

Bus Vandalism causes two-hour delay

Written by

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A call was reported around 6:15 a.m. regarding vandalism at the bus compound of Salem Community Schools.

The City Police along with the Washington County Sheriff's Department responded to find 26 buses at the compound had one flat tire each, as the investigation continued it was found that someone had taken the time to not damage anything as they entered the compound. The compound was locked at the time the report was made and there are no security cameras in that area.

"Whoever this was took great care not to physically damage the area, they did not cut the fence, they simply undid the wire ties," said Salem Chief of Police Scott Ratts.

As rumors have flown, some say it could be a student prank.

"This is more than a prank, it is justified as malicious vandalism, although the possible intent was to merely cause a disruption in school it cost hundreds of dollars. It cost us money and local business who lent a hand to get the buses on the road. This is more serious than a school prank, it's a serious incident," Ratts said.

School Superintendent Lynn Reed said it could have been worse.

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“We are very thankful that the tires were not cut, although it was very chaotic and maddening to see all the flat tires, we are thankful that it was not worse,” she said.

According to police they believe it would have taken three or four people an hour to have flatten the tires and they needed some sort of tool to do so.

According to Ratts, police have an idea of what type of car was in that proximity and he feels very confident that more information will come in.

“We just have to patient,” he said.

Reed is thankful for both local units of law enforcement.

“Both the Chief and the Sheriff have always been there for us, they are so responsive to our needs and appreciates how everyone pitched in to help with this situation,” she said.

The investigation into the crime continues.