



MODEL SCHOOL BOARD RESOLUTION

CONDEMNING JEW-HATRED AND FIGHTING HOLOCAUST DENIAL

Matthew Lobel and Jonathan Pidluzny, Ph.D.

TOPLINE POINTS

- Over the last decade and particularly since the October 7 massacre in Israel, reports of antisemitism throughout American society, including in public schools, have skyrocketed. Manifestations of antisemitism in elementary and secondary schools include physical assault, bullying, and intimidation. Holocaust denial and calls for the elimination of Israel and the slaughter of Jews have also become alarmingly commonplace.
- Jew-hatred has found a home in too many K–12 schools, in part because school administrators have not upheld their responsibilities under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (1964), which forbids discrimination and harassment based on national origin—including Jewish ancestry—at schools receiving federal funds.
- By adopting the America First Policy Institute’s model resolution, school boards can express their commitment to establishing an environment free from discrimination and harassment for all students, including those with Jewish ancestry.

Introduction

The America First Policy Institute’s model resolution, “Condemning Jew-Hatred and Fighting Holocaust Denial,” is designed to be adapted by school board members for their respective districts. The resolution’s purpose is to express the board’s commitment to protecting Jewish students and combating Jew-hatred in K–12 schools. The resolution acknowledges that school leaders have an obligation under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (1964) to ensure that no student is denied equal access to school programs or opportunities due to discrimination or harassment based on race, sex, or national origin. It, therefore, expresses the board’s dedication to ensuring all students, including Jewish students, will be able to learn in a welcoming environment. The resolution expresses the board’s intention to promote the establishment of scholarly and balanced educational programs to improve all students’ understanding of the Holocaust and Israel’s history. It closes by affirming the importance of deliberation in K-12 public schools and recognizes that criticism of Israeli policies is protected by the First Amendment, provided it does not disrupt the educational environment.



[School District] Resolution No. X

Condemning Jew-Hatred and Fighting Holocaust Denial in [School District] School

Primary Sponsor

First Last (Board Member)

Cosponsors

First Last (Board Member), First Last (Board Member), First Last (Board Member), First Last (Board Member)

WHEREAS, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provides that “No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance”; and

WHEREAS, the Biden-Harris Administration’s U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism embraces Executive Order 13899, Combating Antisemitism (2019), and specifies that “national origin” within Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 includes groups with “shared ancestry,” specifically “Jewish ancestry”;¹ and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Education has issued a “Dear Colleague” letter explaining that “[s]chools must take immediate and effective action to respond to harassment that creates a hostile environment” for students based on shared ancestry;² and

WHEREAS, the [District] Statement on [Student Rights and Responsibilities or similar] makes clear that [Quote from school district explicitly stating that unlawful discrimination on the grounds of religion and/or ethnicity is prohibited in district schools];³ and

WHEREAS, the Antidefamation League has reported a 360 percent increase in antisemitic incidents recorded from the October 7 massacre to January 10, 2024, compared to the same period a year prior—3,283 incidents in all, including 60 incidents of physical assault, 553 incidents of vandalism, and 1,353 incidents of verbal or written harassment;⁴ and

WHEREAS, in the aftermath of the October 7 massacre against Israeli civilians and the ensuing war in Gaza, antisemitic attacks and harassment across the United States have skyrocketed, including:

¹ The White House. (2023, May 25). *FACT SHEET: Biden-Harris Administration Releases First-Ever U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism*. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/05/25/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-releases-first-ever-u-s-national-strategy-to-counter-antisemitism/>

² Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (2023, Nov. 7). “Dear Colleague Letter.” <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-202311-discrimination-harassment-shared-ancestry.pdf>

³ This footnote is a reference to a school district-specific policy. [School District Name. (Year, Month, Day). *Name of Document Regarding Students’ Rights and Responsibilities or similar*. URL]

