



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

P.O. BOX 10070 – BROOKSVILLE, FL 34603-0070 FAX 352 796-0493 PHONE 352 754-6830

Media Release

From: Denise M. Moloney
Community/Media Relations Manager, 352-797-3609

Re: Student Arrested for Threatening to Bomb Central High School

Date: April 17, 2018

On 04-16-18 at approximately 3:30 p.m., Hernando County deputies received at least two complaints regarding a person threatening to set off an explosive at Central High School.

The individuals who notified the HCSO had been playing an on-line trivia game application called "Game Show." During the game, a comment was posted on the messaging screen by a player with the username of "Nidolabz." The comment was, *"I am going to set off an explosive at Central High School, spring hill florida tomorrow."* Other players took screenshots of the comment and notified the HCSO.

Deputies responded to Central High School to meet with Administrators regarding the incident.

Having only a username of the person who posted the comment, deputies immediately contacted Crime Analysis for assistance in identifying the suspect.

Crime Analysis Manager Peggy Brooks conducted extensive research and was able to link the username of Nidolabz to a student at Springstead High School.

Deputy V. Mascitelli and Lt. J. Drewal made contact with the student at his home. While on scene, deputies searched the home of the student, nothing out of the ordinary was located. The student then told the deputies that his friend, Jonathan Cunningham, is the person who utilizes the username in question.

Deputies responded to the home of Cunningham. Upon interview, Cunningham admitted to making the threat, saying it was only a "joke."

Deputies placed **Jonathan Chris Cunningham W/M DOB/06-26-2001** under arrest on the Felony charge listed below:

- **Intimidation, Write or Send Threats to Kill or Injure.**

Cunningham was transported to the Hernando County Detention Center, then transferred to the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) in Ocala, where he remains.

Deputies also conducted a search of Cunningham's residence. Again, nothing out of the ordinary was located.

It should be noted that the FBI received notification of the threat through internal intelligence gathering. The FBI contacted the HCSO and was also in the preliminary stages of deploying manpower and electronic resources to Hernando County to assist in the investigation.

Resources from the FBI were cancelled due to the quick action and response from the HCSO.

Sheriff Al Nienhuis said, "There is nothing funny - or cute - or cool - about threatening violence, regardless of the intention. Parents, teachers, and students need to have open and frank discussions. They need to talk about the foolishness and stupidity of mentioning such things as -- bringing a gun to school or threatening to set off a bomb. Many young people do not understand the emotional and financial cost to the community of these intentionally false reports. Unfortunately, these criminal charges will also forever change the life of the suspect. The only effective deterrent will be positive peer pressure. Fellow students must, for example, talk about how idiotic and foolish it is to even consider making such statements, even when those statements are supposedly made as a cruel "joke."

In an abundance of caution, a large team of deputies performed a sweep/search of Central High School early this morning. Nothing out of the ordinary was located.

The Office of Sheriff:

The Office of the Sheriff is established by the Florida Constitution. As a constitutional officer, the Sheriff has the exclusive authority to administer his or her agency and is responsible for preserving the peace throughout the entire county, carrying out the laws of the state, the orders of Florida courts, and the ordinances of the Board of County Commissioners. The Sheriff is the chief law enforcement and correctional officer of the county.

Sheriff Al Nienhuis was initially appointed as the Sheriff of Hernando County by the Governor in January of 2011. He was then elected by the people of Hernando County in 2012, and remains accountable to them.