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NEWS RELEASE



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Juvenile Charged Under New Criminal Threats Law for Oxnard School Shooting Threat

VENTURA, Calif. – Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that a 17-year-old juvenile has been charged with Penal Code section 422.3(a), a new criminal threats law that took effect on January 1, 2026. The charge stems from a threat to carry out a school shooting at R.J. Frank Academy Middle School in Oxnard.

Penal Code section 422.3(a) makes it a crime to threaten death or great bodily injury to people at schools, daycare centers, workplaces, houses of worship, or medical facilities, including threats made by phone calls, text messages, images, or online posts. The law was created to allow law enforcement to intervene when threats cause fear and disruption, even if no weapon is ultimately found. While similar to the existing criminal threat statute, it differs in that the threat may be made towards a location and need not be made to a specific person.

“This new law gives law enforcement and prosecutors an important tool to address credible threats before violence occurs,” said District Attorney Nasarenko. “Threats against schools will always be taken seriously, and early intervention is critical to keeping our students and educators safe.”

On January 21, 2026, the Oxnard Police Department received information that the juvenile had allegedly made statements expressing an intent to commit a shooting at R.J. Frank Middle School. The alleged threats were reported to law enforcement by a mandated reporter. Investigators determined that the school referenced in the threat was not the school the juvenile currently attended.

The juvenile is accused of communicating the threats during a phone call and sending images and material referencing prior mass shootings. The Oxnard Police Department contacted the juvenile and family members and immediately began an investigation.

On January 22, 2026, officers arrested the juvenile as they arrived at school and transported them to the Juvenile Justice Center. A search warrant was later served at the juvenile's residence. No firearms were located. Law enforcement served the juvenile with a Gun Violence Emergency Protective Order, prohibiting them from possessing a firearm.

Senior Deputy District Attorney and Juvenile Unit Supervisor, Maureen Byrne, is prosecuting the case.

The juvenile's arraignment and detention hearing were held on January 27, 2026, in Juvenile Court. Defense counsel requested the juvenile's release on electronic monitoring. The court denied that request and ordered the juvenile to remain detained at the Juvenile Facility. The arraignment was continued to February 10, 2026, at 8:30 a.m. in courtroom J3.