



October 30, 2020

Dear Excel Academy High School Families,

We are writing to follow up with you about an egregious incident of zoom bombing that occurred this week. A zoom bombing describes an incident in which one or more uninvited guests hijack and disrupt a virtual class or meeting. This trend is happening not only in our community, but nationwide, in schools from the elementary through the college level.

In an incident this week, we had an attacker enter a classroom and shout homophobic hate language towards a staff member, in front of dozens of students. The Excel community condemns these acts and does not tolerate disrespectful, harassing, sexist, racist, homophobic or discriminatory language or gestures of any kind, whether remote or in-person. In addition to our in-school investigation of these incidents, we will be following up with the appropriate authorities, including the police, and will continue to do so moving forward.

Over the past several weeks, we have seen a general decline in the frequency of zoom bombing attempts, and even fewer successful zoom bombs. We have increased security measures, including individual student verification, and will continue to enhance technical procedures to ensure that virtual classrooms are safe spaces for all.

As a community, we are heartbroken that our staff and students experienced these issues, and urge you to continue partnering with us as we take steps to increase security and safety. The majority of Excel students also condemned this language and took to social media in defense of impacted staff and community members. Students across all grade levels reached out to peers and faculty members in the community to show solidarity and support those impacted.

By monitoring your child's online presence and participation in Zoom, you can help us ensure that the online learning environment is safe for all. We stand committed to providing all students with the highest quality education and supportive care, despite these challenging times. And, we commit that we will keep your child and family's safety, learning, and well-being at the heart of our work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nina Keough".

Nina Keough