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To: Press Covering Warren County Tennessee
From: Chris Stanford – District Attorney General – 31st Judicial District
Nichole Mosley – Chief of Police – McMinnville Police Department
Jackie Matheny, Jr. – Sheriff – Warren County Sheriff’s Department
Re: Rumors of Threats of Mass Violence at Warren County Schools

Approximately three (3) weeks ago, a Warren County student was arrested and detained for making various threats of mass violence. This young person remains in custody as of this press release. This constitutes the second incident of a threat of mass violence being made this school year. The other juvenile is no longer enrolled in Warren County schools. Although evidence revealed that neither youth had the means or a plan ready to execute any incident of mass violence, this fact is irrelevant.

As of July 1, 2024, any threat of mass violence on or against a school, whether the threat is made recklessly (jokingly) or not, is a Class E felony in the State of Tennessee. It also carries the likelihood of the juvenile offender being placed in juvenile detention or State’s custody, serving a lengthy sentence of probation, loss of driving privileges for one (1) year, and educational consequences as deemed appropriate by the Warren County School System. In addition, these juvenile offenders and/or their parents are often stuck with thousands of dollars in detention costs, court costs, attorney fees and fines that they owe immediately.

Now, in our second year of prosecuting these cases, it is clear that Juvenile Court Judge, Ryan J. Moore, shares law enforcement’s mission to treat these threats of mass violence against schools very seriously. Our local legal system remains committed to ensuring that our children have the best educational environment within which to learn, while also working tirelessly to maintain the highest level of safety in our children’s schools. In fact, agents with the Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security are working closely with our local investigators and detectives to track down every possible threat of violence against our students or school system.

However, we have a significant and emerging problem. Currently, several other students in our school system and in neighboring counties have taken great effort to spread rumors about threats of mass

violence of which they have no first-hand knowledge. This effort has resulted in hysteria running rampant throughout our community. This hysteria does not appear to be based on any current factual or evidentiary basis. Rather, the investigation revealed that these are simply old rumors of threats of mass violence that are being recirculated, for various reasons, by students on social media platforms, primarily Snapchat. Please realize that through the legal process we are able to see everything your children post to Snapchat and other social media outlets. Thus, be aware that we are watching closely.

Again, law enforcement is not aware of any current threat against any student in Warren County. Despite this current situation, we continue to urge any student, teacher, administrator or parent of a student in the Warren County School System who witnessed, heard, or has other first-hand knowledge of any threat of violence towards our students or schools to report the same to law enforcement officials immediately. We cannot conduct any investigation without your information coming to us in the first place. We urge you to continue helping us in our efforts to root out delinquent minors who spread fear and terror with their threats of mass violence. Also, you may be able to provide a tip that saves countless lives in the event of a credible threat of mass violence. Please help us keep our community safe!

However, please also consider advising your children that knowingly spreading false rumors of which your children have no personal knowledge, may result in legal consequences for your child. It is not our desire to charge children with crimes of this nature. However, we must all work together to make sure this unfounded hysteria does not continue. If the hysteria is left unchecked, our law enforcement investigative efforts will continue to be hampered by the work wasted investigating these rampant false rumors. Thus, please consider working with law enforcement directly to curb this issue so your family is not adversely affected.

Finally, Chief Mosley, Sheriff Matheny, and I want to thank the dedicated men and women that work in our schools to protect our children every day. Your vigilance will continue to help us identify and neutralize potential threats to school safety. Please join us in praying for the safety of our schools and a much more positive school year going forward. Thank you.