



School Safety Newsletter

Volume 6, Issue 4

November 2018

*Protecting our
future through
information
sharing*

Noblesville School Shooting: New Details About the Day of the Shooting

IndyStar, November 5, 2018

<https://www.indystar.com/story/news/2018/11/05/noblesville-indiana-middle-school-shooting-suspect-new-details/1891261002/>

The juvenile court hearing on November 5, 2018, for the suspect in the shooting at Noblesville West Middle School has revealed new details about the May 25 incident, which left two injured.

The suspect, a 13-year old boy, has agreed to the juvenile court version of a guilty plea. The suspect's mother has taken the stand to talk about her son and the guns in their home, and prosecutors have shared new information about the suspect and how the events unfolded that day.

IndyStar is not naming the suspect because he is not being charged as an adult.

Here is all of the new information we've learned so far at the hearing:

The day before the shooting

- The suspect filmed a nearly two-minute video in his family basement the day before the shooting, revealing a .45-caliber handgun and a .22-caliber handgun with a silencer attached, according to prosecutors. The boy said on the video: "Tomorrow's Friday, you know what that means. I have to take other people's lives before I take my own."
- Prosecutors said the boy warned three classmates with text messages that read: "Don't come to school tomorrow."
- The boy's mother testified that there are guns in the home, including the two handguns that the boy brought to school. She said the gun safe is in the basement, near where the boy plays first-person shooter games. Prosecutors showed photos of the safe with the keys hanging out of the lock.
- The boy's mother said his father taught him about gun safety, and said they are responsible gun owners.
- An investigator testified that the boy's internet search history included the terms: "Columbine," "Sandy Hook," "school shooting memes," "what was the largest mass shooting in America," and "Noblesville West Middle School blueprint".

The day of the shooting

- The boy's mother said the morning of the shooting was normal, and the boy got ready for school and talked about an upcoming band concert.
- According to prosecutors, the seventh-grade boy came to school with weapons in his backpack, put the bag in his locker and went to class.
- Prosecutors said during the boy's second period science class with Jason Seaman, students took a quiz

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Noblesville School Shooting: New Details About the Day of the Shooting (Continued)

on school-issued iPads. The boy finished early, asking to be excused. He went to his locker, got his backpack and headed to the bathroom, where he left the bag.

- Prosecutors said Seaman was helping student Ella Whistler with a question about the quiz. Seaman testified that he heard a knock on the classroom door, and non-verbally instructed another student to open the door.
- According to prosecutors, the suspect returned to the classroom with weapons hidden in his hooded sweatshirt. The boy entered and fired the .22-caliber handgun, hitting Seaman.
- Seaman was holding a small basketball that he "double-pumped," which he said he learned in training. He said he threw it at the boy as hard as he could and went to rush him in a "bear hug."
- Prosecutors said the boy kept firing, striking Seaman and Whistler. Seaman said he pinned the boy to the ground, which caused him to drop the weapon. Seaman said he shouted at the other students to "Run, get out of the classroom, call 911."
- Seaman testified that he asked the shooter if he had any other weapons, and unloaded another gun and ammunition.
- An eighth-grade teacher in the hallway saw the disturbance and called the school office to request a resource officer, said prosecutors. Seaman said the school resource officer entered the classroom with a key, searched the room for other weapons and checked Seaman's wounds.
- Seaman said he was shot three times — once in the abdomen, once in the right forearm, and once in the right hip. He was taken to IU Health Methodist Hospital, where he underwent surgery.

After the shooting

- According to prosecutors, authorities found what they believed to be the shooter's backpack in the bathroom. There were 100 rounds inside for one of the handguns the boy brought to school, as well as rounds for a 9 mm pistol that was discovered at the boy's home.
- Prosecutors said Whistler was hit in the chest, neck and arm, and one round was found in a cabinet. Authorities found seven shell casings at the scene.
- Ella's mother, Julia, testified that after the shooting, Ella was at risk for a stroke. She was in surgery at Riley Children's Hospital for six hours.
- Julia Whistler said Ella sustained "severe damage" to an artery in her right arm. Doctors told the family not to expect a full recovery in the arm.
- The boy was questioned by the judge at the hearing, and he said the way prosecutors described the incident was accurate.
- The director of the juvenile detention center testified that in August, the boy was given Lego bricks but they were taken away after he used to them make a gun.

