



Township of Springfield

COUNTY OF UNION

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

ESTABLISHED APRIL 14, 1794

**POLICE DEPARTMENT
CHIEF JOHN COOK**

**MUNICIPAL BUILDING
100 MOUNTAIN AVENUE
SPRINGFIELD, NEW JERSEY 07081**

OFFICIAL STATEMENT

For Immediate Release

December 12, 2016

Police Chief John Cook Statement on Public Safety Incident at Springfield Public Schools

Earlier today, December 12, 2016, staff at Jonathan Dayton reported to the Springfield Police that a phone message was left on an answering machine during the early morning hours prior to anyone being in the school by an individual stating that he would bomb the high school and the other Springfield public schools.

The schools went into lockdown as a precautionary measure and officers immediately responded. Other necessary agencies were alerted to what was taking place in the event further assistance or support was needed. Throughout the incident, close contact was maintained with Superintendent Michael Davino and other administration personnel.

Officers thoroughly inspected every public and private school and simultaneously conducted an immediate analysis of the threat. It was determined that the threat was not credible and that the lockdown should be lifted. After ensuring the security and safety of students and employees and in cooperation with the Superintendent, the lockdown was called off and the school day continued on as normal.

With the assistance of Superintendent Davino and with the evidence available, officers had communicated with other agencies and jointly narrowed down the caller to an individual from another state. The investigation is still ongoing and after consultation with the Union County Prosecutor's Office, it will be determined what actions can be taken against this individual. In that the case is still active, no further details will be released about the incident at this time.

Protocol for such incidents and similar situations are rehearsed and reviewed regularly. They are consistent with professionally accepted public safety guidelines and best practices. All actions taken with respect to the decisions made, the handling of the lockdown, the relocation of students and staff, and the response by law enforcement personnel was handled in accordance with rehearsed, deliberate planning and protocol. Additionally, the actions taken and decisions made took into consideration the evidence known related to the threat and incident. The Township of Springfield and Springfield Schools work very closely on their emergency plans for circumstances such as this and nothing but the safety and welfare of our children are our main concern. To prevent jeopardizing the safety of students, employees, and the general public, the details of these emergency plans will not be discussed further. We understand your frustration but also appreciate your understanding and trust that we look at your children as all of our children.