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Winthrop Police Department

Chief Terence M. Delehanty

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Winthrop Public Schools

Lisa Howard, Superintendent

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Winthrop Police Department and Winthrop Public Schools Responding to Incident of Harassment Against Teen

WINTHROP -- Police Chief Terence Delehanty and Superintendent of Schools Lisa Howard announce that the Winthrop Police Department and Winthrop Public Schools

are working together to respond to an incident involving a student harassing a peer on social media.

On Friday, Aug. 7, Winthrop Public Schools were notified of an incident in which a Winthrop student is alleged to have directed vulgar, racist and homophobic audio messages to a peer via Snapchat. The school district engaged the Police Department on Saturday morning.

The student responsible for the incident has been identified and police and school officials have contacted their parents in order to initiate a collaborative response to address the incident.

"The targeted, hateful rhetoric this student used against one of their peers is unacceptable and needs to be addressed directly with all of the individuals involved," Superintendent Howard said. "There's no place for this kind of behavior in our schools or in our community, and I'm hopeful that this will serve as an opportunity for a teachable moment for all."

The investigation is being conducted jointly by Winthrop Police and Schools and the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office.

"Our officers are working hand-in-hand with the district's administrative team and the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office to address the root causes of this incident and ensure it does not happen again," Chief Delehanty said. "We have no tolerance for these types of personal attacks, and we are committed to working closely with the individuals and families involved to find a positive and lasting resolution."

"Every child deserves to be safe, both online and off. It's important that we all recognize that hateful words used online are every bit as harmful as words spoken in person. There are real life consequences to online harassment. Words matter. And, hate has no place in Suffolk County. My Office has been in close contact with the Winthrop Police Department and Winthrop Public Schools to collaborate in this investigation. Together, we will help ensure the safety and wellbeing of all of the young people of Winthrop, and provide services and support to the young person that was targeted in this unfortunate situation. I am personally available to work directly with Winthrop leadership to further educate our youth about online and in person harassment and discrimination," District Attorney Rachael Rollins said.

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