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Harris County District Attorney's Office 1201 Franklin Street, Suite 600 Houston, TX 77002

HARRIS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY KIM OGG

September 24, 2024

Jennifer Blaine, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Spring Branch Independent School District
955 Campbell Road, Houston, Texas 77024

Superintendent Blaine,

I have received your letter, dated September 16, 2024, wherein you express a concern regarding school districts in Harris County and across Texas being subject to extreme disruption and outright fear as students are making terroristic threats against their classmates. Additionally, you stated that you were writing to express your "extreme frustration and concerns with the lack of action by the District Attorney's Office as it pertains to taking charges for students who level these terroristic threats against our schools or our school district." You further allege that the District Attorney's Office has "either just declined to accept charges or put up so many roadblocks that appropriate legal action is not being taken."

First, please note that the Harris County District Attorney's Office takes terroristic threats, or any other criminal activity, on or around our schools campus very seriously. We rely on the eighty-six law enforcement agencies in Harris County to conduct all criminal investigations about school threats, including collection of evidence, witness statements, etc. After the law enforcement agency completes its preliminary investigation, an offense report must be completed which outlines the evidence that supports their probable cause that a person has committed a crime. The reasonable grounds to suspect that a particular person has committed a crime are absolutely necessary to justify the legal action of filing a criminal charge.

You stated that the "Spring Branch ISD Police Department has contacted the District Attorney's Office regarding terroristic threats at our schools." However, we have not located an offense report submitted by Spring Branch ISD Police Department providing a written explanation of why the police officer(s) believed a crime was committed, and by whom. Terroristic threats must be officially documented, and evidence presented showing probable cause that the person suspected has committed a crime. After which, prosecutors review the police investigation to determine the appropriate charging action.

To assist with our review, please submit by Friday, September 27, 2024, 12:00 noon, Spring Branch ISD Police Department offense reports information where the District Attorney's Office "declined to accept charges or has put up so many roadblocks that appropriate legal action is not being taken."

Again, my office takes terroristic threats and other criminal behavior seriously. We work with law enforcement agencies across Harris County daily to help protect our schools.

Sincerely,

Kim Ogg
District Attorney