

Lew-Port to hold forum on racial equality

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were able to track the use of various devices that utilized Snapchat, which led to the arrest of one middle school student, and provided a link to another who is currently out of town and is expected to face arrest upon returning.

Meanwhile, the mother of the student victim vented her frustrations this week on the entire incident via a Niagara Action forum on Facebook. She wrote, "I honestly was not going to make a post or say anything because I show social media the highlights of my life, I never post anything that I'm going though that is emotional or negative! Just positive tidbits & cute pics if you will! But this is NOT justice!" said the victim's mother, identified as Vanessa Crogan.

"After this press release I'm super DISAPPOINTED!!! These 'children' are getting a slap on the wrist & a pat on the back for something that is reoccurring!! I am adamant at feeling like the world should, & NEEDS to know the truth!!!

"RACISM IS NEVER GOING TO STOP AS LONG AS THESE PARENTS ARE TEACHING THEIR KIDS THIS IS OKAY!!!!"

The woman said her son had become a victim of bullying over past months due to the color of his skin. She recounted an incident that grew ugly and went on to involve more bullying tactics, including the use of Snapchat.

"In December, these two boys invited my son ice skating! They pretended to be his friend, but then decided to make racist comments!!

"My baby did exactly what he was supposed to do & that was exit himself out of the situation! Well it didn't stop there!! That's when the snap chat bullying begun!! Now when I tell you the videos and the messages that were being sent was down right heartbreaking!!! Of course my son & his brother wanted to fight these boys, but as a mother you have to teach

your children you can't fist fight your way through life! So I did exactly what a prudent person would do! I emailed the principal, set a meeting, stayed in contact! These particular boys were reprimanded with 'in school suspension'! I wasn't happy but I also thought for a second that this was a learning curve for the 2boys! Everyone makes mistakes, but we learn & we grow!

"As a mother all I could think about was would if my son was closed off! Would if he suffered from depression! Would if he didn't come to me!! Would if I walked in his room and he was hanging from his ceiling with a rope around his neck, because kids kill themselves everyday over bullying!! NOW, I still have to send my son to school EVERYDAY to have him surrounded by people/kids that literally hate the skin that he is in!! & because these parent raise their children with hate in their hearts!!

"Fast forward to yesterday morning! My day starts off normal! I log on to my computer at 7am for work! The kids leave to get on the bus at 710!! 715 I hear the kids walking back up the stairs!!! So now I'm like great, they missed the bus!!! Ohhhh no they're escorted in my house by two officers!!! Yesssss two!!! The officers proceeded to show me a screenshot of my 'son' on snap chat threatening to shoot up his school with an AK during 3rd period!..... Now my son is far from an angel, but he would have never said this!!

"We are then escorted to the school for a full investigation! We were literally there for 2 1/2 hours questioned by about 5 different officers & 2 school staff personal! We are telling them over and over again! This is a fake account, my son didn't have his phone or access to it for 3days, access to no other electronics, THIS WAS NOT HIM! Turned over his phone, we wrote statements confirm-

ing it wasn't him! My son was scared! He is being questioned like he did something wrong all because his peer students hate the skin he is in! LITERALLY!! (I know the police have a job to do & I'm not mad at the process)... I'll get to why I'm really pissed!

"So then I received a call later that evening confirming they figured out who the students were that created this fake account, the ones that have been constantly bullying my son, the ones that tried to set my baby up for 'shooting' a school! But they 'cant' tell me who they were! They 'can't' discuss the 3+ individuals & what their consequences were & or are!! However, according to my son and 'word' around school these kids got another week of in school suspension!!!

"Now the real reason why I'm so angry within is because the real issue has not been addressed & or solved!!!!!! The real 'threat' was never a school shooting!! The REAL THREAT IS BEING BLACK IN AMERICA! But let's just push this under the rug they say!!! Let's say it was a threat made to the school! Nooooo, the whole point was to set him up! Get him in trouble, get him charged!!

"Now my kids are a very light complexion, I never thought in a million years that they would have to deal with such HATE! & here we're are!! So what I will do is continuing to fight for my son! I will fight for who he is, I will fight for where he came from! I will forever be his advocate! Like I told him these kids see something great in you, that

they don't see in themselves! So that's why they want to see you fall! But babbbyyyy, as long as I'm around my son will FOREVER stand tall & be proud of who he is!!! Sincerely, a pissed off mother!!!!"

In response, Lewiston-Porter Superintendent of Schools Paul Casseri said the district shares the concerns of the student's mother and that disciplinary actions will come against the students involved, in addition to any actions take by Lewiston police investigators.

"That sort of behavior and those words are in no way, shape of form are representative of what our school is all about," Casseri told Channel 7.

He said the district expects to pursue disciplinary and restorative consequences against the students involved. "It is very disturbing for us when these things come to light."

On Thursday, Previte told NFP, "Kids are kids, but it's up

to the parents to know what these kids are doing, because this stuff is not games. It's going to be taken seriously. And we're going to pursue charges; we're taking these kids at their word when they say they're going to do something. And I would just reiterate, again, the importance of knowing what your kids are up to, because this is no way to start things for kids that are 12 or 13 years old to be charged with a felony. Even though it's a juvenile, they're still charged with a felony.

"You would think and hope that, after this amount of time, that people would realize the seriousness - especially with the other kids as well, but you know, apparently that's not the case in some situations."

Casseri said Lewiston-Porter had already scheduled a community/town hall meeting for April to discuss racial equality.

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