



PRESS RELEASE AND PUBLIC STATEMENT

FROM THE HAMPSTEAD SCHOOL BOARD CHAIRMAN AND SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

At the January 14, 2016 Hampstead Advisory Budget Committee meeting, committee chairman Jorge Mesa-Tejada, while reviewing the school district's 2016 warrant, specifically the bond article for renovations to the Hampstead Central School, scoffed at the School Board's concerns with the safety of students as it relates to an active shooter scenario with respect to the current modular classrooms that are not connected to the main school building. After acknowledging the possibility of such an atrocious event, he went on to describe in graphic detail, on camera, and with members of the public present, how he, as a retired marine, would commit mass murder at the school and further stated "what a field day it would be." He only stopped this tirade against our children when a fellow committee member asked him to stop.

First and foremost, we wish to state that the School Board and district administrators have a long established commitment and responsibility to the safety and well-being of our students and staff members.

Second, we take seriously these offensive and disgusting statements made by Mr. Mesa-Tejada and wholeheartedly denounce his behavior and blatant display of disregard for our children and their safety. Additionally we call into question his fitness to serve in any town official capacity.

Providing a safe and welcoming school environment for our students and staff is a priority and we are committed to this endeavor. We would like to reassure concerned students, parents, teachers, and staff members that we will continue to do everything within our power to ensure our schools are safe.

Jason Cipriano, Chairman
Hampstead School Board

Dr. Earl Metzler, Superintendent of Schools
SAU 55

January 15, 2016