FBI: Noblesville School Shooting was Preventable

The Indy Channel, November 21, 2018

<https://www.theindychannel.com/news/call-6-investigators/fbi-noblesville-school-shooting-was-preventable>

NOBLESVILLE, Ind. — The man in charge of the FBI in Indianapolis said the Noblesville Middle School West shooting could have been prevented.

Call 6 has learned there were key warning signs that were never reported, that could have potentially stopped the shooter before he even came to school that day. FBI Special Agent in Charge Grant Mendenhall said most

Monthly Webinars!

**First Wednesday
of Every Month**

at 10 am

**(Except January,
July, and
August).**

Next Webinars

**Wednesday,
December 12,
2018**

**Each webinar has a
round table
discussion at the
end. Questions are
always welcome!**

**To participate, you
must be a vetted
member. For more
information please
email
schoolsafety@isp.
state.il.us**

FBI: Noblesville School Shooting was Preventable (Continued)

school shootings are preventable, including the Noblesville one. The difficulty is people reporting the concerns.

"They might not know exactly what the shooter is going to do, but in the vast majority of cases, somebody in retrospect had recognized some type of behavioral change that could have been significant and again, not a very high percentage of people reported it to law enforcement," Mendenhall said.

The findings are all part of a new study released by the FBI that studied active shooter incidents over 13 years.

The report states, in part:

In the weeks and months before an attack, many active shooters engage in behaviors that may signal impending violence. While some of these behaviors are intentionally concealed, others are observable and — if recognized and reported — may lead to a disruption prior to an attack. Unfortunately, well-meaning bystanders (often friends and family members of the active shooter) may struggle to appropriately categorize the observed behavior as malevolent. They may even resist taking action to report for fear of erroneously labeling a friend or family member as a potential killer. Once reported to law enforcement, those in authority may also struggle to decide how best to assess and intervene, particularly if no crime has yet been committed.

In Noblesville, the school was aware of 21 incidents of misconduct involving the teen in the seven months before the shooting. RTV6 is not naming the shooter because he is a juvenile.

But the biggest sign was on the morning of the shooting. It was revealed in court that the shooter sent a text message to three different students warning them not to come to school.

Noblesville Schools Director of Marketing and Communications Marnie Cooke released the following statement:

"While we can't speak to specific items in an individual's file due to privacy laws, it is important to note that nothing in this individual's behavior record would have led us to believe there was a safety threat.

To clarify, there were 21 notes regarding behavior, not 21 incidents of discipline, and that level of documentation in a student's record is not uncommon. In general, file notes can contain documentation regarding a student's grades, and teacher and parent conversations, in addition to actual behavior or discipline concerns."

Dr. Jill Fodstad, a child psychologist at Riley Hospital, said while she isn't aware of the specifics of the Noblesville case, she says the warning signs are often the same across the board.

"It's not just because someone is odd or has disruptive behaviors that makes them a school shooter, it's that they have that may have those warning signs and they're talking about hurting themselves or other people," she said.

The FBI field office in Indianapolis has been distributing the report to school districts and police departments across the state to help recognize potential threats.

To read the full FBI report, visit: <https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/pre-attack-behaviors-of-active-shooters-in-us-2000-2013.pdf/view>

After one-third of North Dakota Schools Get Hacked by Foreign Entities, State Superintendent Addresses Attack with Cyber Security Standards

GrandForks Herald, September 14, 2018

<http://grandforksherald.com/news/education/4499560-after-one-third-north-dakota-schools-get-hacked-foreign-entities-state>

BISMARCK — The North Dakota Information Technology Department said there were malware attacks on one-third of North Dakota schools in February 2018. The hackers behind the attacks were from different international locations including North Korea and the malware was downloaded from multiple access points.

According to ITD's Director of Security Sean Wiese, hackers used DoublePulsar malware that easily gives "bad actors" the ability to infiltrate other systems.

After one-third of North Dakota Schools Get Hacked by Foreign Entities, State Superintendent Addresses Attack with Cyber Security Standards (Continued)

Wiese says this malware can infect a computer if a user simply clicks on something they weren't supposed to click on.

"The most common attacks are through phishing — it takes you clicking on something you shouldn't have," he said. "The attackers are tricky and everyone is susceptible."

According to Wiese, it took 30 to 45 days for the malware to be completely eradicated from their STAGEnet system, a network all North Dakota state employees use. While no information was lost, North Dakota State Superintendent Kirsten Baesler says it sparks a greater drive to combat hacking issues.

