

May 13, 2021

Dear SLMS Titan Parents, Guardians, and Staff,

This evening, campus administration investigated reports from concerned parents and students regarding a social media post that implied that a student in our school had passed away. After conducting this investigation, I want to assure our community that no SLMS student has passed away, and that the social media post caused needless worry and anxiety among parents and students.

Student and staff well-being, including their psychological and social/emotional health, is paramount at Sugar Land MS. Social media can be a useful tool when used responsibly. However, as we hear far too often, it has the power to wreak havoc in people's lives, spread misinformation, and inflict unnecessary pain and harm. I implore parents of our community to speak with and model for their children the proper use of social media and to monitor their children's activity in these powerful platforms. This includes a recognition that sharing messages posted by others can "fan the flames", if you will, and make an already bad situation worse. And that is exactly the case for this evening's matter. Many of our students found it necessary to continue to share this post with their followers, making the problem exponentially worse.

As recently as this past Monday, students who are face-to-face were reminded during lunches by their administrators about social media concerns and the negative impacts that some students are experiencing through the negligent and mean-spirited use of social media platforms. We discussed the recently-passed [David's Law](#) with students, which relates to cyberbullying. But we cannot carry this burden alone; it must be in partnership with parents where we support one another's messages of responsible use of social media.

But on the positive side, we are pleased to report that alert and responsible members of our student body shared with their parents their concerns over tonight's social media post, and we are pleased that these parents in turn reached out to campus administration to make us aware, as well. These students did **exactly** as we have trained them to do--if you see something, **SAY** something. This reporting allowed us to take necessary action.

Campus administration will conclude the investigation tomorrow morning, and we also want you to know we intend to leverage the expectations found in the *FBISD Student Code of Conduct* for the individual(s) responsible for the post, as we take mental, psychological, and social/emotional health seriously.

Thank you for your time and support of our efforts to create and maintain a safe and orderly learning and working environment for all Titans.

Sincerely,

Keith Fickel, Principal