

Punta Gorda Middle School Evacuated After Student Makes Comment About Bomb

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Earlier today an eleven year old student at Punta Gorda Middle School made a comment to a teacher as they entered the classroom about having a bomb in his backpack. The teacher reported the comment to school administration and school resource officers in accordance with school district policy. When the student was confronted they became upset and stated that they had only been joking.

Out of an abundance of caution the school was evacuated and nearby schools were placed on lockdown. A search of the building and the student's belongings was conducted with the assistance of the Lee County Port Authority K9 Unit. It was determined that there were no explosives in the building, so lockdowns were lifted and middle school students returned to class.

During further investigation it was determined that the comment made by the student was a quote from a movie the student had watched with their father the previous night. The teacher confirmed that they and the student had a history of talking about movies and quoting movie lines to each other. The teacher also confirmed that the student had made the comment in a playful manner and did not appear to be serious, but that district policy required that he report the incident. The teacher stated that they did not realize that the comment was a movie quote at the time.

Based on the information received during the investigation it was determined that the student did not intend to make a false report of a bomb. However, it was determined that the

student's inappropriate comment had caused a major disruption to the school day and the student was issued a civil citation for Disruption of a School Function. Any disciplinary action taken by the school is handled by school administration.