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Teen admits trying to obtain weapon

BY TOM QUIGLEY
The Express-Times

WASHINGTON TWP. | The popular myspace.com Internet site is once again the anonymous setting for danger.

A 16-year-old Warren Hills Regional High School student pleaded guilty Tuesday to attempted possession of a firearm, according to the Warren County Prosecutor's Office.

Oxford Township resident [REDACTED] received a

threatening post on the Internet site and decided he needed a gun to protect himself, authorities said.

He approached another Warren Hills student March 21 and asked the student to get him a gun.

"There is no indication that the other student at the school was able to obtain a weapon," Warren County Assistant Prosecutor Tara Kirdendall wrote in a

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report released Wednesday.

Kirdendall said authorities could not track the person who sent the threatening message to [REDACTED]

Washington defense attorney Leonard Artigliere represented [REDACTED] in family court.

"It was my view as an attorney and as a parent that the charges in this case were overkill," he said.

Artigliere said a trial would have led to [REDACTED] acquittal.

[REDACTED] offered the other student about \$15 and asked if he could get him a gun. The other student said he could not get a gun, but took the money anyway and spent some of it in the cafeteria, the attorney said.

"However, in my discussions with the family and this fine young man, we chose to end this matter," he said.

He said the court addressed the potential seriousness of the event and "tempered it by placing the young man in a deferred disposition program."

The charge against [REDACTED] will be dismissed if he successfully completes the program, authorities said. He was sentenced to a suspended 30-day sentence and ordered to tour Warren Acres Juvenile Detention Center.

Artigliere said the publication of [REDACTED] juvenile offense by the prosecutor's office has the potential of exacerbating the situation.

[REDACTED] parents could not be reached for comment Wednesday.

Warren Hills Board of Education President James Momary said the Internet can be a dangerous place for young people.

"What you have here is an issue of total anonymity," he said.

"Nobody knows who anybody is and anybody can pretend to be anybody."

Momary said poor judgment by students leads to situations such as going out on dates with somebody "who lives half a state away."

"Kids don't seem to think too far down the road about consequences and the monsters that hide in the wings," he said.

Last month in Hanover Township, police charged a man with invasion of privacy for allegedly taking nude photographs of an 18-year-old woman he met on myspace.com.

Mark Edward Doyle, 30, of the 1100 block of Bridle Path Road, posed as a 21-year-old Moravian College biology major in his on-line profile, authorities said.

He invited his alleged victim to his parent's residence, where he blindfolded her and had sex with her, police said.

He then took digital photographs of the woman without her knowledge or consent, it is alleged. A search of his laptop turned up the photographs and other nude photographs of several of other women, police said.

Students often publish their photographs on the myspace.com site.

"It's one thing to exchange photos with someone in your class," Momary said. "It's another to post your photograph on the Internet for everybody to see."

He said parents must supervise their children and keep the household computer in a room where they can observe.

"In my humble opinion, kids are growing up a little too fast," the school board president said.

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