## C'ville parent protests 'humiliating' treatment of girl

The filing of a false police report this menth by a 12-year-old fifgh-grader at Clarenceville's Grandview Elementary has prompted one par-ent to protest the way the situa-tion was handled by school offi-

eials. The incident, in which the girl

reported some high school boys had pulled her into woods near the school and cut her hair, has led to a petition drive spearhead-ed by Grandview parent Carolyn

ed by Grandview parent Carolyn Krough.

On the petition, Keough, a nurse, charges the district forced the girl to undergo "public humiliation" when she confessed to lying in a series of meetings before classmates.

School administrators said the airing of the incident five separate times before classmates was done to calm Grandview parents and students who believed an abduction had taken place on

abduction and taken place on school grounds.

The school district serves stu-dents in the cities of Livonia and Farmington Hills and Redford Township.

Technically speaking, the girl

could have been charged with a felony because the false report involved an abduction, a felony, said Livonia police Lt. Jim How-

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But we don't see any point."
Howton said. "It's a common
sense kind of thing. She's too
young to bring charges. We
think the girl learned her lesson.
It was an unfortunate thing tha
tappened."
On Oct. 14, Livonia police
were called to the school after
the girl reported that during a
fitness walk during lunch recess.
some high school boys had pulled
her into the woods, hold her
arms down, covered her eyes,
and cut her hair.

and cut her hair.
Police searched the woods with
a tracking dog and found no evidence that a crime had taken

dence that a crime had taken place.

"We determined it was a false report all most immediately." Howton said. "When we talked to the girl, it was obvious it didn't happen."

By that time, however, news of the alleged abduction and the school.

"Her hair was actually cut and sho was upset, so we had no reason not to believe her immediate precautions were taken for the remaining recesses, with children playing only close to the building," said principal Elie.

building," said principal Ellen Davis.

That evening, the girl con-fessed to her parents that she had lied. The girl had cut her own hair and "figured out a plan to not be in trouble," Davis said. The girl had no idea, Davis said, that her lie would escalate

into a police investigation and

fearful students and parents at Grandview.

"She truly thought that she would simply escape blame from her parents by blaming the hair cut on the high school kids who didn't really exist," Davis said.

The next day, the girl, the girl's mether, Davis, counselor Dennis Ringle and Superintendent Tom Tattan, all agreed that, to calm the Grandview community, the girl should tell Grandview students what had happened.

Grandview students what had happened.

This was a serious thing and it impacted a lot of people, "Davis said. "Rumors were flying; other kids were seeing boys running out of the woods. We wanted the kids to feel safe; we wanted them to see that she was safe."

Grade by grade, students entered the learning center that morning to hear Davis, Ringle and the girl talk about the incident. The three sat in front of the students. Tattan sat in during the session involving third-graders. graders.

ing the session involving third graders.
Keough's son was one of the students who listened to the students who was a side of the this shouldn't happen to anyone, not even a dog." Keough said.
On the petition she is now cir-culating throughout the Clarenceville community, Keough called the airing of the incident a "public humiliation" for the girl.
"A fifth grade child was forced to undergo public humiliation, during which this child was pro-sent at five public meetings to confess to lying in front of her peers, and answer questions peers, and answer questions relating to her actions by her

peers," the petition reads. "During many of these meetings the child was crying. We refuse to allow a child to be branded as a liar in front of the ontire student body, and to be subjected to such an outrageous and sadistic form of intimidation."

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During the sessions, Davis said she and Ringle mostly talked, with the girl speaking only in short sentences to answer questions put her by her classmates. "Why did you do that?" "Why did you tell a lie?"

Davis, Ringle and Tattan all support having the girl appear at sessions before classmates. Davis sent a two-page letter home to Grandview parents explaining the incident and subsequent 90-minute sessions with students.

sequent 90-minute sessions with students. "It was done in a compassion-ate and caring manner, to com-municate what's real," Tattan

said.
The meetings were not a punishment for the girl, just a way to 'convey to students what had actually happened,' Ringle said. 'Before each session, we saked her, 'how are you doing' Are you uncomfortable? Do you want to stop?' She never said a thing.'

By lunch hour, students were

thing."

By lunch hour, students were once again walking on the fitness trail near the woods because the incident had been cleared up, "Ringle said.
Keough said she is circulating the petition because she doesn't ever want to see this happen again." She said school administrators couldn't assure her it would not happen again.

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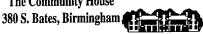
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