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For Immediate Release

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# DA Summer Stephan Reacts to Spate of School Threats, Calls Together School and Law Enforcement Officials for Safety Summit

## *Goal is to Reduce Targeted Violence at Schools, Revise Threat Protocol*

San Diego County District Attorney [Summer Stephan](#) announced today that her office, in partnership with the County Office of Education, is hosting a first-of-its-kind School Safety Summit, in direct response to widespread school threats that have plagued San Diego County schools in the past two months. DA Stephan also directed her office to work with stakeholders to update the protocol for law enforcement response when threats are received. About 200 school and law enforcement leaders will participate in today's summit at Liberty Station, which will feature the co-founder of the Sandy Hook Promise Organization.

**“The physical, emotional, and mental well-being of students and staff in San Diego County schools are of paramount importance,” DA Summer Stephan said. “As tragedies continue to unfold across our nation, in which students of all ages, teachers, and administrators lose their lives to acts of targeted violence on school grounds, we want to renew our commitment to making schools a safe place for students to learn and grow.”**

A dedicated multidisciplinary team established by the San Diego County District Attorney's Office, in collaboration with law enforcement, works together to address school threats. At the summit, the team will provide an updated School Safety Protocol for Countywide implementation.

Manny Tau, a clinical and forensic psychologist and certified threat manager, will present critical insight into school threats and Bob Mueller, Executive Director of Student Services and Programs for the County Office of Education, will provide practical tools that schools can implement immediately. In addition, school leaders will have the opportunity to share specific issues and concerns they have involving threats of targeted violence.

Already this year, law enforcement has forwarded 40 incidents of school threats to the District Attorney's Office for review, resulting in 21 current juvenile prosecutions. That does not include the number of threats that are resolved at the school level and which are not forwarded for potential prosecution. Other cases have been handled in a variety of ways, including restorative justice, which focuses on rehabilitating young offenders through reconciliation with victims and the community at large, and other school-based options.

“While schools remain among the safest places for students, even one violent event is too many,” said San Diego County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Paul Gothold. “That’s why we’re pleased to continue this important and ongoing work with law enforcement. Together, we can reduce the threat of violence at our schools.”

The District Attorney’s Juvenile Division prosecutes felonies and misdemeanors committed in San Diego County by those who are under the age of 18 at the time of the crime. Juveniles who are prosecuted for criminal acts are referred to as minors. The juvenile justice system is geared toward rehabilitation not punishment, which is why rules within the juvenile system are so different than those in the adult system. In addition, most juvenile hearings are confidential under Welfare and Institutions Code Section WIC 676.

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**About the San Diego County District Attorney’s Office**

*The San Diego County DA’s Office prosecutes all felony crimes in the county and misdemeanor crimes committed outside the City of San Diego. The office files about 40,000 criminal cases a year and balances prosecution with numerous crime prevention programs. District Attorney Summer Stephan leads the office of more than 1,000 dedicated employees who pursue justice and support victims daily across San Diego County. DA Summer Stephan has devoted her life to protecting children and families and providing justice to the voiceless and most vulnerable. She is a national leader in the fight against sexual exploitation and human trafficking, and has served as a Deputy District Attorney in San Diego County for 28 years.*

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