



Source: 6A Kitty Hawk Landing Ste 101

Contact: Daniel Black, Superintendent (603) 432-6920, ex 1109

Date: 9/8/2023

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dear Londonderry Families,

School officials have recently become aware of extremely concerning allegations regarding a toxic and pervasive culture of bullying, harassment, and discrimination on the Londonderry High School Cheerleading Squad. Unfortunately, these allegations encompass the entire cheerleading program, including the coaching staff, student athletes, and parents.

Last night, school administration discussed the allegations with the School Board in non-public session. The school board, with the full support of the administration, voted unanimously to suspend the LHS Cheerleading Program effective immediately. The suspension will remain in effect until at least September 25, 2023, at which point the Board will re-evaluate the program's standing for the remainder of the season.

Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege, and we hold student-athletes in Londonderry to high standards. The District attempts to offer as many extra-curriculars as it can to satisfy the various needs and interests of a diverse student population. However, fundamentally, extra-curricular activities are an extension of a rigorous program of academic instruction in Londonderry, and the educational component of these extra-curriculars cannot be put aside. When we receive allegations that a program's overall culture is perpetuating mistreatment of students, we must act swiftly. To that end, the Board is in the process of securing an independent investigator to conduct an investigation into these allegations. The cheerleading coaching staff is currently on paid administrative leave and will remain on leave until the conclusion of the investigation.

While the investigation is ongoing, it is important to know the following: first, there has been no finding of any wrongdoing in the cheerleading program. If the investigation concludes that misconduct has occurred, administration will address that misconduct through typical disciplinary channels. Second, while we know that suspension of the cheerleading program impacts many people in our school community, it is critical that we allow the investigator to do their job and that we not participate in gossip, rumors or speculation. Any student conduct that amounts to bullying or retaliation should be reported to the appropriate administrator and will be addressed accordingly. Third, while your student's conduct in school matters, please also be mindful of their conduct on the internet. Board Policy JICK extends to cyberbullying, and administration will address those allegations through its typical process.

Every administrator and School Board member in Londonderry has the shared goal of helping students succeed in a caring, supportive learning environment. Where the integrity of that environment has been compromised, it is incumbent upon all of us to determine what went wrong and how we fix it. We look forward to resolving this matter as quickly as possible and we thank you all for your commitment to making LHS a safe and respectful environment for all students.

Sincerely,

Daniel Black

END