



March 13, 2024

Dear GWMS Parents and Guardians,

I am writing to you today in the spirit of transparency to uphold our values of maintaining an inclusive culture at all our schools. After school dismissal today, we learned that the word “Holocaust” was written several times with heart symbols behind one of the pillars in back of George Washington Middle School. The words and symbols were written in an obscure location and we cannot confirm how long these markings were there. The incident was reported to the Ridgewood Police Department, who gathered the necessary information and photos. The writing has now been removed from the wall.

Although the investigation of this event is still underway, we take very seriously such apparently antisemitic, hateful and violent language. Such hate-based behavior will not be tolerated in our schools. Hate has no place here. The Ridgewood Public Schools are to be respected as safe and peaceful spaces where all students from all backgrounds feel welcome and protected.

If any additional information or updates become available, we will share them as necessary. In the meantime, we will continue to be vigilant regarding identifying, reporting, and addressing any behavior that does not meet the inclusive values of Ridgewood Public Schools.

If you or your student become aware of any similar inappropriate conduct, I encourage you to reach out to your school principal immediately. Through our ongoing and concerted partnership, we can ensure an inclusive school community for all students. .

Sincerely,
Mark Schwarz