

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

To: All Media Outlets
From: Cole Withrow
Date: May 16, 2013
Re: Possession of a Weapon on School Property at Princeton High School

STUDENT ACCEPTS RESPONSIBILITY AND PLEADS GUILTY TO MISDEMEANOR

I, Cole Withrow, was not truthful to Principal Kirk Denning and Johnston County Sheriff's Officer Adam Davis in regards to my possession of two shotguns on the campus of Princeton High School on April 29, 2013. I did in fact know that the two shotguns were in my truck on school property. I did not mean to hurt anyone by my actions. I regret not removing the weapons from my truck.

I believe it is necessary for me to issue this statement to correct the misinformation that has been reported by the media. I understand this inaccurate information resulted in many agencies and individuals suffering significant harm. I should have stopped the inaccuracies, and I did not. As a result, I think it is imperative that I now take responsibility for my own actions.

I would like to apologize to Princeton High School Principal Kirk Denning, Johnston County Schools Superintendent Dr. Ed Croom and the Johnston County Board of Education. I recognize now that due to confidentiality laws, these individuals could not publicly respond to the inaccurate information despite the fact that they had evidence that proved my statements wrong. I am grateful that Dr. Croom modified the mandatory suspension to allow me to continue my studies, graduate and receive a diploma from the Johnston County School system. I will not pursue any appeal to the Johnston County Board of Education.

I would also like to apologize to the law enforcement, including Deputy Adam Davis, Johnston County Sheriff Steve Bizzell and Johnston County District Attorney Susan Doyle for any stress or negative comments that have been posted because of the inaccurate information received. I understand these individuals were just doing the jobs they are there to do.