GEMA/HS Intelligence Unit

(U) SCHOOL SAFETY/THREAT BULLETIN FY 23 Q1 – NOVEMBER 2023
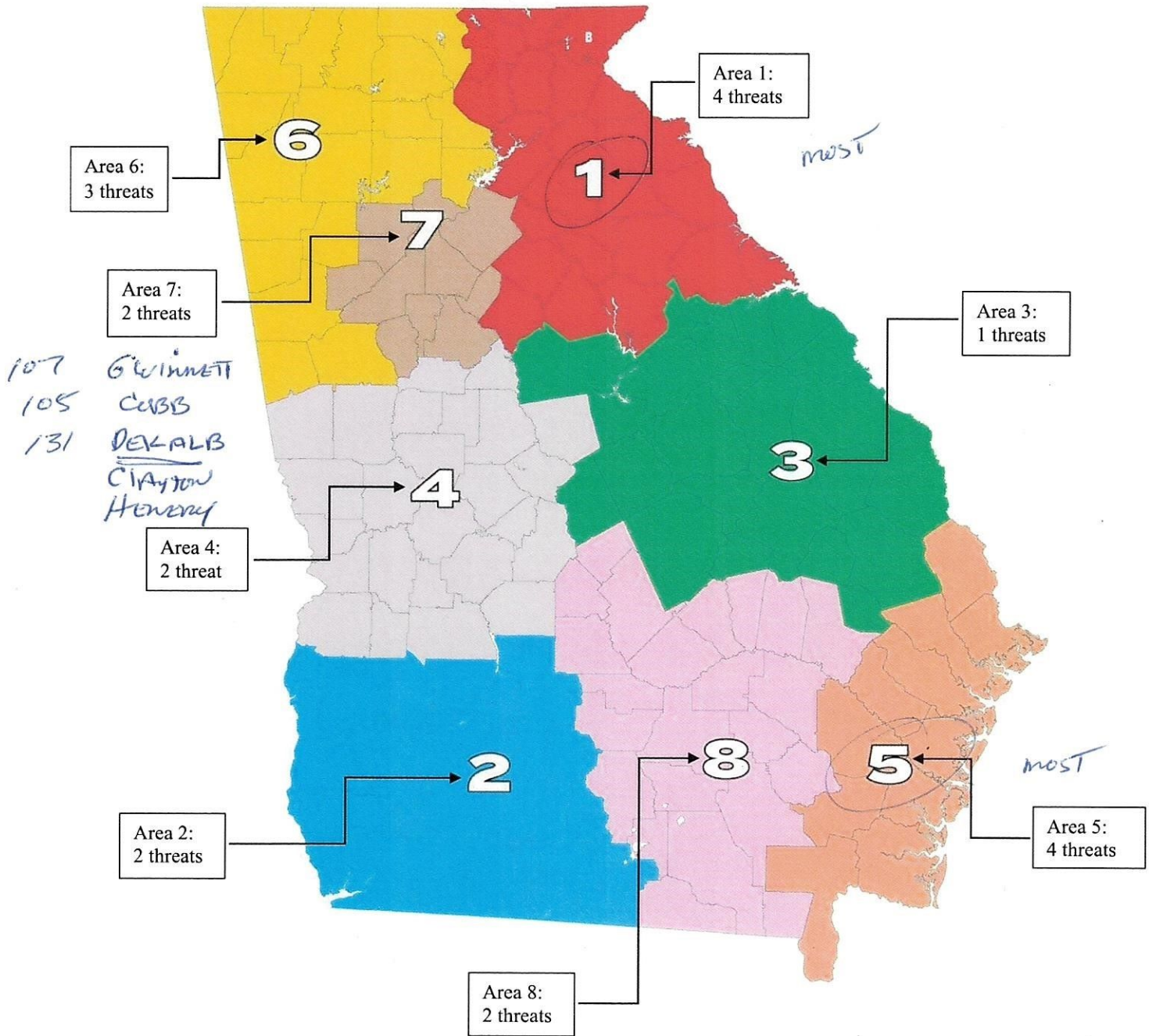
PURPOSE:

*The purpose of this report is to provide our local, state, and federal partners with an overview of GEMA/HS reported school threats for the period of August 1st, 2023, through November 1st, 2023. The goal is to analyze anonymized statistical information to identify trends, patterns, and relationships. This bulletin does **NOT** document all school threats in Georgia for the indicated reporting time, only the threats reported through GEMA/HS Homeland Security Coordinators. GEMA/HS encourages all educational facilities to report alleged school threats to the GEMA/HS Homeland Security Coordinator assigned to your area.*

(U) School Safety Quick Facts

➢ During the 2023-2024 school year, there have been 20 school threats reported to GEMA/HS across the 8 identified areas, with Area 1 and Area 5 receiving the most and Area 3 receiving the least.

