

April 5, 2023

Rockland Woods families:

I want to make you aware of a serious incident that happened on one of our school buses this afternoon. I'm sharing this so that you have accurate information, and you can have a discussion with your child in a way that you feel is most appropriate.

A student on one of our buses pulled a handgun out of his bookbag this afternoon and showed it to other students. It was not shown in a threatening way, and the gun was not loaded. Students reported this to the bus driver right away. The driver took quick action and confiscated the student's belongings to secure the gun. The driver returned the bus to school so the student could be removed. The Washington County Sheriff's Office, the student's parents, and I have met with the student. The Sheriff's Office is currently conducting an investigation into this incident.

While we are thankful no one was harmed or threatened in this situation, it is unfortunate that I need to send this message. I ask you to please talk to your student and remind them about the danger of bringing inappropriate items to school. In addition, we ask you to encourage your child to quickly report any potentially dangerous situation to a trusted adult in our school. If your family has weapons in your home, please follow Maryland law and make sure they are locked and secured at all times so that your children do not have access. Circumstances like this bring serious consequences for both students and families.

I understand this raises concerns for our school community. Please know that our school counselors and administrators are always available to speak with students, parents, and staff about their feelings and concerns they may have regarding safety in our school. In addition to school contacts, safety concerns can also be reported to the Washington County Sheriff's Office or Maryland State Police.

Safety in our school is a top priority. While students will not be in school tomorrow, I will be at Rockland Woods, and I will be available if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Scott Wildesen, Principal