

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2021 - PRESS RELEASE FROM THE UTICA POLICE DEPARTMENT

This evening, The Utica Police Department received several calls from parents and students in the Utica City School District who were very rightfully concerned regarding a social media post that was being circulated.

This post, referenced an individual who was going to commit a school shooting. The post states "I will shoot up the school Thursday September 30th. Whoever reads this, this is good warning this is not a joke this is an active threat"

Immediately, we in conjunction with the Utica City School District, commenced an investigation into this threat. We take all threats extremely seriously always, and especially now with some of the recent incidents occurring within the District.

As part of the investigation, in researching the name associated with the posting, we came across several other associated social media accounts of the individual. We poured over them and located several videos and postings. It was immediately evident that the videos and related stories were not taken in Utica, NY or the surrounding area. Furthermore, additional information gleaned from the postings led us to believe the original poster, or whom we believed the original threatening post originated from, was located in the Central Florida region around Orlando.

Upon speaking with the students and parents of the individuals who received this message, none were a direct recipient from this individual nor were they in the alleged group message it was sent in originally. It appears that the message was shared virally. Furthermore, absolutely none of the individuals interviewed had any direct knowledge of who the male depicted is, nor do they recognize his face.

Additionally, the continued investigation found more evidence consistent with that location and nothing at all immediately associated with Utica, NY. This included friends, followers, and commenters of the original poster. The great majority of them also resided in the Orlando, FL. area.

Never once does the original post mention a particular high school, and most certainly not Proctor High School or any Central New York location.

In summation, based on the totality of the factors present at this very moment there are no ties to Utica NY that we can establish in any capacity. However, interviews with all individuals who report the threat will continue in an attempt to determine any local threat or relations of the individual in question.

Preservation requests through Instagram and the associated social media accounts have been initiated as well.

We have been in contact with our law enforcement partners in Florida who in fact had been aware of these posts as well.

As a caveat, while we cannot be absolutely certain the individual that is named in the post is the author or originator of the threat, we are taking all investigative measures possible at this time.

The Utica Police Department and the Utica City School District have done and will continue to make the safety of our students, staff, and faculty our very first priority. There will be many additional heightened security measures taking place at our schools to ensure this.

We will continue to investigate this specific threat and any threat that may arise with the utmost importance and expediency.

Again, the threat in question never mentioned Utica, Proctor, or any individual associated with the district at any time. Nonetheless we commend each and every individual who brought it to our attention, and we will never waiver in commitment to ensure the safety of our schools.