

Pierce Middle School
Milton, MA 02186



Dear Pierce Community:

March 9, 2017

I am deeply saddened to inform you that late in the school day yesterday graffiti depicting swastikas was found in the 8th grade boys' bathroom and the 6th grade boys' bathroom. An investigation was immediately initiated. In addition, yesterday afternoon I contacted the Milton Police Department, and we are providing full cooperation and assistance to them. Our investigation to identify who is responsible continued throughout the school day today. As soon as our thorough investigation is concluded, we will follow up with disciplinary consequences as set out in the Pierce Middle School Handbook. We also will take appropriate steps to remedy the negative impact of these acts upon the school community and to restore a sense of safety and support for all.


The fact that swastika graffiti was again found in the Pierce Middle School is far, far beyond disappointing. My words to you in my communication this past December were, "This is extremely troubling and highly inconsistent with the inclusive culture that we are committed to creating at the Pierce Middle School." This remains true. The Pierce Middle School is no place for hate. I pledge to you continued vigilance in this matter as well as continued efforts long term to promote and support a positive, hate-free school environment.

After the incidents of swastika graffiti in December, in addition to following up appropriately with the individual students who were responsible, the Pierce Middle School responded at the school level by:

1. facilitating grade level assemblies with students led by me and my administrative team that communicated both our expectations as outlined in the Pierce Middle School Handbook and our expectation for being a positive member of the Pierce community
2. forming a team of student leaders to attend the Anti-Defamation League conference this month
3. reaching out to a number of organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), which will result in an assembly by the ADL this spring, professional development for Pierce teachers and administration in the summer, and the implementation of the ADL's peer leadership program in the fall
4. forming a team of Pierce teachers and administrators who are now working with an expert in the field of promoting a positive welcoming school environment; this group is working to design whole school and team level initiatives

I conclude by reiterating that this behavior will not be tolerated at the Pierce Middle School. I will be working with Superintendent Gormley, the Milton School Committee and other appropriate resources to ensure that we have taken every appropriate action to deter further occurrences of this type. I am appalled and heartbroken by these acts. If you have any information regarding these acts, please contact me immediately. My faculty and I are here for you and/or your child if you would like to discuss this further or need support. If that is the case, I encourage you to reach out to your child's guidance counselor or me.

Sincerely,


Dr. Karen L. Spaulding
Principal
Pierce Middle School