

NESHAMINY SCHOOLS

Hour-long lockdown at high school

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Neshaminy High School was locked down Thursday morning following reports of an unknown man walking the building's halls, police said.

The stranger never was found and police said they never received any threat.

The man, described to be in his 60s, was seen first in the school parking lot and then inside the building, walking in the liberal arts section of the high school, officials said.

After an extensive search of the Middletown school by police and teachers, the lockdown ended, said Middletown police spokesman Mark Wert.

"At this point in time we have no idea who this person was," Wert said.

Wert said police first thought the man could've been a construction worker granted access to the school, where a new addition is being built. But the foreman of the work crew said it wasn't one of his men. Those workers have a separate access to the construction site, Wert said.

Wert said a crew of movers was working in the school Wednesday, but no movers were scheduled to work in the building Thursday.

Neshaminy Superintendent Paul Kadri said the man could have been a parent there on business who didn't follow protocol by signing in with staff.

The lockdown lasted for less than an hour, between 9:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m., police said. All personnel and students were asked to "freeze" in their classrooms while every room and closet was checked to make sure a person wasn't hiding.

During that time, several students called or text-messaged their parents from within the school, causing some alarm, police said. A line of about 20 cars was backed up on the high school's access road as officials conducted their search.

Kadri said the high school was put into a "code blue," which signifies that no actual threat was made. Kadri and administrators asked teachers and staff to be extra watchful in the hallways the rest of the day.

Stephanie Karnell, parent of a Neshaminy junior, is concerned about safety and security at the school.

"If that man can get in, anybody can. That guy's walking around the community. He's wherever. He could come back tomorrow or [go] to another school," she said.