

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT DIVISION

SAFE SCHOOLS

CRISIS RESOURCES :: BOMB THREATS = BIG TROUBLE

Stop Threats/Acts of School Violence

FACT SHEET ON STATE LAW

- Provides that any person who communicates a false bomb threat or perpetrates a hoax is guilty of a Class H felony. Increases the criminal penalty for making second or subsequent bomb threats or perpetrating hoaxes within five years of first offense to a Class G felony. Allows the court to order the person convicted under this section to pay restitution for interruption of daily activity that would have otherwise occurred on premises but for the false report or hoax.
- Includes using a computer to report a false bomb threat as making a false report.
- Makes it a Class G felony for any person who possesses or carries or encourages a minor to possess or carry onto educational property or to a curricular or extracurricular activity sponsored by a school any dynamite cartridge, bomb, grenade, mine, or powerful explosive (excluding fireworks).
- Requires Division of Motor Vehicles to revoke the permit or license of any person upon receiving record of the person's conviction of making a false bomb threat, perpetrating a hoax, possessing or carrying a dynamite cartridge, bomb, grenade, mine, or powerful explosive, or aiding a minor to possess the above on educational property.
- Adds that a parent or individual legal guardian who has care, custody, and control of an unemancipated minor may be held civilly liable to an educational entity for the negligent supervision of a minor if: the educational entity proves the minor committed a felony offense involving injury to persons or property through use of a gun, rifle, pistol, or other firearm on educational property, the parent or individual guardian knew or reasonably should have known of the minor's likelihood to commit such an act and had the opportunity to control the minor, but made no reasonable effort to correct, restrain, or properly supervise the minor.
- Allows the educational entity to recover up to \$25,000 for damages resulting from a false threat or hoax from parents or individual legal guardian convicted of the above and up to \$50,000 for damages resulting from a discharged firearm or detonation or explosion of a bomb or other explosive device.
- Provides for the suspension for 365 calendar days any student who makes a false bomb threat or perpetrates a hoax which can be modified on a case-by-case basis by the local school board upon recommendation by the superintendent.
- Requires the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee to examine the issue of students who threaten to commit or who carry out acts of violence directed at schools and those in schools.

BOMB THREATS = BIG TROUBLE

- You're in big trouble if you make a threat or pull a hoax involving your school, classmates, or teachers. It's a felony if you make school threats or hoaxes.

- Leave a note threatening your classmates and you could end up suspended from school for an entire year and lose your driver's license.
- Parents may be forced to pay the cost of searching the school and letting school out early÷thousands of dollars.
- If you call in a bomb threat, the school will trace the call and you'll likely be caught and put in jail.
- If you have information about threats to schools or your classmates, please contact local police or sheriffs departments or the State Bureau of Investigation's Operations Center at 1 -800-334-3000.
- **Bomb threats are serious business that could land you in big trouble.**

SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS

DATE

Dear Parents:

We are working hard to keep our schools safe. Your principal, teachers and other staff members are taking extra care to get help for students who need it, to investigate any threats or problems that come up and to talk to students to make sure they are comfortable in school. But, we need your help. Some students and adults are disrupting our schools through bomb threats and hoaxes. These actions will not be allowed.

Legislators are so concerned about the seriousness of these threats that they enacted a law in 1999 that puts serious penalties on students and others who make bomb threats or hoaxes and holds parents liable for their child's actions. You need to be aware of this law and its potential impact on you and your children. The law makes it a serious felony, Class H, for people who make school-related bomb threats or hoaxes.

The law requires an automatic suspension of 365 days for any student who makes a false report or perpetrates a hoax. Parents or legal guardians will be held liable for costs resulting from the disruption or dismissal of school or school activities. Parents will have to pay up to \$25,000 for hoaxes and up to \$50,000 if a firearm, bomb or other explosive device is discharged if it is determined that their supervision of the minor is negligent. Also, students and adults can lose their driver's licenses for making these threats.

Our schools are safe and the majority of our students take their schoolwork seriously. (Insert local numbers regarding students involved in school violence and number of schools reporting zero incidents.) We cannot let a few students ruin the instructional experience for all students. We need your help in keeping our schools safe.

Sincerely,

Local Superintendent

SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

DATE:

CONTACT:

N.C. Has Tough Penalties for Bomb Threats

Students and others in the community who think it is a joke to make bomb threats against schools are in for a serious shock. In 1999, the Legislature stiffened penalties for those who make bomb threats against schools and approved holding parents liable for these actions.

