



ANDOVER HIGH SCHOOL
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December 12, 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians,

It is with deep sadness that I reach out to you today, on the cusp of the first evening of Hanukkah, to tell you that our school has been impacted by hateful graffiti found on a desk in a social studies classroom. This classroom desk was found to have three small swastikas on it.

Unfortunately, this is not the first time this type of hate speech has been found at our school. It had been my hope that we would be able to stop this behavior which, I believe, involves a small group of individuals. However, since this behavior continues to victimize members of our community and has created a pattern of hostility within our school, I feel that I need to shine a bright light on the situation and involve our entire school community so that we can stop this and all hate speech from occurring on campus. There is a need to recommit ourselves to providing a safe, supportive, and equitable learning environment for all. If you have any information about these incidents please contact us here at school. Keep in mind that, as a school, we are committed to the ideals of our school's core values and beliefs. These read in part that:

All students will act with respect, integrity, and compassion

All students will demonstrate responsibility for their actions

All students will cultivate their awareness of contributing to the common good

Clearly, we have had a breakdown of these values.

Therefore, I am asking that we all recommit ourselves to the principles that all of us should be able to fully participate within our school community without having to worry that we will be the target of acts of hatred or bigotry. I hope that you will join me in denouncing these acts in the strongest possible manner. With this in mind, we will work with the Anti-Defamation League of New England, our houses of worship, student and parent leaders, and the Andover Police Department to develop educational programming, community forums, and actionable responses to incidents that tear at the fabric of our school.

As we move forward from these incidents please know that we are deeply committed to the goals that all students are safe, that all students develop empathy and respect for others as well as reject hate and intolerance. I will keep you updated on our progress. While we cannot guarantee how all members of our community will respond I can guarantee that we will not stop fighting to create a school environment that respects the dignity of all students and staff and where we conduct ourselves with respect, integrity, and compassion.

Respectfully,

Philip Conrad

Philip Conrad
Principal

C.c. Dr. Shelley Berman, Superintendent of Schools, Andover Public Schools
Chief Patrick Keefe, Chief of Police, Andover Police Department