perpetrators?

BULLYING

Repeated acts over time that involve a real or perceived imbalance of power with the more powerful child or group attacking those who are less powerful

with the more powerful child or group attacking those who are less powerful. Bullying can be physical in form, verbal, or psychological. It may include intimidation and harassment that includes derogatory comments, extortion, exploitation, name calling, or rumor spreading. Cyber-bullying includes bullying through the misuse of technology. (A.R.S. 13-2921) Student's who believe they are experiencing being bullied or suspect another student is bullied should report their concern to any staff member of the District. School personnel are to maintain appropriate confidentiality of the reported information.

As this conversation has proceeded you have shown by your responses that you are doing the bare minimum to cover yourself. You are taking the easy way out.

I would like for this conversation to continue with you taking more assertive action and get all of these assailants identified and properly disciplined.

Please, let us know specifically what you are going to do to properly address the issues I raised above.

Regards,
Heather Trask

Mr. Trask,

I can't even imagine how hard this has been on Holden and your family. As a parent, I would do whatever I could to get answers and to ensure my child was safe. I am deeply horrified by the behavior I witnessed in the videos. It was absolutely terrible. I am sincerely sorry that your family is having to deal with this situation at all.

Please know there are limitations to what we can do as a school because this did not happen at the school. We have been working diligently to support the MCSO investigation, and we continue to do so because this will be the agency that can properly investigate and determine consequences. From the time that I was given the video Friday evening, this has been a focus for myself, my Assistant Principals, and my security team. We have run into challenges in further identifying students because the typical resources that we can use on campus to investigate do not exist-- surveillance cameras, staff supervision, or even any indication of who would have been in that area at that time. The videos are super challenging to identify students without frame of reference or help from witnesses. We have received zero pieces of information or reports from students that were there other than the names and information provided by your family. None of the incidents that I am hearing occurred with this group of students have happened at the school so there isn't a cohesive group or known issue to our campus with these students. We are working to assist in the ways we can on campus as we gather information and also continue to support MCSO's investigation. Please know that I am doing everything that I can within my scope to assist, but my priority has been to make school a safe place for Holden to return when he is ready while also ensuring that he can come and go from campus directly without having to go back to the park.

| On Feb 16, 2023, at 10:36 AM, Brittany Sutton <Brittany.Sutton@dvusd.org> wrote:

01/20/20, 10:10 AM, Brittany Sutton <brittanysutton@deervalley.net>

Good morning Mrs. and Mr. Trask,

I have shared the information that you sent me with our school SRO Officer so he can provide the information to MCSO as well. In terms of the email regarding premeditation, we do need students to come forward to write a statement at school or to speak to our SRO officer or MCSO. We can then investigate the concern. We cannot work through hearsay or rumors, so any concrete information such as names of witnesses, videos, or screen shots of social media or texts will help us look further into the situation. I do understand that people don't like to come forward because of fear of retaliation, but solid witnesses and facts are the best ways to work through an investigation. We are providing this information to MCSO as it comes to us since they are entity that is working specifically and directly with this incident.

I feel like I am going to reiterate some of the same pieces of information here on the supports for Holden, but I want to be sure that this is all in one place.

To help support campus safety:

- We gave Holden a parking space on campus so he does not need to go back to the park to park for the remainder of the school year. This can help him come to school and leave school where we can supervise students. This also separates Holden from having to be with the students at the park.
- We have and continue to investigate to support the MCSO investigation. This includes taking statements and having students involved sign a non-violence agreement. This agreement is for the BCHS campus & school events, etc. I say this because students are quick to choose to move acts that go against our code of conduct off campus intentionally so they do not have consequences at school. We do work to intervene when reports of these plans are reported to help mitigate actions. We also report these pieces of information to our SRO. The challenge, as you are aware, is that we have control over school-based situations.
- Parents of students involved were notified of the situation and the involvement of law enforcement.
- We have changed the one shared class that Holden had with the other student so they no longer will be in the locker room together.
- Holden's counselor, Mrs. Lodolce, has offered Holden time and support if he needs it at any point during the school day. The same is true for administration.
- Holden is welcome to eat up in the counseling office even with a couple of friends if he is uncomfortable at lunch.
- Holden is also welcome to come use the restroom up in the office, if he is uncomfortable using restrooms on campus.
- Holden is strongly encouraged to immediately report any concerns he has to administration. He can go to any adult on campus (teachers, support staff, security, administration, our SRO) to get assistance. Reporting any concerns will allow us to investigate and intervene quickly.
- While it sounds like Holden has no desire to engage, it will be important for Holden to also refrain from escalating the situation with other students on campus as well.
- Holden's teachers have been notified about the situation. Our administrative and security staff are also apprised so we can monitor the situation as well. I have included my administrative team on this email.

We also continue to investigate and work with law enforcement to do everything we can to support campus student safety. We are hopeful that Holden will be ready to return to BCHS soon.

Sincerely,
Brittany Sutton

Brittany M. Sutton, M.Ed
Principal
Boulder Creek High School
<IMAGE.jpg>
Deer Valley Unified School District