When the law was passed, then Gov. Jim Hunt said North Carolina will have "zero tolerance for anyone who makes threats of violence against our schools."

Local Superintendent, fill in name, said, "Our schools are some of the safest places in our community and we want to keep them that way. Students and others who make jokes about bombs and other threats against our schools are going to be in serious trouble. The Legislature has given us some stiff penalties to use against these pranks," fill in superintendent's name, said.

The law makes it a serious felony, Class H, for people who make school-related bomb threats or hoaxes. It also requires an automatic suspension of 365 days for any student who makes a false report or perpetrates a hoax. Parents or legal guardians will be held liable for costs resulting from the disruption or dismissal of school or school activities. Parents would have to pay up to \$25,000 for hoaxes and up to

\$50,000 if a firearm, bomb or other explosive device is discharged if it is determined that their supervision of the minor is negligent. The law also requires the Division of Motor Vehicles to revoke the permit or licence of a person convicted of making a false threat.

The current tougher bomb threat penalties were proposed by local principals and superintendents following a rash of threats and hoaxes in the wake of the Columbine High School shootings.

Ward said that teachers cannot teach and students cannot learn if they are concerned for their safety at school. "Students and others who perpetrate hoaxes and threats will be held responsible for their actions. We cannot let a few disrupt the learning experiences of many students."

Besides the tougher penalties, other local initiatives to make schools safer include: fill in local efforts.

BOMB THREAT PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT SCRIPT (RADIO/TV :30)

Students listen up!

- If you think making a bomb threat is funny...you'd better think again.
- The North Carolina Department of Public instruction wants you to know that bomb threats are no joke.
- If you are caught making a bomb threat, you could face serious penalties like immediate year-long suspension and loss of driving privileges.

Parents . . . this could affect you too!

- If your child is convicted of making a false bomb threat you may be forced to pay
- 25-thousand dollars in fines for damages resulting from a threat or hoax.
- Making bomb threats or hoaxes is no laughing matter. It is serious business that calls for serious consequences.

STUDENT HANDBOOK INFORMATION

Bomb Threats

NOTE: Three types of bomb threats represent a serious crime in North Carolina, and therefore involve serious penalties that can be administered by the school system, or local and state law enforcement agencies.

Category of Crime

Crime no. 1: Making or communicating a false bomb threat in any form, even including computer messages, is a **Class H felony** crime.

Crime no. 2: Perpetrating a bomb threat hoax by bringing a fake explosive device onto school property (buildings, grounds or buses) or into school-sponsored events or activities is a **Class H felony** crime.

Crime no. 3: Encouraging or aiding a minor to bring onto school property any true explosive device is a **Class G felony** crime.

Penalties: In addition to legal consequences that accompany any of the above felonies, the following penalties also apply to these crimes:

- A second conviction of either of the first two crimes within 5 years of a first conviction is a Class G felony crime.
- Conviction of any of the three crimes results in loss of one's driver's license or permit.
- There is an automatic 365-day suspension from school for committing either of the first two crimes.
- Possible restitution and financial liability for the costs or damage experienced by the school or school system in having to deal with the threat. Parents who are found to be negligent with regard to their children who commit either of the above crimes may be required to pay up to \$25,000 in costs associated with a false bomb threat or hoax, and \$50,000 in costs associated with actual damages resulting from a discharged explosive device.

Questions to Ask When Receiving Bomb Threats

1. When is the bomb going to explode?
2. Where is it right now?
3. What does it look like?
4. What kind of bomb is it?
5. What will cause it to explode?
6. Did you place the bomb?
7. Why?
8. What is your address?
9. What is your name?

EXACT WORDING OF THE THREAT

Sex of caller:

Race:

Age:

Length of call:

Number at which call is received:

Time:

Date:

Caller's Voice {circle those that apply):					
calm	angry	excited	slow	rapid	soft
loud	laughter	crying	normal	distinct	slurred
nasal	stutter	lisp	raspy	deep	ragged
clearing throat	deep breathing	cracking voice	disguised	accent	familiar
If voice is familiar, who did it sound like?					
Background noises (circle those that apply):					
street noises	crockery	voices	PA system	music	house noises
booth	factory	animals	clear	static	local
long dist.	motor	office machines	other:		
Threat language {circle those that apply):					
well spoken (educated)	taped	irrational	incoherent	foul	
message read by threat maker					
Remarks:					
Report call immediately to name and number):					
Date:		Name:		Phone Number:	

{Adapted from a card provided by the Pitt County Sheriffs Office}