

## **‘ADULT FAILURES’**

**Teen**

**Mayor Warren finds fault with officials who failed to act Trevyan Rowe was marked ‘present’ by 3 teachers**

**Meaghan M. McDermott, Steve Orr and Will Cleveland**

Rochester Democrat and Chronicle USA TODAY NETWORK

A mistake at the city-run 911 center may have contributed to the death of Trevyan Rowe, Rochester Mayor Lovely Warren acknowledged Tuesday in a frank, somber news conference.

Trevyan, a 14-year-old student with autism, walked away from a city elementary school Thursday morning. His body was recovered from the Genesee River 3 1/2 days later.

City officials now believe Trevyan likely was the person who walked onto the Douglass-Anthony Memorial Bridge on Thursday morning, prompting a rash of phone calls from alarmed motorists.

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**Flanked by Rochester’s emergency response leaders, Rochester Mayor Lovely Warren said protocol wasn’t followed when 911 was alerted to a potentially distraught young man on the Frederick Douglass-Susan B. Anthony Memorial Bridge last week. It’s believed that person was Trevyan Rowe, who was found dead in the Genesee River. MAX SCHULTE/@MAXROCPHOTO/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER**



**Trevyan Rowe**

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Warren said the calls should have triggered the dispatch of fire and water rescue crews to the bridge.

But that didn’t happen.

Warren said that breach of protocol, which has led to the suspension of six 911-center employees, was inexcusable.

“Adult failures led to a child’s death,” Warren said, alluding to the 911 mistake, as well as misdeeds at School 12 that came to light Tuesday. “Sorry, in this case, is not enough.”

City officials now assume, but are not yet certain, that Trevyan fell from the bridge into the river Thursday morning moments after the motorists alerted 911.

Whether a prompt response from rescue crews could have saved him will never be known, officials said Tuesday.

“As much as I’d like to know, I don’t know,” Fire Chief John Schreiber said at the news conference.

He said fire trucks could have arrived on the Douglass- Anthony bridge in three minutes.

The news conference focused on the 911 error, and Police Chief Michael Ciminelli deflected most other questions about Trevyan’s case.

### **Last moments**

Trevyan rode the bus to School 12 at 999 South Ave., arriving about 7:30 a.m. on Thursday.

School surveillance video shows him walking away on South Avenue, clad in a black hooded coat, a dark sweatshirt, blue jeans and red sneakers.

What, exactly, happened to Trevyan after he left school that morning is still unclear.

Ciminelli said Tuesday that other video captured Trevyan at the corner of Mt. Hope Avenue and Gregory Street, a mile from the school, at 7:51 a.m.

Seventeen minutes later, the phone calls to 911 began about a black male in dark clothes at the east end of the Douglass-Anthony bridge. That spot is 1 1/3 miles from Mt. Hope and Gregory.

One caller told a 911 operator that the person was climbing over the rail at the edge of the bridge. Two others reported the person was fully outside the rail. A 911 dispatcher can be heard on scanner recordings telling State Police the person was “over the guardrail ... over the rail.”

At that point, the edge of the bridge is about 20 feet above the water.

### **Fire rescue should have been dispatched**

Several of the callers clearly indicated to 911 that person now believed to be Trevyan was in a potentially dangerous place above the water, city officials said Tuesday.

That should have prompted an automatic response from the dispatchers.

“It is our protocol when someone is on a bridge to dispatch fire rescue and notify our scuba team. This did not happen,” Warren said. “And you know what? We have to own it.”

The 911 recordings show a dispatcher asked a State Police trooper who was on his way to the bridge, “Do you want me to start fire?” That was a reference to fire rescue crews.

The trooper responded that he would advise the dispatcher when he arrived on scene.

State Police spokesman Mark O’Donnell confirmed Tuesday that the trooper arrived at 8:16 a.m. and notified 911 there was no person in sight.

That apparently ended the episode.

Ciminelli said he and staffers began to review 911 logs and tapes late Monday afternoon and came to the conclusion the calls “were not properly dispatched.”

The *Democrat and Chronicle* published a story calling attention to the bridge episode shortly after noon Monday.

O’Donnell had no reaction to the city’s suspension of the 911 employees other than to reiterate that troopers had never been told that the person on the bridge seemed poised to jump or was otherwise in peril.

On Sunday evening, Trevyan’s body was pulled from the Genesee River after crews from the Rochester Police Department and Monroe County Sheriff’s Office used sonar equipment to search the river between the Douglass-Anthony bridge and the Court Street dam.

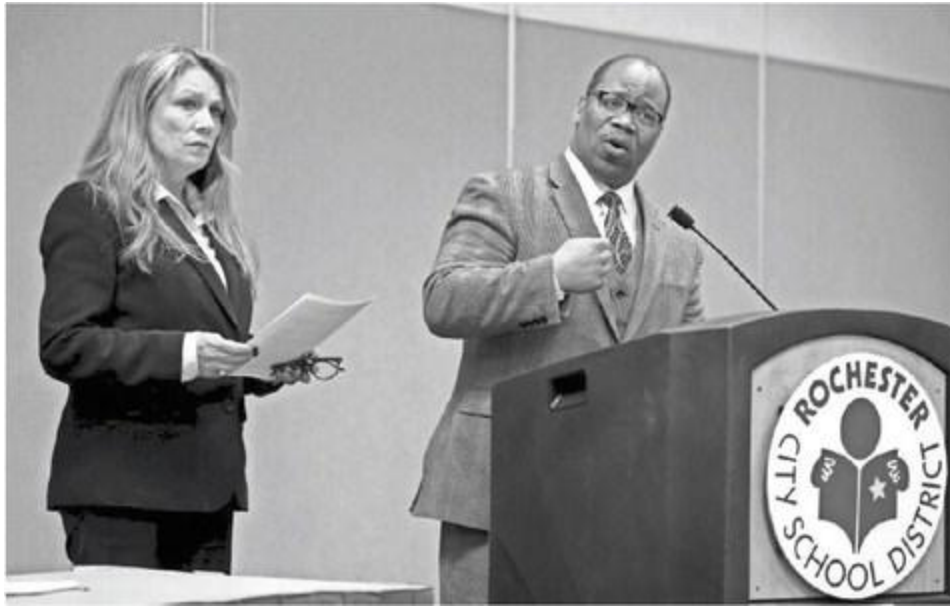
One of the 911 callers, who had been tracked down by a police investigator, was brought to the riverbank to help them find the right place to search.

Trevyan’s body was found about 200 feet downstream of the spot where he would have entered the Genesee if it was indeed him on the bridge Thursday morning.

“I can honestly say we don’t know had fire been dispatched and scuba been dispatched would we be able to save him,” said Warren.

“But we just don’t know. I think that the fact that this was a procedure and protocol that was not followed was egregious enough, and we have to take responsibility for it.”

[MCDERMOT@Gannett.com](mailto:MCDERMOT@Gannett.com) [SORR@Gannett.com](mailto:SORR@Gannett.com) [WCLEVELAND@Gannett.com](mailto:WCLEVELAND@Gannett.com)



**At a news conference Tuesday afternoon, Rochester School Board President Van White and Superintendent Barbara Deane-Williams detailed failures on the school district's part concerning the disappearance and death of Trevyan Rowe. MAX SCHULTE/@MAXROCPHOTO/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER**