

March 8, 2023

Dear UPSD Staff, Parents and Guardians:

The purpose of this message is to provide you with information about an incident that took place at Curtis Junior High School today. Parents and staff at CJH have already been notified but, because of the serious nature of the incident, I want to be sure that all UPSD stakeholders are informed.

Early in the day, CJH administrators received a report that a student was in possession of a firearm at school. The student and their belongings were detained immediately. Law enforcement responded and officers confirmed that the student was in possession of a handgun.

**No students or staff were threatened or injured and school operations were not impacted.** CJH administrators continue to work with law enforcement to investigate. At this time, there is no evidence that the student intended to use the weapon and we are not aware of any threats or threatening behaviors that preceded the incident. However, firearm possession is an extreme violation of school policy and is also against the law. Proper disciplinary and legal action has been initiated.

Incidents like this are unacceptable and undermine everyone's sense of safety. All of us have an important role to play in keeping weapons out of schools. We also share a responsibility to get immediate help whenever we feel there is a real or potential threat of any kind to others in our community. Parents, staff, students and citizens can help in the following ways:

1. Rumors and/or knowledge of weapon possession by children anywhere, and especially at school, must be reported immediately to school officials and/or law enforcement. **I can not overemphasize the importance of immediate reporting.**
2. Action must be taken, personally and collectively, to limit children's access to weapons and especially firearms. This includes appropriate **legal/legislative action** to restrict the access that school-age children have to weapons and **personal action** to ensure that firearms in homes are locked away and secure.

We are very grateful to the individual who promptly reported this matter to school staff this morning. It is essential that this becomes everyone's first response. We are also proud of the exceptional response by CJH staff and administration as well as our strong partnership with the University Place Police Department. Student and staff safety remain our highest priority and we continue to plan and prepare for situations like the one we experienced today.

If you have questions about this incident and/or the district's response, please feel free to respond to this email directly.

Sincerely,

Jeff Chamberlin  
Superintendent