➢ The types of weapons reported included 7 bomb, 4 handgun, 3 long gun, 1 edged weapon, and 8 unidentified.

➢ The methods of communication included 4 phone calls, 2 text messages, 8 social media, 3 in-person, 1 written/typed/letter, 1 email, and 1 unspecified. Of the 20 school threats reported, 1 incident did not have an expressed threat identified.

- While there were 8 social media threats noted, 1 report listed 2 social media platforms, bringing the total platform number to 9.
- Of the 9 social media platform threats, 1 was on Facebook, 3 were on Instagram, 3 on Snapchat, and 2 were unspecified.

➢ On August 8th, 2023, the White House hosted its inaugural cybersecurity "summit" called *Back to School Safely: Cybersecurity for K-12 Schools* addressing the rampant ransomware attacks targeting schools across the United States. The event highlighted the pressing necessity for enhanced funding and resources to strengthen cybersecurity initiatives in schools and libraries across the U.S. Following the summit, GEMA/HS released a comprehensive report that captured key insights and information from the event.
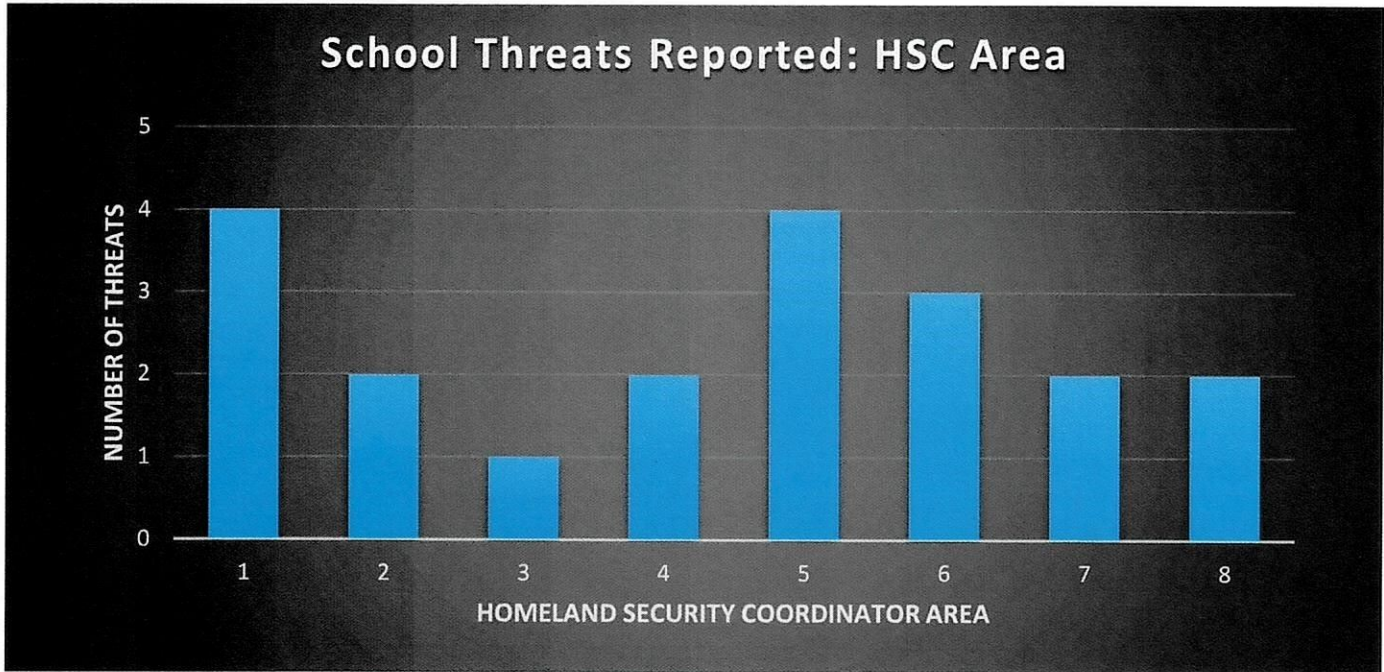
(U) Prepared by the Georgia Emergency Management & Homeland Security Agency Intelligence Unit (GIU). For questions, contact gemahs-intel@gema.ga.gov

