

WAGNER COLLEGE

Security increased after solicitation complaints

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Complaints from Wagner College students about religious solicitors on school grounds has led to increased security at the Grymes Hill campus.

An email sent Friday to students and staff described two incidents in which students were approached about an off-campus Bible study group.

The email, sent by the Public Safety Department, instructed anyone who experiences a similar scenario to immediately contact school officials.

For the time being, officials have increased security at the school, said Wagner

College spokesman Lee Manchester. "In addition to informing our campus community... our public safety staff has increased the number of rounds they are doing on campus," said Manchester.

A non-solicitation policy applies to everyone at Wagner College, whether they're affiliated with the school or not, he said.

The email, drafted by Public Safety Director Ed Moss, described each incident as follows:

On Feb. 8, a student told school officials she was approached at about 8 p.m. near the dining hall by a woman — described as a well-dressed African American woman in her 20s,

about 5 foot 11 inches tall — who invited her to join an off-campus Bible study called "God our Mother."

The student reportedly said she wasn't interested and walked away.

On Feb. 14, a different female student said she was approached at about 8 p.m. outside of student housing. She said two women, who appeared to be in their late-20s "also tried to recruit her," according to Moss.

The women, who wore backpacks, "looked like students," wrote Moss.

School officials don't believe any of the women attend the school or work there, based in part on the fact they didn't identify themselves as such, said

Manchester.

"We're a relatively small campus community, and it's pretty easy to identify when someone on campus is from outside our community," he said.

School officials said police are aware of both incidents. In addition, officials at St. John's University, also located in Grymes Hill, and College of Staten Island, which encompasses a campus in St. George and one in Willowbrook, were also made aware of the incidents.

A spokeswoman for the NYPD said Sunday there was no record of formal complaints of harassment filed on the dates in which the incidents reportedly occurred.