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## Word of threat led to MSHS lockdown

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By Will Duggan

A 17 year old male is being held in Siskiyou County Juvenile Hall after allegedly making criminal threats that led to a two

hour lockdown at Mount Shasta High School Friday morning.

The suspect, who was already on probation according to the Siskiyou County Sheriff's Department, was arrested without incident in Happy Camp at approximately 10:40 a.m. Friday and booked in Yreka.

Mount Shasta Police Department Lieutenant Gabriela Tazzari said the suspect is a Mount Shasta High School student.



Principal Jami Whedbee stands watch at the front of Mount Shasta High School on Friday morning during a lockdown that was caused by a threat to the school, students and staff by a 17 year old male who was subsequently arrested.

Mount Shasta High School principal Jami Whedbee said he lifted the schoolwide lockdown after receiving confirmation of the arrest from law enforcement officials.

No one in, no one out was the order Whedbee imposed at about 8:50 a.m. Friday. He said the lockdown was a response to a report from a concerned parent that an individual had made a threatening statement regarding the students and staff at MSHS.

The Mount Shasta Police Department responded to the emergency within minutes after they received a call from Whedbee, then helped school officials secure the entire campus and patrol the perimeter.

During the lockdown students remained in secured classrooms with their teachers. Window shades were drawn and doors were kept closed and monitored as standard lockdown procedures were put into effect.

A number of worried parents who received text messages from their children during the lockdown called the Police Department for more information, others went to the school to try to find out what was happening.

"The first thing I did was call the police and activate the lockdown measures," said Whedbee. "And then as soon as possible I let students and staff know that the lockdown was not a test. We wanted to make it clear to everyone that this was the real thing since we had a practice lockdown just a few months ago."

Whedbee said he informed parents about the situation by utilizing the teleparent automated phone system that is normally used to communicate attendance issues. The principal said he made one recorded message and then the system dialed the contact numbers automatically to

relay the lockdown information.

Although classes resumed following the lockdown, several parents decided to take their children out of school until all the facts about the incident were disclosed.

Later in the day Whedbee said, "This is the start of a long process. It's not going to be easy sorting this incident out and making sense of it. The students are going to have a lot of questions. I met with them and the staff briefly in the gymnasium after the lockdown to explain why the lockdown had occurred."

In a letter addressed to parents, students and staff, Whedbee wrote, "The number one priority at Mount Shasta High School and throughout the Siskiyou Union High School District is to provide and maintain a healthy and safe learning environment for all shareholders in our learning community. To that end we will remain focused and vigilant."

Most school districts adapt state lockdown procedures to their particular needs according to the Siskiyou Union High School District. There are no national guidelines for school lockdowns. Lockdown is the highest state of alert readiness that is activated when violence is occurring or is possibly imminent on campus, or any other situation is deemed by the police or school staff to warrant a total lockdown of the campus.

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