

Darienite

News for Darien

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Police: Homeless Man Yells at Kids During Middlesex Middle School Recess, Gets Arrested

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A 63-year-old homeless man familiar to Darien police went on the grounds of Middlesex Middle School on Tuesday and yelled at students, some of whom were shaken up, police said.

The man was charged with breach of peace and held on a \$1,000 bond.

Darien police described what happened with this account, including accusations not proven in court:

At about 11 a.m., school officials called police about the presence of the man on school grounds.

Several teachers who were monitoring recess told police that they saw or overheard the man "hollering" at children outside at recess. The teachers told the campus monitor and school administrators, who discontinued

recess.

The campus monitor confronted the man, later identified as Robert Houseworth, and followed him. The monitor told police what direction Houseworth was going when he left the campus.

Numerous officers went to the school and the surrounding area. They found Houseworth at the back of the property at 368 Heights Road and quickly recognized him from several previous incidents.

Houseworth denied that he had any contact with the children at the school, but he did admit he was on school grounds.

Police confirmed with school staff that Houseworth did yell at or in the direction of the children, something teachers saw.

The police announcement about the incident said:

Through staff interviews it was also determined that some of the children nearby were “scared” and “visibly shaken” as a result.

If Houseworth posts his bond, he will be scheduled to appear April 6 in state Superior Court in Stamford.

Principal Shelley Somers' Message to Parents

Apparently, well before Darien police issued a news release about the incident, Middlesex Principal Shelley Somers issued this email to parents, according to the Darien Times:

Good afternoon,

During 6th grade recess today, a teacher reported to Ms. Thompson, our campus monitor, that a man whom she did not recognize was in our parking lot, and several students reported that he was raising his voice to no one in particular. Ms. Thompson went out to question the man, and immediately notified the Darien Police Department when it became clear to her that he had no reason to be on campus. The individual, who the police indicate is homeless and known to them, was arrested for breach of peace. At no time were any of our students at risk. As a precautionary measure, our recess was canceled for the remainder of the lunch shifts.

I want to reassure you that all middle school students are safe, and that our safety plan protocol was followed as would be expected.

If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to me directly.

Sincerely,

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Shelley

Editor's note: Somers either has the Darien Times on her school's parental email lists, or the Times has access to the emails. Darienite.com has previously requested from all school principals in town that this publication's email address be added to their lists, but so far that hasn't happened for Middlesex. We have again requested that Somers either put our address on that list or tell us why she hasn't.