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Georgia Emergency Management & Homeland Security Agency
Homeland Security Coordinator Areas

Area 1:
4 threats

Area 6:
3 threats

Area 7:
2 threats

Area 3:
1 threats

Area 4:
2 threat

107   GWINNETT
105   COBB
131   DEKALB
      CLAYTON
      HENRY

most

most

Area 2:
2 threats

Area 8:
2 threats

Area 5:
4 threats

(U) **School Safety Report Visuals**

| School Threat Reports by County [Georgia]; As of 11/01/2023 ||
County Name	Number of Reports
Bacon	1
Brooks	2
Carroll	1
Chatham	3
Coweta	1
Douglas	1
Effingham	1
Forsyth	1
Fulton	2
Greene	1
Houston	2
Newton	2
Richmond	1
Walton	1

The data in the chart above provides information on the <u>School Threat Reports by County</u> *in the state of Georgia from August 1st, 2023, to November 1st, 2023. Based on the reports provided by the GEMA/HS Homeland Security Coordinators: The highest number of reports received was documented in Chatham with 3 reports. These reports, within the School Report Bulletin, were provided voluntarily by school personnel to the GEMA/HS Homeland Security Coordinators.*

School Threats Reported: HSC Area

Bar chart titled "School Threats Reported: HSC Area" with y-axis "NUMBER OF THREATS" (0 to 5) and x-axis "HOMELAND SECURITY COORDINATOR AREA" (1 to 8).

HSC Area:	# of Reported School Threats:		%
1	4		20%
2	2		10%
3	1		5%
4	2		10%
5	4		20%
6	3		15%
7	2		10%
8	2		10%
Total:	20		100%

According to the _School Threats by Homeland Security Coordinator Area_ data charts, there have been a total of 20 reports spanning across the eight GEMA/HS areas through the August 1st, 2023, to November 1st, 2023, reporting period. Areas 1 & 5 had four school threat reports, while Areas 3 had one school threat report. It's essential to recognize that the variance in reporting by area is not imply responsibility but rather highlights the proactive stance of these communities in reporting potential issues.

