

## Community Update about 12/11/23 Post

Joseph Steimel • hace 16 horas • Tuesday, Dec 12 at 4:10 PM • **Eastport-South Manor Central School District**

Dear Eastport-South Manor Community,

I am writing this afternoon with updated information regarding the incident which took place at the Junior-Senior High School last evening. As with any security matter, the district has completed a follow-up analysis to review the facts surrounding the incident and the protocols that were quickly put into action. Given the nature of the event, I felt it important to share the following with our community to provide further assurance.

One question that I have received is regarding the identity of the off-duty officer and why it was not shared in my initial email to the public. As with all matters of safety, individuals' names and/or their professional positions within the district are not historically shared during such communications, both for privacy and legal reasons. However, the individual has shared his name publicly and I can now confirm that the off-duty police officer is a member of the Board of Education and that he was on campus for a BOE special session meeting last evening, coming directly from his job.

Another question is regarding the timeline on which the events unfolded. The weapon was found in the bathroom at approximately 6:24 p.m. and immediately reported to security, who secured the scene by 6:26 p.m. From there, our administrative team enacted district emergency protocols – including contacting the Suffolk County Police Department. Simultaneously, building administration alerted my office and the Board of Education of the matter, at which time the off-duty officer identified himself as the owner of the weapon and returned to the scene. All of this occurred in fluid motion over the course of approximately 15 minutes, during which time neither the weapon nor its location was accessible by anyone other than district personnel, our security team and the police on their arrival. As such, the situation was not deemed an imminent threat and the ongoing operations of building activities remained uninterrupted, including our concert which had concluded at 6:34 p.m.

With that said, please know that I don't mean to diminish the issue or the concerns that our families may have over the fact that a weapon was found in one of our schools. However, I do hope that these additional details help to explain the brevity in which the events transpired – in particular, how quickly the weapon was found, the scene secured and its owner identified.

School safety and security remains our district's top priority and we assure all families that we take these matters very seriously.

I once again wish to thank our security team, the Suffolk County Police Department and all individuals who assisted with last night's isolated incident. Please know that we will continue to work to review and strengthen our security initiatives, protocols and procedures to further safeguard our ESM school community.

Sincerely,

Joseph A. Steimel