"Shawn Riley, chief information officer at ITD, and his team informed me that this had occurred, the breach was contained and sealed, no data was lost," Baesler said. "I was very pleased to know there was no damage, but it was an opportunity for Sean and I and the state (to talk) about what we need to do to make sure these breaches don't happen, and make sure we aren't an entry point for further attacks."

Malware that enter systems like STAGEnet have the potential to infect more confidential state departments like the treasury, Department of Agriculture and more. There are 252,000 users that have access to STAGEnet in North Dakota, and the school computers are just an entry point to what could be much more confidential information.

"This event is not the exception, these are now occurring more frequently and they are getting more skilled through getting past the firewall," Baesler said. "We have 450-plus school buildings, it's not realistic to think we can build a strong enough firewall to sustain this. K-12 committed to working with the technological department so that we may not be the entry point."

Wiese says coordination between cybersecurity departments and the K-12 system is the most crucial part in addressing such a dire situation.

"We're trying to align our security initiatives with the K-12 arena. We want to be on the same page, creating a singular approach to cyber security so we react the same way when things like this happen," he said.

Wiese added that they are "working as a trifecta of cyber experts, technological tools and our K-12 staff."

The trifecta Wiese mentions is backed up by Baesler with a coalition comprised of cyber professionals, new protective technologies and the teacher licensing board.

The K-20W Coalition will create a set of standards and train teachers to educate students K-12 about cyber security, coding and computer science every year.

"We formed this statewide coalition to talk about cybersecurity and computer science. (We're) using the three-pronged approach so every student has access and exposure to computer security standards," Baesler said.

That curriculum will begin February 2019, according to Baesler.

Letter Sent to Racine Parents, Students in Effort to Thwart School Threats: 'A Very Serious Issue'

Fox 6 Now, November 5, 2018

<https://fox6now.com/2018/11/05/letter-sent-to-racine-parents-students-in-effort-to-thwart-school-threats-a-very-serious-issue/>

RACINE -- Officials with the Racine Unified School District and Racine County Sheriff's Office have come together in an effort to thwart threats to schools -- promising to investigate any ominous message thoroughly.

"Safety is our number one priority," said Stacy Tapp, Racine Unified School District spokeswoman. "Making school threats is a very serious issue," said Racine County Sheriff Christopher Schmaling.

A letter (see letter on next page) was sent home to parents and guardians to reinforce involvement at home. "We really are asking families to talk about it," said Tapp. The letter, in part, says safety threats "disrupt learning and instill fear," and authorities want children to "understand the negative impacts of posting or sharing these types of threats on social media." "When we say we are taking it seriously -- absolutely," said Sheriff Schmaling.

Schmaling said a significant amount of resources are poured into each incident, and with growing violence across the country, these moves are necessary.

Letter Sent to Racine Parents, Students in Effort to Thwart School Threats: ‘A Very Serious Issue’ (Continued)

"Just in the U.S. alone, there were 1,300 threats in U.S. schools this last year. The vast majority of those were just false. They didn't come to fruition. However, there were 279 acts of violence in U.S. schools last year alone. That number is up over 100 percent from 131 acts of violence from the year prior," said Sheriff Schmaling.

Although the threats in the Racine Unified School District have been considered non-credible, the letter to parents also served as a reminder to students to speak up.

"If they see something, to say something to an adult or law enforcement, rather than re-sharing or re-posting it on things, because that just exacerbates the problem," said Tapp.

The letter also warns about the severe repercussions of making a threat, which can include suspension, expulsion and possible felony charges.

Combating Human Trafficking with School Bus Drivers

School Transportation News, November 1, 2018

<http://stnonline.com/conferences/conference-connection/item/9894-combating-human-trafficking-of-students-in-the-school-bus-industry>

KANSAS CITY — At the NASDPTS Annual Conference, human and sex trafficking of students and the role school bus drivers can play to report the crimes was discussed. State directors who were at the well-attended session at the Crown Plaza Downtown, heard details of anti-trafficking efforts in many states, which are now well-underway.

Annie Sovcik, Esq. program director for Busing on the Lookout, discussed human and sex trafficking on Oct. 28. She reported on nationwide efforts to help school bus drivers, aides and school staff better identify and help students who are being trafficked.



