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## **VERMILION PARISH SCHOOLS**

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### **Board Members:**

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*Nick Touchet*

*District I*

**May 16, 2023**

### **STATEMENT CONCERNING SENIOR PRANK AND VIRAL VIDEO AT ABBEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL**

On the evening of Thursday, May 11th, law enforcement placed calls to school officials and central office personnel about unsupervised students inside of Abbeville High School in the midst of a “senior prank”. Upon arrival, central office officials questioned students and were handed over two keys given to the students by a school employee. At this time, this incident is still under an internal investigation and necessary disciplinary actions could result from the outcome of this investigation.

Clean up of the school took place immediately by the students after the principal, Mr. Philip Freeman, arrived and addressed the students involved.

On Friday, videos became available via social media that the students gained access into a locked room that housed an electric wheelchair on loan to an AHS student that uses it during the school day. Multiple students were seen riding through the halls on the wheelchair and displayed actions that were insensitive and disrespectful to students with disabilities. Abbeville High and the Vermilion Parish School System are completely disappointed in the actions of these students and in no way condone this sort of behavior. School officials on Friday notified the central office that apologies from students to the student who utilizes the electric wheelchair had been offered and conversations between students had taken place.

The Vermilion Parish School System has been in contact with the company that partners with the school to ensure that the chair was not damaged in any way that would jeopardize the effectiveness of its use for the AHS student. The school board will seek damages from those who have accessed the chair in a non-prescribed manner if it becomes necessary.

School officials are still investigating the situation and any disciplinary actions against students and or faculty are confidential.

The Vermilion Parish School System does not condone any disrespect to students with disabilities nor any behaviors that include damage to school property in any manner.