

Henry Ford High student shot dead on front porch

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By Jennifer Mrozowski

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A Henry Ford High School student was shot and killed on his front porch Sunday while talking on a cell phone just a month after another student was killed near the high school, according to school and police officials.

The shooting of **Dewayne Sims**, 15, a sophomore, took place in the 15400 block of Chatham, according to Detroit Police Department officials and Detroit Public Schools spokesman Steve Wasko.

While some parents and students speculated that Sunday's shooting was in retaliation for the shooting death of Henry Ford student Christopher Walker last month, the incidents appear unrelated, according to Detroit Police Department spokesman James Tate. The shooting is under investigation.

Meanwhile, Detroit Public Schools' police force is continuing a stepped-up safety effort in and around the school, Wasko said.

"The school and the Office of Public Safety (are) continuing to ensure a high visibility presence on campus, and continuing to work in conjunction with the Detroit Police Department," he said.

But some residents don't feel enough is being done.

Carolyn Miller-Bell, who chairs Henry Ford High's Local School Community Organization, said the police presence has waned since the days following last month's shooting.

"At dismissal you would see (police) cars on every corner," Miller-Bell said. "You don't see that now."

Miller-Bell said she wants answers on the work that Detroit Police Department's gang squad is doing in schools like Henry Ford, especially after school officials acknowledged that the 1,300-student Henry Ford is plagued by gang activity.

Walker's death followed a week of problems at the school, in which a football game against Renaissance had to be moved for fear of violence. Some say the problems stemmed, in part, from the influx of Redford High's students into the school after Redford's building was closed. Concern over the shooting led some student to walk out in protest last month.

The district issued a new security plan for Henry Ford that doubled security and incorporated other measures, but some students said they still feel unsafe.

Tate said Detroit police frequently work with Detroit Public Schools' Office of Public Safety and other agencies, "but we can't be everywhere every time."

He said one of the best deterrents to crime among teenagers is having parents who are involved in their children's lives.

Three teens were arraigned last month in 36th District Court in connection to the shooting of Walker, including the son of Detroit homicide detective Derryck Thomas. Because the case involved a Detroit officer, Detroit Police turned it over to Wayne County prosecutors, who then handed it to Michigan Attorney General Mike Cox.

In Sunday's shooting, a witness said three to four other teens were on the porch with **Sims** before the shooting, Tate said. The police want to talk to those teens, who left the scene, he said.

"There's no indication this was a drive-by (shooting)," he said.

Although the shooting did not occur at the Henry Ford High, school officials still need to be concerned, said Detroit Board of Education member Reverend David Murray.

"Whether this happened at home or at school, these are still our children," he said, adding that the district must continue to monitor the situation.

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