

# Mason City Police Department

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## PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**DATE: FEBRUARY 27, 2018**

**Contact Person:** Chief Jeff Brinkley

**Re:** MCHS Social Media Post

Yesterday, the Mason City Police Department responded to a social media threat that was made at the Mason City High School. We worked with school officials to investigate the threat and to help make a determination about the remainder of the school day. Based on the information known to us at the time, we supported the decision to finish the school day, as planned. We are continuing to investigate this incident and would ask anyone with information about it to contact Lt. Rich Jensen at 641-421-3636.

Today we are releasing the Instagram message that was widely circulated among students and parents yesterday. The image has been edited slightly, in order to remove the identity of the account holder and to remove profanity. We also hope that this helps to provide some context for students, parents, and the community about these kinds of incidents.

There is no guidebook for school or law enforcement officials in making decisions about what to do when these situations arise. We must balance the interests of school safety, public safety, and an appropriate law enforcement response against panic and fear that is generated by these kinds of messages. When we allow panic and fear to guide our decision-making, then the message writer accomplishes their goal.

I also want to share this message with students and parents. It is not ok to REPOST these kinds of messages. It is appropriate to REPORT them – to school officials and/or law enforcement. When we blindly forward or share these kinds of messages, we are not part of the solution. Nor do we give school or law enforcement officials time and information that will help them to respond appropriately to these scenarios.

We encourage students, parents, and community members to think proactively about their safety at all times. When you see something suspicious, do your part by reporting it to your local law enforcement agency.

"AN ARREST WITHOUT DISPOSITION IS NOT AN INDICATION OF GUILT"

**Citizens with information about a crime are encouraged to call  
CrimeStoppers at 1-800-383-0088. Rewards are available.**