



November 13, 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian:

As part of its longstanding commitment to providing all students with a world-class educational experience in a safe and nurturing learning environment that enables them to thrive both academically and socially, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) is partnering with local law enforcement agencies to launch a joint campaign designed to end the fake threats of violence affecting our schools.

As a matter of practice, M-DCPS continues to monitor and respond to any and all reported threats that may impact schools or school functions. While we strongly encourage stakeholders to report any suspicious activity regarding threats made against schools and other community locations, we recognize the simultaneous need to continue educating students, families, and the broader community about the severe consequences associated with making threats to do harm of any kind – whether these threats are intended as a hoax or credible in nature.

Threats – whether real or intended as a prank – require the mobilization of significant resources, potentially endanger lives, and carry with them often life-altering consequences for the perpetrator. They lead to a disruption of the learning environment, interfere with police officers' ability to protect schools from real dangers, increase stress levels and anxiety among students and staff, and cost taxpayers money.

We urge you to remind your children to engage in positive, responsible behaviors and assist us by educating them of the serious repercussions associated with making threats to harm others. The penalties for making a threat – even if intended as a prank – can vary from probation to commitment to a residential facility operated by the Department of Juvenile Justice. Those juveniles not sent to a residential commitment facility are required to attend a weapons offender program, a 6-month educational program provided in a medical rehabilitation environment that discusses the tragic consequences of weapons possession and charges, as well as the harm that threats to do bodily harm or commit mass shootings have on parents and students of targeted schools. The juvenile arrested on charges for writing threats will be ordered to spend at least 21 days in secure detention at the Juvenile Detention Center. Additionally, a juvenile may be transferred to adult court to be prosecuted as an adult on these charges. Making a written threat to kill or do bodily harm to a person or to commit a mass shooting at a school is a second-degree felony and offenders who are sent to adult court may face up to 15 years in prison.

In addition to potential prosecution in criminal court, students who make threats may face suspension or expulsion from school. Students convicted of such a crime also risk being

precluded from college acceptance, may be ineligible for financial aid, and may have difficulties securing employment.

Since most of this behavior occurs beyond the school day and away from the schoolhouse, we implore you to not only speak with your children about the consequences of their actions, but also to closely monitor their behavior, especially on social media.

For available resources regarding this topic, please visit [itsnojoke.dadeschools.net](https://itsnojoke.dadeschools.net).

Sincerely,



Alberto M. Carvalho  
Superintendent of Schools



Katherine Fernandez Rundle  
State Attorney for Miami-Dade



# #ItsNoJokeMDCPS

Making threats,  
whether real or hoax,  
has long-term  
consequences that  
could impact  
**YOUR CHILD'S FUTURE!**

Offenders will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

Threats - whether real or intended as a prank - require the mobilization of significant resources, potentially endanger lives and often carry life-altering consequences for the offender.

Even a prank threat against a school or public place is considered a federal crime. It can lead to a felony that carries a maximum sentence of five years in prison.

**Remind your children to think before they act. Irresponsible behavior could ruin their FUTURE!**

## Threats:

- Disrupt the educational environment and interfere with police officers' ability to protect schools from real dangers
- Increase stress levels, anxiety and absenteeism in schools
- Cost taxpayers money