Year to Date Comparison - Month of Threat 2022-2023/2023-2024
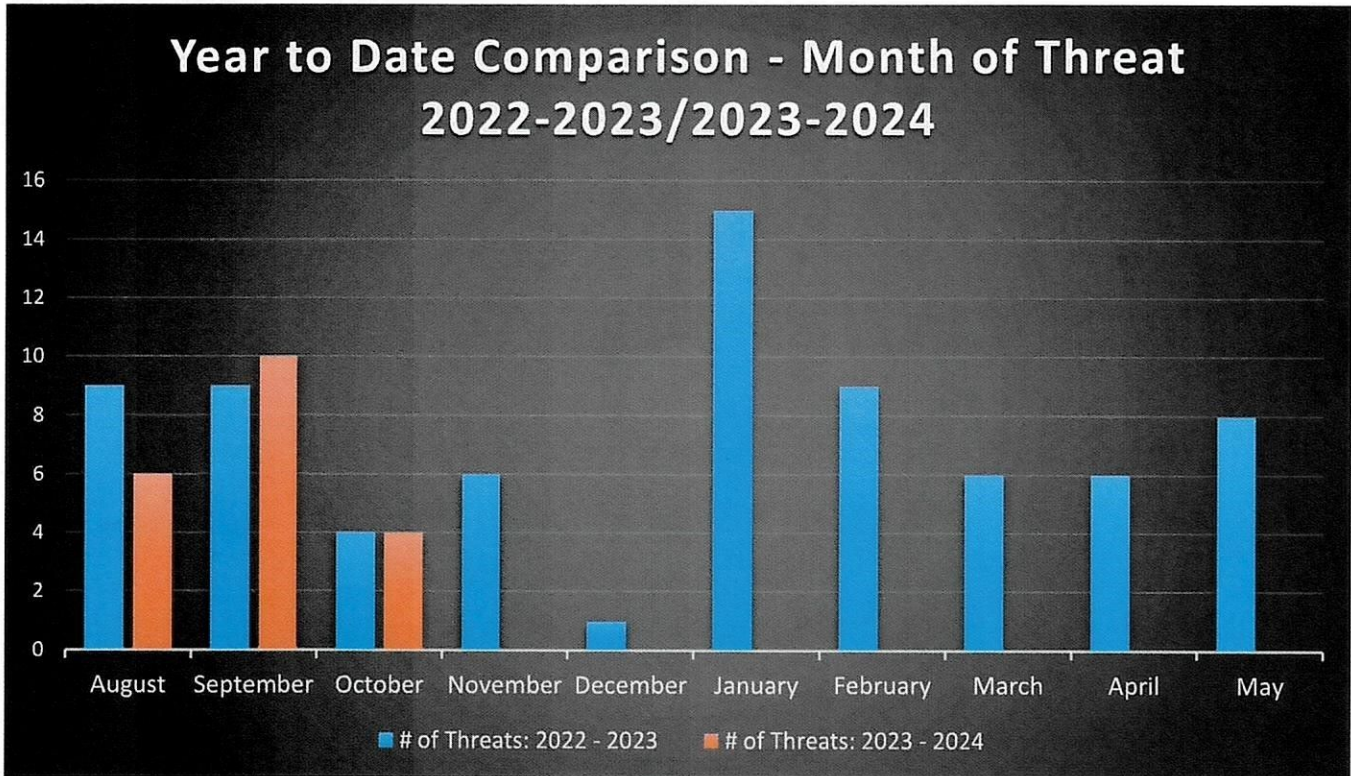
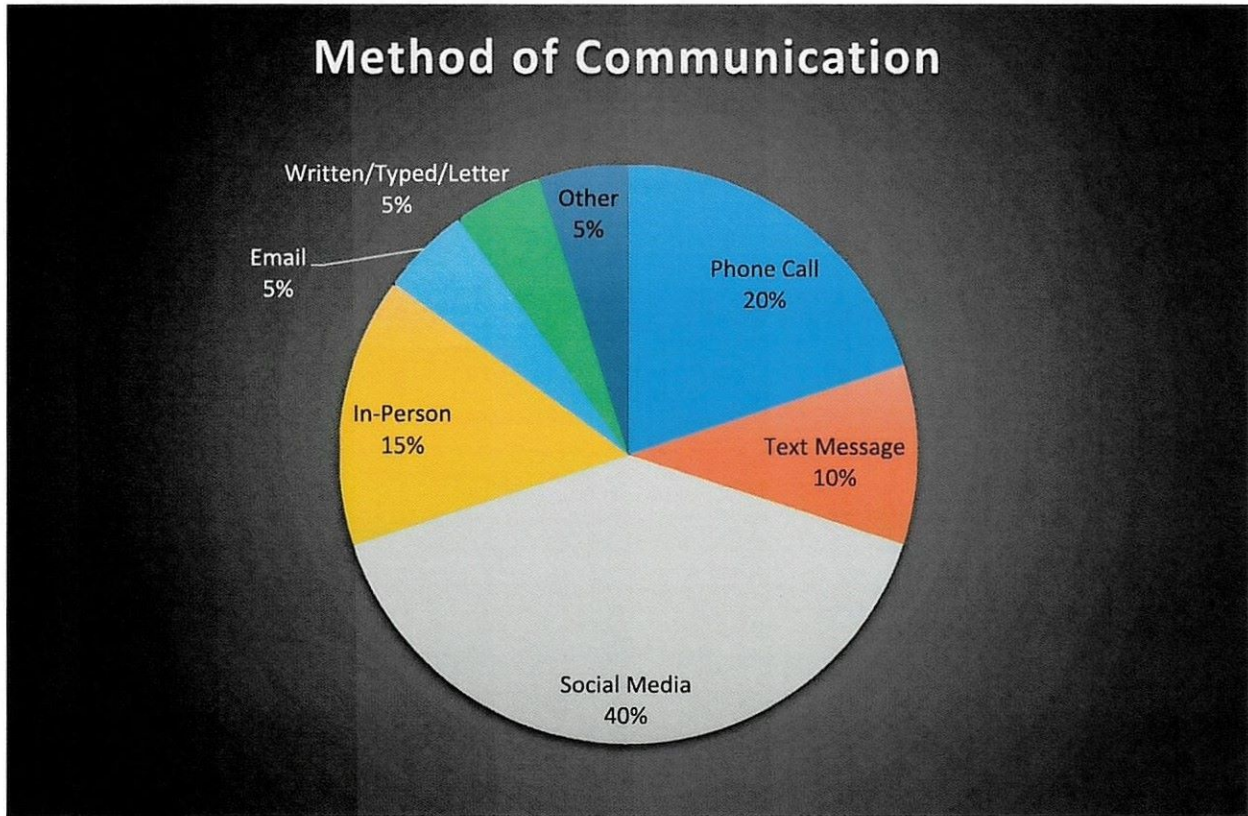| Month of Threat	# of Threats: 2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024
August	9	6
September	9	10
October	4	4
November	6	-
December	1	-
January	15	-
February	9	-
March	6	-
April	6	-
May	8	-
Total	**73**	**20**

