

October 11, 2010

Dear Parents and Guardians:

I have had many conversations with parents and received many phone calls and emails in recent days regarding the injury to a student stemming from a fight that took place at our school on October 6. I know well that many of you are frustrated over the inability of both me and our school system to discuss specifics about the situation and the consequences of it to students involved. However, I want to use this forum to hopefully allay some of those frustrations and provide you with some information about the processes involved.

First, we have been in contact with the family of the student who was hospitalized as a result of injuries sustained in this fight. He is, thankfully, out of the hospital at this point. However, he is still recuperating from some significant injuries. I and our school system are continuing to work with the student's family to provide instruction to him throughout the recovery process.

With regard to the students who have been charged in this incident, I understand fully your frustration that I cannot share information on potential disciplinary actions that may arise in this case. However, the same privacy provisions apply to these students as would apply to your children should they be involved in a violation of the Code of Student Conduct.

As a factual matter, I want you to understand the disciplinary process. Under state law, school principals have the authority to mete out discipline up to a 10-day suspension. Any sanction that exceeds a 10-day suspension must be handled by the central administration. Such information, again, is protected by privacy provisions.

While I know that in many cases you have more information than I am able to provide, I would urge you not to believe everything you hear or see printed in the media or online. While some of it may be factual, other information may well be speculation or misguided theory.

Finally, I want to address the wording in the letter posted online last week that has been a source of some consternation. Several parents and others have taken issue with the word "altercation" used in the letter. I assure you that there was no intent to downplay the incident by calling it an altercation. Rather, my entire focus was to get as much information to you as quickly as possible in the hopes of stemming rumors that sometimes spiral out of control. The letter was posted within two hours of the fight and parents were notified by phone call, an option I thought better than waiting a full day to hand a letter to students.

The safety of our students and staff continues to be a top priority for our school, as it is with every school in our county. I would simply ask that you continue to partner with us, and to share information that you may have that can help us when it comes to the daily operation of our school. Please do not hesitate to contact the school at 410-956-5600 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

William T. Myers
Principal

WTM/bm