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MEDIA RELEASE

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Gurnee Police Respond to Incident at Viking Middle School

Earlier today, February 23, 2024, at approximately 9:30 AM, Viking Middle School, located at 4460 Old Grand Avenue, Gurnee, was placed on soft lockdown following reports of a firearm on school premises. School officials promptly notified authorities, leading to the immediate response of the Gurnee Police Department.

Upon arrival, the School Resource Officer, already present on campus, was joined by additional officers and detectives from the Gurnee Police Department to provide assistance in the investigation. Initial reports indicated that a student had overheard another student discussing the possession of a weapon. Prompt action by school staff initiated the investigation process.

Assisted by a Lake County Sheriff's Office Handler and K9 unit, law enforcement conducted a thorough search of the school premises. Subsequently, a loaded handgun was discovered in a student's locker and safely recovered by police.

The 13-year-old male student in question was promptly located and taken into custody. Following a comprehensive investigation, it was determined there were no credible threats to other students or school staff. Consequently, the soft lockdown was lifted a short time later.

The student was transported to the Gurnee Police Department for questioning and subsequently charged with unlawful possession of a weapon in a school. The student has since been released to the custody of their parents.

"We commend the swift action of school officials, the collaboration of the Lake County Sheriff's Office, and the professionalism of all responding officers," said Chief Brian Smith. "The safety and well-being of our community remain our top priority, and we continue to work diligently to ensure a safe learning environment for all students."