

Donna Conkling

From: Mayor
Sent: Tuesday, April 09, 2019 3:31 PM
To: Donna Conkling
Cc: Steve Pappalardo
Subject: Fwd: Lockdown at SMS

Begin forwarded message:

From: Michelle Sterling <michellesterling1@gmail.com>
Subject: Lockdown at SMS
Date: April 3, 2019 at 4:21:41 PM EDT
To: Marc Samwick <marc.samwick@gmail.com>, Steve Pappalardo <spappalardo@scarsdale.com>

Hello Marc and Steve

Yesterday as I am sure you know there was a lockdown at the middle school. We have been told that it was a false alarm which was the result of a technical glitch. I'm emailing because I wanted to make sure you are aware of certain village-related concerns parents have relayed to me.

The lockdown started at around 1:45 and ended at 3:50. During that time it is my understanding from speaking with other parents who have reached out to me, that when parents called the Scarsdale Police Dept they were told the following by the person answering the phone: "I was told to tell you that it is a false alarm and that the police are onsite only as a precaution. If you would like further information you would need to call the School Information Line." When the resident asked for the phone number for that line, they were told that "[the police does] not have it but that [the resident] can look it up online." Further when the resident questioned why the police were at SMS for such an extended period of time if it was only a false alarm, the person on the phone reiterated "This is what I was told tell you."

As I am sure you would agree, this response was very concerning to the parents who called. I wanted to bring this matter to your attention so the Village and School leadership can work together and address how after months of planning there are still such significant lapses in process and information during actual emergency events.

My questions and concerns with this response are:

- (1) In this situation if residents call the police for information and are told to call elsewhere for more information, the police officer should have that # at the ready to give to residents.
- (2) When the police phone attendant made the statement "I was told to tell you" where was she getting her statement from? Was it the school district? Police chief? Village leadership? Such statements made the parents feel like the police were not in control of the situation.

(3) It is understandable that it would seem incongruous to a resident that a 2 hour unscheduled lockdown is merely a false alarm. The officer's statements of "this is what i was told to tell you" are also understandably disconcerting for a parent. Please note that in a lockdown the kids are under desks, with the lights off, and no talking or movement allowed. So that was the situation inside the middle school for 2 hours yesterday. And outside of the middle school parents were gathered and were extremely concerned and wanted more information.

Thanks in advance for your time to look into this situation.

Best

Michelle Sterling