

Gateway School District



Dear Ramsey families,

As a follow up to Mr. Rosi's letter and upon speaking with the Monroeville Chief of Police this morning, I want to provide as much information as possible regarding an incident that took place yesterday.

On Tuesday, March 15, 2022, Principal, Mr. Joseph Rosi detained an individual who entered the school under false pretenses at approximately 2:19 p.m. after asking a Gateway employee to use the bathroom. This person approached the main entrance and was met by a district employee who is responsible for screening visitors prior to admittance. The employee permitted this individual to enter the building and access the restroom hallway, unaccompanied. This egregious error in judgment is against school district policy and procedures.

This individual entered a girls' restroom and stayed in that area for 40 minutes. During this period, he remained in a bathroom stall, and it was reported that he was using his cell phone in what was described as someone attempting to record. A student who was in the bathroom recognized the danger and inappropriateness of this individual being there and ran out of the restroom to find the Principal, Mr. Rosi. Mr. Rosi immediately entered the restroom and escorted the person to his office, detaining him while contacting the Monroeville Police.

The Monroeville Police dispatched three officers and were at the building within 15 minutes. The officers assumed control of the situation, questioned the individual, searched him, and uncovered a box cutter that the perpetrator indicated was used for his employment. An arrest was made, and charges have been filed. In addition, the Monroeville detective confiscated the cell phone, and it will be forensically searched.

The efforts made by this student and Mr. Rosi assisted in preventing a further escalation of this deplorable act. As a district, we strive to ensure that our children receive the best possible education, but also in a safe and secure environment. Unfortunately, we must do better, and as Superintendent, I can assure you that we will.

Please know that even as recently as Friday, March 11, 2022, our Technology Director provided an update to employees regarding visitor entrance procedures and the workings of our visitor access system. However, district policy was not followed in this situation. In response, the district has provided additional security and education regarding school district visitor policy to our staff. The employee has been placed on leave pending an investigation. Counselors and the elementary social worker also have been present in the building today to support the children.

As we receive additional information from the Monroeville Police, we will communicate those findings with parents and the community. Recognizing that emotions may still be elevated from this incident and parents may have additional questions, please don't hesitate to contact my office or Principal Joseph Rosi.

Sincerely,

Dr. William Short
Superintendent