According to the <u>Year-to-Date Comparison – Month of Threat</u> data, September 2023 had the highest number of submitted reports in the current 2023-2024 school year, with a total of ten. Comparing the school threat reports between the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years, we can observe that August had 9 reports in the previous year, which decreased to 6 in the current year. In contrast, September saw an increase from 9 reports in the previous year to 10 in the current year, while October remained consistent with 4 reports for both years. During the period of August 1st, 2023, to November 1st, 2023, there were a total of 20 reported school threats across the state of Georgia, provided voluntarily by our Homeland Security Coordinators.

Type of Weapon

Type of Threat	# of Threats		%
Bomb	7		31%
Handgun	4		17%
Long Gun	3		13%
Edged Weapon	1		4%
Cyber	0		0.0%
Fire	0		0.0%
Other	8		35%
Total	**23**		100%

The chart above provides an overview of the types of weapons identified in reported threats, shedding light on the nature of these incidents in Georgia schools. Based on the Type of Weapon data chart, as documented in the GEMA/HS School Threat Reports, bombs were the most frequently reported weapon, with 7 threats, followed by handguns as the second most common, with 4 threats. This data underscores the importance of maintaining vigilance and preparedness to address various potential threats and ensure the safety of Georgia's schools.

**Disclaimer: Some of the reports identified multiple types of weapons, while some identified no weapon.

Method of Commmunication

Written/Typed/Letter 5%
Other 5%
Email 5%
Phone Call 20%
In-Person 15%
Text Message 10%
Social Media 40%

Method of Communication:	# of Threats:		%
Phone Call	4		20%
Text Message	2		10%
Social Media	8		40%
In-Person	3		15%
Email	1		5%
Written/Typed/Letter	1		5%
Other	1		5%
Total	20		100%

The chart and information above concentrates on the methods of communication used when threats were reported, offering insights into the channels through which these incidents were conveyed. According to the _Method of Communication_ data set, there were six identified methods used for threats. The number one reported method for threats in schools was social media with 8 threats, followed by phone calls with 4 threats reported. This data underscores the importance of monitoring various communication channels for potential threats and maintaining a proactive approach to school safety.

