

False alarm: Southwestern High School reacts to shooting threat

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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BRIGHTON - A post on Facebook threatening a possible school shooting at "SHS" had many schools across the Midwest on alert - including Southwestern High School.

Southwestern School Superintendent Brad Skertich said the threat from Facebook was determined to have come from Springfield, Ohio. That determination was made after officers from the Macoupin County Sheriff's Office were called to investigate. Skertich said precautions were taken at the high school Thursday morning in the event the threat

was credible. He said students were not in any immediate danger, adding teachers and principals were available to speak about the situation Thursday.

After the horrific recent school shooting in Florida, however, Skertich said the school and its students were a bit worried when the initials "SHS" were threatened. He said the high school goes by those initials and said the threat was a vague one cast across several portions of the Midwest.

"It heightened fears at a lot of districts across the Midwest," he said. "We go by SHS, but a lot of other districts around here do as well. The kids were fine. Principals and teachers had conversations throughout the day. There was an element of concern due to the media coverage of the school shooting in Florida. We're asking students and parents to reach out to proper authorities and school staff if there is a problem."

Skertich said the district regularly works with staff, first responders and law enforcement to adjust and practice drills involved with active shooters.

When asked how his district copes with students who may pose a threat to safety, he said the district works with the social and emotional aspects of students as well as academic progress. He said staff works with the parents and peers of at-risk students for issues at both home and school.