



Covington Community School Corporation

“Home of the Trojans”

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Covington Community Schools Independent Incident Review Statement

Covington Community Schools continues to heal after the tragic loss of fellow Trojan Terry Badger III. The thoughts and prayers of the entire community remain with the Badger family, and while we cannot fully understand why this happened, we are called to respond so that it never happens here again.

As promised, the school board called for a third-party investigation into allegations of bullying.

The investigation included interviews with Administration, students, and staff. A review of the Anti-Bullying Policy, the School’s middle school handbook, the School’s Suicide Awareness and Prevention Policy, relevant documents related to Terry, and communication from a parent. The investigation did determine the School was responsive to any concerns raised and followed protocols by working with students directly.

This report is in no way intended to minimize the distress of this young man, rather it calls us to acknowledge the current mental health crisis students across the entire country, and within our own community face.

Jessie Russell Fogle, LCSW, LCAC, with the Indiana Health Group has been treating adolescents in the Central Indiana area for nearly 20 years. “Now, more than ever, children are exposed to information, constant access to communication, and endorse an increased pressure to achieve social and academic success - all on the heels of the isolation experienced at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.”

She added, “It is clear that children and adolescents are not developmentally prepared to process and respond to all stressors; they need support and guidance from adults. Brain development, hormonal changes, and mental health conditions (in addition to psychosocial factors) all impact how adolescents behave and interact with one another.”

Covington Community Schools is actively researching screening tools to help identify students in crisis and looking at virtual counseling opportunities to support students in immediate need. We also anticipate providing the community and parents with educational supports to discuss the topics of student mental health, student suicide, and social media impacts with their children. Lastly, Covington Schools will continue to work with the community to increase needed resources for the youth of the Covington Community.

Out of this tragedy, Covington Schools commits to ensure our schools continue to be safe and supportive places for all students.