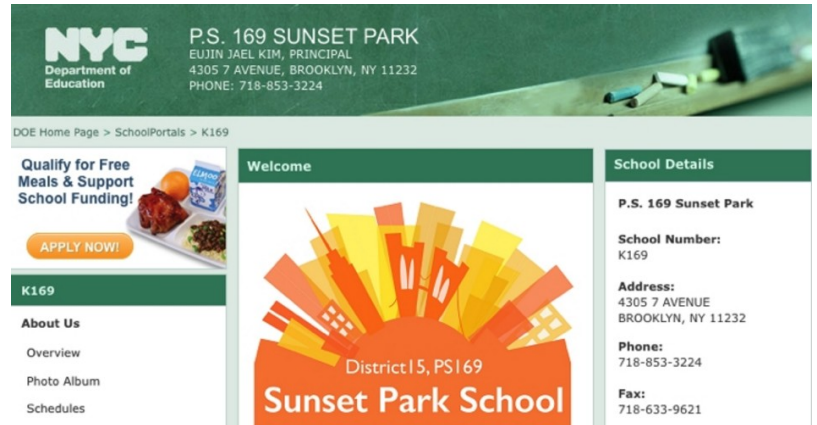




Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on December 14, 2015

NYC Principal Bans Santa, Thanksgiving, Holiday Parties, and Pledge

Principal Ejun Jael Kim of Brooklyn's Public School 169 (Sunset Park School), along with her colleague, assistant principal Jose Chaparro, has performed what Fox News has dubbed a "politically correct scrub-down." Kim has banned all references to Santa Claus, removed the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance from the weekly routine, replaced Thanksgiving with "Harvest festival" and renamed all holiday parties as "winter celebrations."



According to Fox News, a memo was circulated amongst the teachers at PS 169 last month from assistant principal Chaparro that suggested a "harvest festival instead of Thanksgiving or a winter celebration instead of a Christmas party."

The reason?

Chaparro writes that the goal is to "be sensitive to the diversity of our families. Not all children celebrate the same holidays."

InsideSchools.org reports that the demographic breakdown at PS 169 is 51 percent Asian, one percent Black, 43 percent Hispanic, and four percent White.

But this is America, and in America, we celebrate Thanksgiving. It has been a national holiday since 1863, when President Abraham Lincoln, inspired by a Union Army victory at Gettysburg, declared an official day to give thanks. President George Washington had also called for an official "day of public thanksgiving and prayer," but it was not until Lincoln that Thanksgiving was officially set for the fourth Thursday of November. It marks a significant moment in our American history.

Perhaps that is why it has been axed at PS 169. Attacking Americanism seems to be a benchmark of the progressive agenda. The *Independent Sentinel* observes of Kim's policies, "This isn't even political correctness, this is bigotry against Americans and American traditions."

Principal Kim's directives go further than even what the Department of Education stipulates. According to the *New York Post*, New York City's Department of Education issued a directive stating that holiday symbols such as Christmas trees, Kwanzaa candles, dreidels, Hanukkah menorahs, and the Islamic star-and-crescent are permissible. Exceptions to this are symbols considered to be religious, ones that "depict images of deities, religious figures or religious texts."

A DOE spokesman clarified to the *New York Post* that Santa would be considered a permissible secular figure.

But PS 169 business manager Johanna Bjorken disagrees and indicated on the school memo, "In case you are wondering about grey areas: Santa Claus is considered an 'other religious figure.'"

Parents and school staff are frustrated by the school's policies.



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"We definitely can't say Christmas, nothing with Christmas on it, nothing with Santa," PTA President Mimi Ferrer said administrators told her. "No angels. We can't even have a star because it can represent a religious system, like the Star of David."

Before Kim took over as Principal of PS 169, State Assemblyman Felix Ortiz had visited the school dressed as Santa for many years, recalls Joseph Iorio, assistant principal and acting principal of PS 169 until Kim accepted the position.

Iorio also indicates that the Pledge of Allegiance was recited every Monday morning before Kim took over as principal.

As with the holiday directives, Kim's edicts on the Pledge also go further than that of the DOE, which permits teachers to use their discretion regarding recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. Teachers at PS 169 state that they were not given a choice.

Staff at PS 169 claim that Kim clearly came into the school with an agenda to shake things up. One source told the *Post* that Kim instructed teachers to clear their classrooms of "clutter," which included books and school supplies. Staff noted that Kim moved brand-new reading books to the basement because she preferred a different kind of curriculum.

Following these moves, she bought seven 70- and 80-inch Sharp flat-screen smart TVs, which cost approximately \$3,000 per unit, and had them mounted in the auditorium. Sources at the school indicate that the TVs have never been used. Kim also saw to it that historic murals inside the school were painted over.

People have taken to Twitter to express their outrage over Kim's politically correct agenda. Matt Walters posted on his Twitter, "PC is the downfall of this country!!!" "This principal needs to be fired," tweeted Alan Straub, "Funny how so many try to get into our country, then try change it to what its not." Dr. Ben Albensi tweeted, "I can think of no reason to ever remove the Pledge of Allegiance from US schools. Sounds like this school needs a new principal." Twitter user Catherine DiGennaro wrote, "oh for heaven's (yes i said heaven) sake! the pledge is for the USA no religion indicated as is thanksgiving!"

And TheBeard questioned how or why Kim's policies are being tolerated: "I can't believe the parents would stand for such a dictatorship."

As frustrating as Kim's actions undoubtedly are to many people, this scenario is exactly what can be expected when the government gets involved in education. If the government is running the show, parents will have little say in what their children learn in the schools, or the environment in which they learn it.





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