**Disclaimer: Some of the reports identified multiple methods of communication, while some identified no method.

Social Media Platform
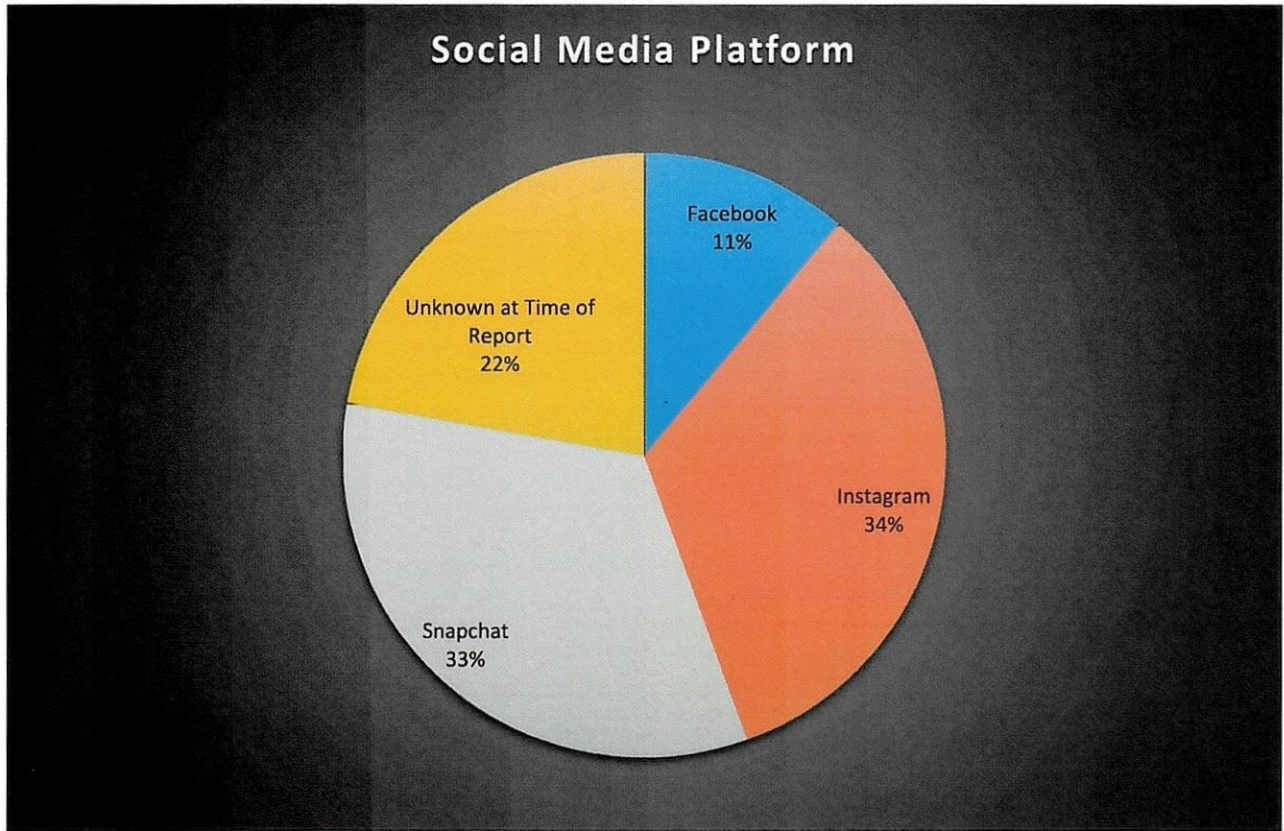
| Social Media Platform:	# of Threats:		%
Discord	0		0%
Facebook	1		11%
Instagram	3		34%
Snapchat	3		33%
TikTok	0		0%
Youtube	0		0%
Unknown at Time of Report	2		22%
Total	**9**		**100%**

According to the <u>Social Media Platform</u> data set shows an overview of the social media platforms through which threats to schools were reported, shedding light on the various channels used for such incidents. "Instagram" and "Snapchat" both had 3 reported threats, underscoring the significance of these popular platforms in the context of school-related threats. "Facebook" was used in 1 reported threat, and "Unknown at Time of Report" accounted for 2 incidents.

