



# RIDGEWOOD

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## PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** **A STATEMENT FROM DR. DANIEL FISHBEIN, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

**November 14, 2017** -- The Ridgewood High School Administration has completed its investigation into the serious incident that occurred two weeks ago. According to its investigation, the Administration has concluded there were two (2) fights between the same two (2) students: the first on Friday, October 27, 2017, and then on Saturday, October 28, 2017. Both fights occurred after school hours on school property. One student was injured. The fights were mutually conducted and were fueled by social media, with a genesis dating to this past August.

The District is aware that the Ridgewood Police Department has completed its investigation and has charged two students for their roles in the fights.

The Ridgewood Board of Education and Administration are concerned that the students chose to resolve their dispute with violence rather than to report their issues to school officials or an adult who could have taken action. Students regularly bring their concerns to school administration and that is why we have a low incidence of fighting and Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB). We are a school district and understand that students make mistakes in action and judgement and it is our job to administer consequences when necessary, teach better behavior, provide therapeutic counseling when warranted and accepted. Our schools regularly educate and counsel our students to make good decisions. We are proud of our students, but they need redirection when they make mistakes. Accordingly, the High School Administration will utilize it's a variety of interventions, including the use of education, counseling and school discipline to discourage such behavior in the future.

District Administration is open and transparent whenever possible. However, due to student privacy laws, the Administration is unable to discuss individual students and disciplinary consequences that may be imposed.

While an investigation is ongoing, every attempt will be made to dispel rumors, but our focus must be on a thorough investigation and certainty of the final determination. Only the administrators and the police, when necessary, who are conducting the investigation know the pertinent facts. We would like to remind the public to be aware that the misuse of social media impedes an investigation when misinformation and falsehoods are disseminated. When working with children and adolescents, serious incidents sometimes occur. Our staff excels at dealing with serious situations and does so with compassion and care. While people might point fingers and make false accusations when students make poor decisions, we assure you our administrators always work towards resolution and a goal that students will learn from the experience. School officials and counselors are available to support and assist all students in learning from this unfortunate event.