

School Responds to Students' Attempt to Build Destructive Device

by Bend Weekly News Sources

Vigilant students at Buckingham Elementary School reported seeing six classmates combining small cell batteries, duct tape and wire on the playground during the lunch hour on Thursday, October 26. Staff immediately investigated the situation. Per the District's zero tolerance policy, the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office was called to the campus for further investigation.

Buckingham Principal Teresa Hjeresen reminds parents to share stories about "student heroes", like the ones who reported the suspicious activity, with their children.

"The safety of our students and staff is paramount - the students who reported this activity, however big or small it may have seemed, absolutely did the right thing," said Hjeresen.

"We may never know if the students could have done harm with these materials, but we can all use this as a learning and educational opportunity for our kids," she says.

"It appears this was an isolated incident and there was no apparent intent to harm any students or staff members," said Lt. Deron McMaster with the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office.

Three of the children involved were referred to the Deschutes County Juvenile Detention facility per the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office in accordance with the Safe School Alliance agreement. None of the six students allegedly involved in this situation were at Buckingham Elementary School the following day. According to a news release issued by the Deschutes County Sheriff's office, this incident is also being reviewed by the Deschutes County District Attorney's Office to determine if criminal charges need to be filed or other actions need to take place.

Per the state Right to Privacy act, additional information about these students may not be shared with the public.

The Bend-La Pine Schools have several policies in place regarding threats of violence and weapons in the schools, which can be viewed at www.bend.k12.or.us Two of the policies cited in the investigation are Board Policy JFCJ and Board Policy JFCM.

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