**Disclaimer: One school threat report identified two social media platforms.

Threat by Day of Week
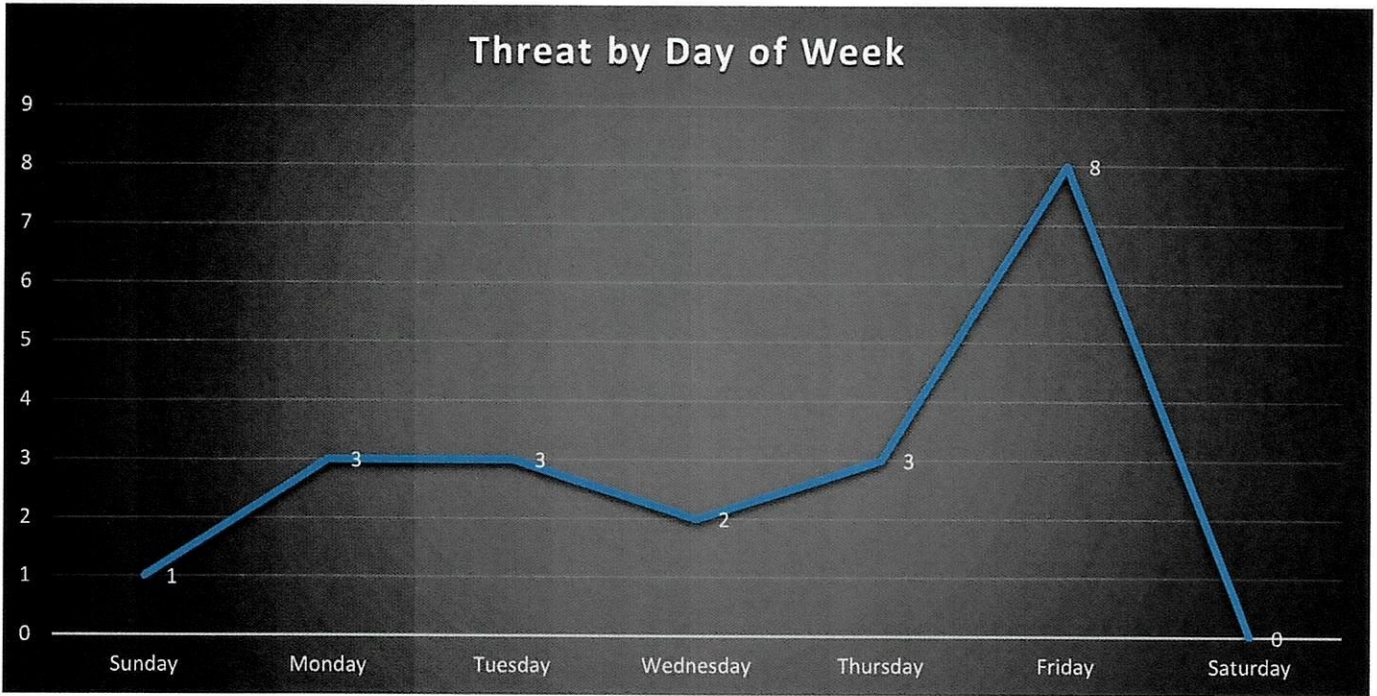
Day of the Week:	# of Threats:		%
Sunday	1		5%
Monday	3		15%
Tuesday	3		15%
Wednesday	2		10%
Thursday	3		15%
Friday	8		40%
Saturday	0		0%
Total	**20**		**100%**

The line chart above presents School Threat Reports submitted for the ongoing 2023-2024 school year, categorized by the day of the week. Notably, Friday stands out with the highest number of reported threats, totaling 8. Mid-week patterns are evident, with Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday each reporting 3 threats. Wednesday recorded 2 threats, while Sunday reported 1 threat, and Saturday remained without reported threats. This data underscores the significance of maintaining thorough security protocols throughout the week, with particular attention to Fridays, to ensure the safety of schools during the current academic year.

Reports by School Type
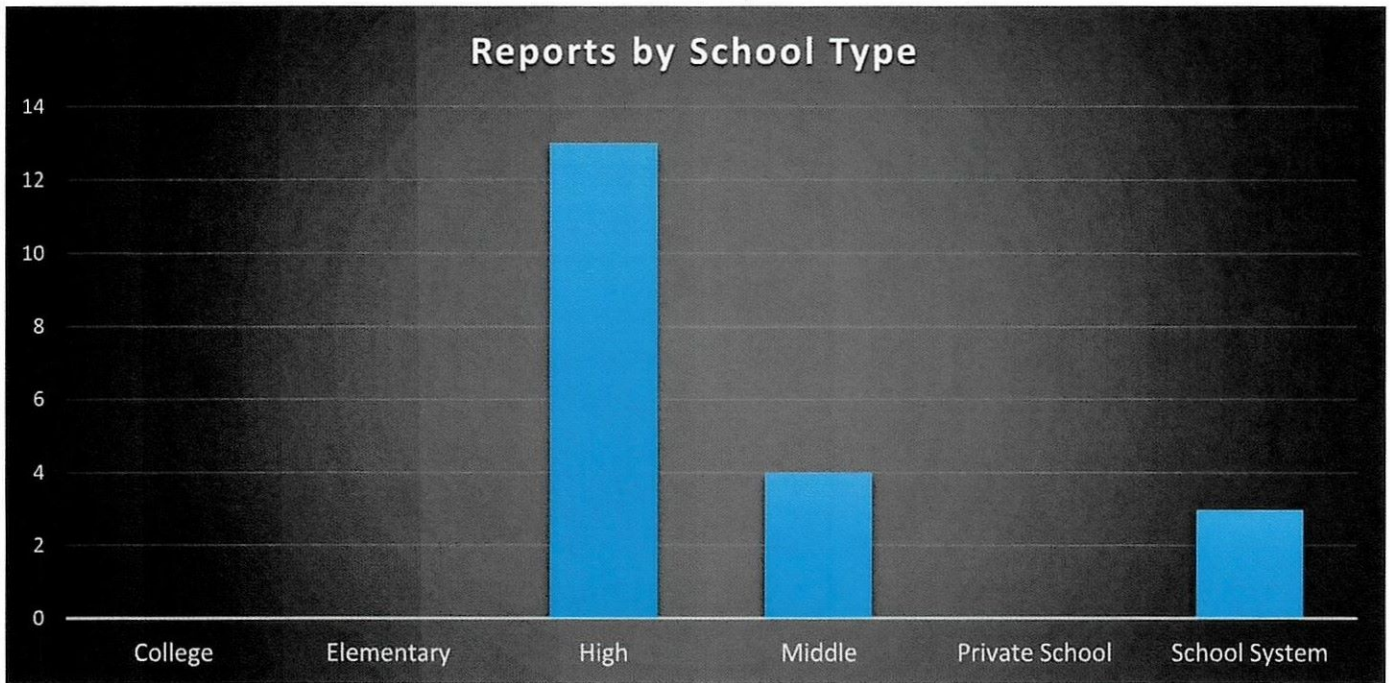
School Type	# of Threats:		%
College	0		0%
Elementary	0		0%
High School	13		65%
Middle School	4		20%
Private School	0		0%
School System	3		15%
Total	**20**		**100%**