November 4, 2018

Dear Racine Unified Parents and Guardians,

As you may be aware, recent safety threats have caused disruptions at schools in RUSD as well as neighboring communities. Whether a reported incident is credible or not, we take all potential threats very seriously as we are committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for our students and staff. In collaboration we work tirelessly to thoroughly investigate all potential threats so that appropriate action may be taken as necessary.

Though necessary, these investigations take significant resources from our local law enforcement as well as school staff. They detract from the purpose of our schools – which is to provide a positive and safe place for all students to learn. They disrupt learning and instill fear, most often unnecessarily, in students, staff and families in our community.


We are asking you to please help by talking with your children about the seriousness of making any type of threat. Threats are never ever tolerated and the repercussions for students are severe. Whether a child perceives making a threat as a joke or a meaningless act, making such a threat could result in suspension, expulsion and/or charges up to a felony from local law enforcement.

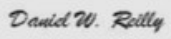
We also ask that you help your child understand the negative impacts of posting or sharing these types of threats on social media. This can cause the spread of misinformation and unnecessary panic and can hinder a potential police investigation. Instead, if you see or hear something, say something to any adult. It's imperative that our students report threats of any kind.


We are committed to ensuring that your children receive their education in a safe, secure and positive school environment. We appreciate your continued support and partnership.

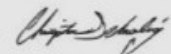
If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your school principal directly.

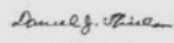
In partnership with you,

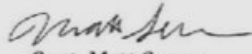

Dr. Eric Gallien
Superintendent

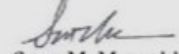

Daniel W. Reilly
Chief of Police
Village of Caledonia


Arthel Howell
Chief of Police
City of Racine


Christopher Schmaling
Sheriff
Racine County


Daniel Thielen
Chief of Schools


Capt. Matt Soens
Interim Chief of Police
Village of Mt. Pleasant


Sean M. Marschke
Chief of Police
Village of Sturtevant



Combating Human Trafficking with School Bus Drivers

Looking out for the “abnormal,” Sovcik stressed, plus who to call, are key. Trafficking is a crime against a person, while smuggling is a crime against a boarder, she explained. One in four victims are under the age of 18, Sovcik reported. Trafficking is the second largest crime worldwide, topped only by drug smuggling, it is estimated, and ahead of weapons smuggling.

According to Sovcik, trafficking is a crime of power, control and greed. For instance, they involve false offers of employment, or expressing love. These are the most common hooks to capture younger victims, or threatening to call ICE. The victims may be completely fooled, she stressed.

Trafficking is an “everywhere problem” that happens in all 50 states, Sovcik said. In four out of 10 cases, commercial buses and school buses are used in some portion of the ongoing crime. The traffickers isolate the victims from their social support system, as a key methodology of maintaining control. She cited a Polaris study, that found that 26 percent of the cases included bus transportation of some kind. Some victims will continue to attend schools, even when they are being trafficked at night, Sovcik concluded.

What are the Warning Signs?

- Training on the Busing on the Lookout program rolled out over the summer to Iowa school bus drivers. Officials there recently released a checklist of signs to watch for:
- Unexpected, frequent absences from school.
- Signs of neglect, appears malnourished or unkempt.
- Bruises and physical trauma.
- Signs of drug addiction.
- Changes in attire, material possessions, unexplained gifts and all the latest gadgets. For instance, human traffickers will often groom their victims by showering them with attention, affection, and purchased items, in order to earn trust and affection.
- Tattoos (a form of branding, displaying the name or moniker of a trafficker).
- Fearful demeanor, uncomfortable with a certain individual or individuals.
- Major changes in behavior, uncontrollable anger or crying, emotional highs and lows.

From the FBI’s point of view, the most noticeable signs of a likely victim are:

- They do not hold their own identity or travel documents.
- They appear to suffer from verbal or psychological abuse which intimidates, degrades and frightens.
- They are not permitted to speak for themselves.
- They appear nervous, especially if in the presence of their trafficker.
- They are not allowed to move about by themselves, and seem to have little understanding of where they are.

Teresa Flores, a survivor and author, noted in *Traffick Free*, “[A]ttended school during the day alongside of her traffickers, only to be called into ‘service’ late each night while her unknowing family slept.” Another survivor and activist, Laine George, said in *The Mountaineer*, “When I wasn’t in foster care, my school bus would drop me off at my mom’s strip club.... I would always ask, ‘Why didn’t anybody see? Why didn’t anybody notice?’”

School Safety Newsletter

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