

Walt Whitman High School
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240-740-4800



Robert Dodd, *Principal*
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December 17, 2022

Dear Walt Whitman High School Community Members,

I want to share information with you regarding an incident that took place today and how it is being addressed. It was reported, this morning, that there was antisemitic graffiti; the words “Jews Not Welcome,” written on our school sign. This behavior is abhorrent, extremely hurtful, and will not be tolerated at Walt Whitman High School.

We immediately notified the Montgomery County Police, who are actively investigating the incident. In addition, if found to have been committed by an MCPS student, this incident will be addressed as a disciplinary matter in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding with county police and in alignment with the MCPS Student Code of Conduct. We commend the individuals who reported this incident of hate and encourage any student or community member with additional information to contact our school administration, the Montgomery County Police non-emergency line at 301-279-8000, or anonymously through the Maryland Safe Schools Tip-Line at 1-833-632-7233.

Walt Whitman High School will continue to use education and restorative practices to engage our students in conversations about respecting and celebrating our diverse community. This past Wednesday (12/14/22) leaders of the Walt Whitman High School Jewish Student Union, in collaboration with staff members, led our school through a *OneWhitman* lesson on confronting antisemitism. All students engaged in this learning and heard student testimonies to the Jewish student experience at Walt Whitman High School. While we are deeply disturbed and disappointed by what occurred today, it will not deter us from our collective mission to end antisemitism and intolerance and build a safe and inclusive school community where ALL students can thrive.

I encourage parents to talk with their children about respecting and showing acceptance to all people and demonstrating understanding of our differences. Please help them understand the impact that intolerable symbols, words, and actions have. The following links offer parents tools and strategies to talk with children about antisemitism:

- [5 Tips for Talking with Children About Anti-Semitism | JSSA](#)
- [Anti-Defamation League \(ADL\)](#)
- [Teaching Materials on Antisemitism and Racism](#)
- [Resources to Address and Challenge Antisemitism | ADL](#)
- [Antisemitism Today](#)
- [Policies and Regulations: Detail - Montgomery County Public Schools, Rockville, MD](#)

If your child is impacted by this unacceptable behavior, our counselors, administrators, and mental health professionals are available to support them. Our students expect and deserve a safe school environment in which to learn and develop. We remain steadfast in our commitment to foster an anti-biased school culture and eliminate hate in all its forms. We appreciate your support as we confront incidents like these and work toward creating a community which preserves the dignity of all people.

If you have any questions, or would like to discuss this further, please call the main office at 240-740-4800.

Sincerely,

Robert W. Dodd, EdD
Principal
Walt Whitman High School