

# CAPE ELIZABETH SCHOOLS

**Alan H. Hawkins**

*Superintendent of Schools*

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*Business Manager*

November 29, 2006

Dear Cape Elizabeth Parents and Citizens,

Today has been a challenging day for our school system. Earlier this morning a letter was found attached to a wall in one of the high school boys' bathrooms. The letter was very specific about the fact that there were seventeen bombs in the high school and the middle school. The writer also had specific demands regarding the placement of students as they evacuated the schools.

Needless to say, our clear focus was on the safety of our students and staff. Working with the three school principals, the assistant principals, the fire chief, the assistant police chief, the transportation supervisor, and our business manager, we knew that evacuation of the buildings was necessary. Due to careful planning in each school, we had evacuation plans discussed with all staff and were ready to manage the process. As soon as evacuation plans were in place and activated, principals e-mailed all parents and information was sent from my office to the television and radio stations.

With the generous assistance of the Superintendent of Schools in South Portland, we were able to move our high school students to South Portland High School's auditorium, our middle school students to Memorial Middle School in South Portland, and Pond Cove students to St. Bartholomew's church. Our sincere thanks to Jeanne Crocker, the principal at South Portland High School, Megan Welter, the principal at Memorial Middle School, and Monsignor Henchal and staff at St. Bartholomew's church. The greatest care was taken to safely move our students from the buildings to the evacuation sites. Staff was readily available to continue to oversee students and carefully manage the situation. Much work followed to obtain food, provide bathroom facilities, and manage the needs of our students. All the school adults performed admirably.

The assistance from many people in the community was extremely helpful. A very, very sincere thank you to all the parents who trusted us to ensure the safety of their children. With 1803 students in the system, we were not able to even begin to contact each parent individually and manage the safe movement of students. We had to depend on the e-mail system, television and radio. We were prepared, and we did everything in our power to manage safety for all. My sincere thank you to students, school staff, administrators, the secretarial staff in our offices and town offices, town officials, and the community.

All three buildings were carefully inspected by local and state police, police dogs, and our local maintenance staff. The buildings have been judged to be safe for tomorrow's reopening. Our students and staff are safe, and school will reopen tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Alan Hawkins  
Superintendent of Schools

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