⁴ Antidefamation League. (2024, January 17). *U.S. Antisemitic Incidents Skyrocketed 360% in Aftermath of Attack in Israel, according to Latest ADL Data*. <https://www.adl.org/resources/press-release/us-antisemitic-incidents-skyrocketed-360-aftermath-attack-israel-according>



- Protests from New York City to Los Angeles featuring antisemitic chants, including “From New York to Gaza, globalize the intifada,” “Intifada, intifada. Long live the intifada,” and “We don’t want no two states, we want 48”—all of which are clear calls for violence targeting Jews and the return of the intifadas of the early 2000s, in which Israeli Jews were indiscriminately killed;⁵
- Hundreds of bomb threats at American synagogues, which create a climate of fear among congregants, force the cancelation of prayer services, and drive Jewish life underground;⁶
- Calls to “gas the Jews!” including at an incident in Washington, D.C., where a man sprayed a foul-smelling substance at a Jewish prayer group in front of a synagogue;⁷ and
- An altercation between a Jewish man and a pro-Palestine protester at a protest in Los Angeles, California, that left the Jewish man dead, his death judged a homicide;⁸ and

WHEREAS, since the October 7 massacre, the number of assaults and instances of harassment and vandalism have skyrocketed at K–12 schools around the country, including:⁹

- Swastikas that were found multiple times at the Academy of Information Technology and Engineering High School in Stamford, Connecticut;¹⁰
- A group of Pro-Palestine educators held an unauthorized teach-in featuring a coloring book that stated, “I is for Intifada, Intifada is Arabic for rising up for what is right, if you are a kid or a grown-up”;¹¹
- A group of Pro-Palestine students attempted to break into a classroom to find a Jewish teacher who had attended a Pro-Israel rally at Hillcrest High School;¹² and

WHEREAS, Jews make up only 2.4 percent of the U.S. population but are the targets of 54.9 percent of all religion-based hate crimes in the United States;¹³ and

⁵ Donlevy, K., Vago, S., & Land, O. (2023, November 17). Hundreds of pro-Palestinian protesters — including A-list actress — shout ‘Long live the Intifada!’, pass out maps of pro-Israel locations to target in NYC. *The New York Post*. <https://nypost.com/2023/11/17/metro/pro-palestinian-protesters-shout-long-live-the-intifada-in-union-square/>

⁶ Secure Community Network. (n.d.). *Secure Community Network News Releases*. <https://www.securecommunitynetwork.org/about/news>

⁷ Lybrand, H. (2023, December 17). *A man was arrested in Washington DC after allegedly spraying a substance at 2 people and yelling an antisemitic phrase*. CNN. <https://www.cnn.com/2023/12/17/us/washington-dc-man-arrest-anti-semitic-phrase/index.html>

⁸ Cowan, J., & Hubler, S. (2023, November 6). Jewish Man’s Death After California Protest Clash Is Under Investigation. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/06/us/california-jewish-man-paul-kessler-israel-protests.html>

⁹ Antidefamation League. (2024, January 17). *U.S. Antisemitic Incidents Skyrocketed 360% in Aftermath of Attack in Israel, according to Latest ADL Data*. <https://www.adl.org/resources/press-release/us-antisemitic-incidents-skyrocketed-360-aftermath-attack-israel-according>

¹⁰ Smart, S., & Wolfe, E. (2023, October 31). *Swastikas found drawn on Connecticut high school campus for second time since Israel-Hamas war ignited, district says*. CNN. <https://www.cnn.com/2023/10/30/us/connecticut-stamford-high-school-swastika-vandalism/index.html>

¹¹ Goldstein, D. (2023, December 6). *Oakland Educators Hold Unauthorized Teach-in Supporting Palestinians*. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/06/us/oakland-california-teachers-palestinians-israel.html>

¹² Paolicelli, A. (2023, November 27). *Officials denounce chaos at Queens school after students found out teacher attended pro-Israel rally*. Spectrum News NY1. <https://ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/education/2023/11/27/hillcrest-high-school-riot-antisemitism-israel-queens-jewish-alliance-department-of-education>

¹³ Antidefamation League. (2023, October 16). *ADL: FBI Data Reflects Deeply Alarming Record-High Number of Reported Hate Crime Incidents in the U.S. in 2022*. <https://www.adl.org/resources/press-release/adl-fbi-data-reflects-deeply-alarming-record-high-number-reported-hate>



WHEREAS, we recognize that roughly two-thirds of antisemitic incidents since the October 7 massacre are directly related to the Israel-Hamas war;¹⁴ and

WHEREAS, shifting attitudes among young people raise serious concerns that America may grow less welcoming to Jews in the future, an alarming trend documented by:

- A Harvard University/Harris poll finding that 67 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds believe that “Jews as a class are oppressors and should be treated as oppressors”;¹⁵ and
- An Economist/YouGov survey finding that 20 percent of 18- to 29-year-olds believe the Holocaust is a myth, while 0 percent of respondents above the age of 65 deny the Holocaust;¹⁶ and

WHEREAS, we recognize that criticisms of Israel can veer into antisemitism when such criticism demonizes Israel, applies double standards to Israel, or delegitimizes the state of Israel—for example, when protestors liken Israeli Defense Forces operations in Gaza to Nazi behavior at Auschwitz or call for Israel’s destruction and the ethnic cleansing of Israeli Jews; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that one can vehemently criticize Israeli policies without veering into antisemitism, and we affirm that it is of utmost importance that K–12 encourage civil and wide-ranging deliberation on controversial topics; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the [District] School Board condemns violent antisemitic attacks in our schools and at school sponsored events, including instances of bullying and harassment, and commits to establishing an environment free from discrimination and harassment in which all students, including Jewish students, have unfettered access to educational programs, activities, and benefits; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the [District] School Board is committed to protecting Jewish students from discrimination and harassment and will investigate parent, student, and staff complaints fully, in the same way we respond to allegations of race- or sex-based discrimination and harassment; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the [District] School Board stands with our district’s Jewish community and Jews everywhere and condemns antisemitic chants calling for the murder of Jews and the destruction of the Israeli state, including “Globalize the Intifada,” “Gas the Jews,” and “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free”; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the [District] School Board affirms the importance of free expression in public education, including criticism of Israeli policies, speech that is protected provided it does not disrupt educational activities; and

¹⁴ Antidefamation League. (2024, January 17). *U.S. Antisemitic Incidents Skyrocketed 360% in Aftermath of Attack in Israel, according to Latest ADL Data*. <https://www.adl.org/resources/press-release/us-antisemitic-incidents-skyrocketed-360-aftermath-attack-israel-according>

¹⁵ The Harvard University and Harris Poll. (2023, December 14). *Harvard CAPS (Center for American Political Studies) Harris Poll*. https://harvardharrispoll.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/HHP_Dec23_KeyResults.pdf

¹⁶ One in five young Americans thinks the Holocaust is a myth. (2023, December 7). *The Economist*. <https://www.economist.com/united-states/2023/12/07/one-in-five-young-americans-thinks-the-holocaust-is-a-myth>



BE IT RESOLVED, that the [District] School Board is committed to striving for balance and academic integrity in programs of study designed to educate the student body about the Holocaust and the modern state of Israel, including the history of Arab Palestinians in Israel; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the [District] School Board instructs [President/Chair of the School Board] to transmit a copy of Resolution No. X to every school principal within our district’s control—for distribution to teachers and staff members and to be posted in a prominent public location.

To learn more about this resolution or to request a copy of the resolution as a Microsoft Word document, please contact Matthew Lobel at mlobel@americafirstpolicy.com.

To learn more about the education policy priorities of the America First Policy Institute, please visit the [Center for Education Opportunity](#), [Center for 1776](#), and [Higher Education Reform Initiative](#).

