



September 11, 2014

Dear McKinley Middle School Parents,

At McKinley Middle School, we highly value and are committed to fostering a supportive, safe and encouraging learning environment for our students. We also want to communicate clearly with our families about concerns when they arise.

As you may have seen in recent news reports, a McKinley Middle School teacher created a worksheet that was handed out on Tuesday as a homework assignment, which asked students to compare and contrast President George W. Bush and Adolf Hitler, after reading two texts. One text, "Fighting Hitler – A Holocaust Story" is part of the current curriculum's suggested materials. The text about President Bush is a news article, and it is not suggested as part of the current year's curriculum, but was included last year as part of a unit examining the causes and justifications for war.

As a school district, teachers have the flexibility to decide the best approach and day-to-day lessons for their students, working within the curriculum and standards we want our students to learn. We focus on helping students become critical and analytical thinkers. The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) curriculum and guidance documents for teachers do not include what was suggested in this assignment. As such, the assignment reflected extremely poor judgment in this instance and we, as a school community, are very sorry this happened. Our teacher deeply regrets this mistake as there was no malice intended, no effort made to push any certain political ideology, and any suggestion made to malign the presidency or make any comparison in this offensive way.

Today, we'll talk to the students in this teacher's class about why a different activity would have been more appropriate. We are also available should you or your student has other questions. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,

Louise Jones, Ed.D.  
Principal

Lysa L. Scott  
Associate Principal