



Thornton Township High School District 205
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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Building Stability and Safety in a Time of Crisis

District 205 plans to take aggressive measures to mitigate criminal activity around schools

South Holland, IL – Thornton Township High School District 205 is committed to ensuring a safe school environment where faculty can teach, and students can learn. As a result, the district is aggressively moving forward with infrastructure projects that will enhance both interior and exterior of school buildings.

An incident that occurred this morning at Thornwood High School validates the district’s aggressive approach to providing a safe environment in and around its schools. At approximately 9:24 a.m., an individual in a white BMW attempted to steal a vehicle from the northeast parking lot of Thornwood High School, 17100 South Park Avenue. This individual was unsuccessful and left the area. However, there was a report of shots fired outside the school building.

Response to the incident was swift. Thornwood High School was immediately placed on a soft lockdown. The South Holland Police School Resource Officer responded immediately to the incident site, where gun shell casings were collected. Fortunately, there are no reported injuries and no threat to students, faculty, and staff.

An investigation is ongoing by the South Holland Police Department. Therefore, all questions pertaining to the investigation should be directed to the police.

“The safety of our students, faculty, staff, and facilities is paramount,” said Dr. Nathaniel Cunningham Jr., Superintendent. “We recognize that as a society, we live in different times. Gun violence is prevalent. It is a national emergency, and District 205’s board and administration have placed an immediate focus on mitigation to the fullest extent possible.”

In the forthcoming weeks, the district intends to move forward with its plan to restrict access to school campuses. Each building will have a designated area for student parking, faculty parking, and student drop-off. The student drop-off at all buildings will be outside the campus grounds, with one-way in and out areas to increase safety on the campus. The district will no longer accept drop-in appointments or open access to campus. Each campus will have restricted access through gates or guards at the entrance. The new security plan also includes constructing gate access with proximity cards for staff.

District 205 school board members and administrative leaders are confident these measures will provide a safer experience for students and their parents, faculty, and staff. Additionally, the district is Thornton Township High School District 205

initiating an interior safety plan. At all schools, the district will reduce access to buildings. Moving forward, there will be no more than two doors for student access, designated doors for staff with proximity cards, and one entry for visitor access. Audible alarms will be installed on all non-designated entrance/exit doors. Each building will have interior plans to ensure students and staff follow the safety requirements.

“We are living in a time of crisis, and this cannot be ignored. As a district, we are preparing our schools to face a new reality. It is a reality that challenges our safety in and around our school buildings. We are preparing to create stability for our students and parents, faculty and staff,” said Dr. Cunningham.

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