



PHILIP D. MURPHY  
GOVERNOR

SHEILA Y. OLIVER  
LT. GOVERNOR

State of New Jersey  
Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness  
PO Box 091  
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0091

JARED M. MAPLES  
DIRECTOR

From: Jared Maples, Director, New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness  
To: All School Administrators and Principals  
Re: School Threats in New Jersey  
Date: September 9, 2019

The mass shootings that occurred this summer in Gilroy, California; El Paso, Texas; and Dayton, Ohio; coupled with the aftermath of the Parkland school shooting in February 2018, serve as an unfortunate but important reminder that all schools should remain vigilant about reporting suspicious activity to their municipal police department. Local authorities will then immediately notify the County Prosecutor's Office and the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (NJOHSP), which, in turn, shall immediately share such reports with the FBI.

This statewide information-sharing process known as SARs (Suspicious Activity Reporting) has been mandated by a [New Jersey Attorney General Directive](#), which states that all Chief Law Enforcement Executives shall report suspicious activities to better reflect the current threat landscape, including threats of violence to schools or other criminal activity related to terrorism. As a result of this amended Directive and in the wake of the Parkland school shooting, NJOHSP received an unprecedented spike in school threat reports. An in-depth analysis on the changing trends in threats and tactics affecting New Jersey schools revealed that *social media remains a pervasive method* used by some juveniles and students to convey school threats.

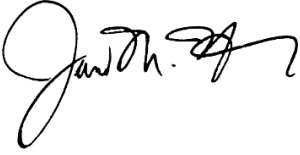
Thus, the arrival of the new school year presents an opportunity for the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) to urge local Boards of Education to address the rising trend of school threats with students and their parents/guardians. Along with many school-related rules and regulations, school boards can specifically mention that any threats of violence should be immediately reported, will be taken seriously, and appropriately addressed. Parents should be notified that consequences may include measures such as:

- 1. Suspension from school and all school-related activities**
- 2. Notification of the allegation to the local police department**
- 3. A search of their residence**
- 4. Criminal charges**

If school boards address the rise in school-related threats and discuss the consequences, parents/guardians and students will accept that school threats—whether communicated through social media posts, “jokes,” or drawings—will not be tolerated. That will allow NJOHSP, NJDOE, and homeland security partners to focus their combined efforts on threats of potential terrorist activities and other substantial risks, thereby keeping the citizens of the State of New Jersey safe.

As a reminder, suspicious activity, specifically threats of violence to schools or other criminal activity related to terrorism, should be reported immediately, per existing protocols. Activity can also be reported 24/7 to NJOHSP's CTWatch at **866-4SAFENJ** (866-472-3365) or [tips@njohsp.gov](mailto:tips@njohsp.gov).

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jared M. Maples". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a stylized "M".

Jared M. Maples  
Director  
New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness