

# RECOGNIZING ANTISEMITISM IN OUR SCHOOLS

## ABOUT THE IAC:

The **Israeli American Council (IAC)** is a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering the Israeli American community and combating antisemitism across the United States. Through educational programs, public awareness campaigns, and community engagement initiatives, the IAC works to address the challenges of antisemitism and promote understanding and inclusion. The IAC aims to create a safer and more inclusive society by fostering partnerships with diverse communities and advocating for tolerance. With chapters nationwide, the IAC serves as a vital resource for addressing prejudice and building resilience against hatred and bigotry.

## BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

As a community-driven organization, the IAC is committed to fostering strong, long-term partnerships with schools, recognizing their vital role in every community. We strive to serve as a bridge between the Israeli and Jewish communities and the education system. Our goal is to provide schools across the country with valuable resources, training, and educational programs on antisemitism and Israel for both educators and students. Additionally, we serve as a trusted resource for schools to navigate discussions, address concerns, and find guidance on these important topics.

## IAC AND IHRA DEFINITION FOR ANTISEMITISM

The Israeli-American Council (IAC) utilizes the [IHRA definition](#) of antisemitism, which has been adopted by both the U.S. government and the state of Nevada, as a vital tool in identifying and addressing antisemitism in schools and distinguish legitimate discourse from antisemitic incidents, ensuring that Jewish students feel safe and supported. This approach helps schools recognize and respond effectively to antisemitic rhetoric, discrimination, and harassment, fostering an environment of respect and inclusion.

## IDENTIFYING ANTISEMITIC SYMBOLS AND RHETORICS

Although Jewish Americans make up only 2% of the U.S. population, they are the target of more than 60% of religiously motivated hate crimes. Antisemitism is one of the oldest forms of hatred, but its modern manifestations are often complex and nuanced, making them difficult to recognize without proper training.

Like any immigrant community, Israeli Americans deserve to be heard and protected. Effective education requires a deep understanding of the signs, behaviors, and ideologies that fuel hatred, bigotry, and discrimination.

Recognizing antisemitic symbols and rhetoric is essential in distinguishing between legitimate criticism and discriminatory beliefs. Antisemitism can take many forms, from overt hate symbols and conspiracy theories to coded language and double standards applied only to Jews or Israel. Understanding these markers helps ensure that antisemitism is not dismissed or misidentified.

## FORMS OF ANTISEMITISM

### 1. Vandalism



- **GRAFFITI:** Nazi symbols, Swastikas, hate speech targeting Jewish people/Israel.
- **DAMAGE TO PROPERTY:** Damaging Jewish symbols and/or Jewish property.

### 2. Harassment



- **VERBAL ABUSE:** Insults and derogatory comments.
- **PHYSICAL INTIMIDATION AND AGGRESSION:** Threats or acts of violence.
- **CYBERBULLYING:** Online harassment and abuse.

### 3. Bias & Misinformation



- **BIASED CONTENT:** Prejudiced or slanted information.
- **FALSE INFORMATION:** Incorrect or misleading facts.
- **DISINFORMATION:** Deliberately false or deceptive information.

**“SEE SOMETHING SAY SOMETHING ADDRESS ANTISEMITISM TODAY!”**

Rather than just banning such expressions, schools should use these moments as educational opportunities, guiding students and educators toward awareness, accountability, and restorative measures. This approach fosters a safer, more inclusive learning environment while reinforcing the values of respect and critical thinking.

Addressing antisemitism in schools can be a powerful educational opportunity. Here are some effective strategies:

#### 1. Incorporate Holocaust and Antisemitism Education

- **HOLOCAUST EDUCATION:** Integrate comprehensive lessons about the Holocaust to provide historical context and highlight the consequences of unchecked hatred
- **CONTEMPORARY ANTISEMITISM:** Discuss modern forms of antisemitism, including stereotypes and conspiracy theories

#### 2. Promote Inclusive Curriculum

- **DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES:** Include Jewish history, culture, and contributions in the curriculum to foster understanding and appreciation
- **BIAS AWARENESS:** Teach students and teachers to recognize and challenge biased content and misinformation

#### 3. Create Safe Spaces for Dialogue

- **OPEN DISCUSSIONS:** Facilitate conversations about antisemitism and other forms of discrimination, encouraging students to share their experiences and perspectives.
- **SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT:** Ensure that students feel safe to report incidents of antisemitism and know that their concerns will be taken seriously

## 4. ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY

- **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:** Involve parents and guardians in educational efforts to combat antisemitism, ensuring a consistent message at home and school
- **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:** Collaborate with IAC experts to provide resources and support for educational programs.

The IAC recognizes schools as central to every community and is committed to building strong, long-term partnerships with educators. We aim to bridge the Israeli and Jewish communities with the education system by providing resources, training, and educational opportunities on antisemitism and Israel. In addition, we serve as a trusted partner for schools, offering support in navigating sensitive discussions, addressing concerns, and promoting understanding. By addressing antisemitism head-on, educators can empower students and staff members to be allies in the fight against hate and build stronger, more empathetic communities. For more information, support, and training opportunities, please contact us. Together, we can foster a safer and more inclusive learning environment for all.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

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