The presented chart details a comprehensive breakdown of school threat reports received based on the type of educational institution. According to the Reports by School Type data set, the number one institution reported was High School with 13 reports.

(U) Cyber Stats and Future Products

2023-2024 School Year Portal Stats

House Bill 156

On March 25, 2021, House Bill 156 was passed, mandating that governmental agencies and utilities report any cyber-attacks to the director of emergency management and homeland security or his designees. All incidents should be reported within 2 hours of making such report to the U.S. Government or any agency thereof. GEMA/HS list Governmental agencies as all entities providing county, local, tribal, and school resources within the state of Georgia.

GEMA/HS has created a portal dedicated to receiving cyber **incidents & events** and communicating with the impacted agency in a timely manner. Located on the official GEMA/HS website: **https://gema.georgia.gov/** If internet access is unavailable, in an emergency, incidents can be called into the GEMA/HS Warning Point via **1-800-TRY-GEMA.**

(U) Supplemental Information

Georgia Emergency Management & Homeland Security Agency
Homeland Security Coordinator Areas

Legend:
1. David Shanks   404-772-3799
2. Clint Westbrook 404-977-7555
3. Ashley Kelly 470-905-6787
4. Clint Westbrook   404-977-7555
5. Kate Hargrove 404-747-5523
6. Kevin Stanfield 404-434-1160
7. Mat Dunn 404-754-6861
8. Kate Hargrove 404-747-5523

Source, Reference, and Dissemination Information

Source Summary Statement	N/A
Definition	*((PM)* **FOUO:** For Official Use Only *(PM)* **LES:** Law Enforcement Sensitive
Reporting Suspicious Activity	*(U)* **To report suspicious activity, law enforcement, Fire-EMS, private security personnel, and emergency managers should follow established protocols; all other personnel should call 911 or contact local law enforcement.** Suspicious activity reports (SARs) will be forwarded to the appropriate fusion center and FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force for further action. For more information on the Nationwide SAR Initiative, visit http://nsi.ncirc.gov/resources.aspx. *(U)* **To report a cyber security incident, submissions should be made to the GEMA/HS Cyber-Security Incident Portal.** An incident is defined as a violation or imminent threat of violation of computer security policies, acceptable use policies, or standard computer security practices. In general, types of activity commonly recognized as violating typical security policies include attempts (either failed or successful) to gain unauthorized access to a system or its data, including personally identifiable information; unwanted disruption or denial of service; the unauthorized use of a system for processing or storing data; and changes to system hardware, firmware, or software without the owner's knowledge, instruction, or consent.
Dissemination	*(U//FOUO)* Federal, State, and Local officials, homeland security advisors, fusion center directors, emergency management directors, and school officials.
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