

RIVERHEAD CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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November 17, 2023

Dear Blue Waves Community,

Earlier today, our middle school administration was informed by a teacher and several students of a small swastika symbol they collectively discovered on a piece of artwork at the school. The district immediately opened an investigation into this matter.

Any form of antisemitic or discriminatory symbols, speech or actions are reprehensible and unacceptable in our schools and community. Unfortunately, these acts are not just limited to the Riverhead community, as incidents of this nature are occurring across Long Island and throughout the country at elevated rates. We are committed to condemning this behavior and taking action to prevent such occurrences from happening in the future. We are steadfast in our development of fruitful learning environments where every student feels safe and respected and is taught to appreciate all religions, cultures and backgrounds.

With this mission in mind, our district-wide Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee will commence their work in the coming weeks to promote acceptance and inclusion and establish programming, events and lessons throughout all of our schools. In addition, at Riverhead Middle School specifically, students will be taking part in an assembly next week with community advocate Joselo Lucero that is centered on teaching students how to treat others with dignity and respect, combat discriminatory actions and bullying and embrace diversity. Through these initiatives in our district, we will continue to foster educational spaces that value empathy, understanding and togetherness.

When any additional information that can be shared becomes available, we will provide the community with an update.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Pedisich

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