

**Item #7 – Board Package: Correspondence Received****Correspondence received end of day November 15, 2023**

- Concerns related anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate
  - Aiden Purnell
  - Alison Jones
  - Ameil Joseph
  - Andrea Purnell
  - Community Fridges HamOnt
  - DP
  - Dr. Anjali Menezes
  - Equity Network (2)
  - James Beattie
  - Katie King
  - Matthew Higginson
  - Mohammad Samad Zubairi
  - Project DROC
  - Sjanita H
  - Tanya Collins
- Our Voice Matters – Letter to HWDSB
  - G

**Correspondence received end of day November 16, 2023**

- Concerns related to anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate
  - Ayesh Khan
  - Carla Angela Ferrer
  - Harley Collins-Appleton
  - Ja'miil Millar
  - Jane Mulkewich
  - Jennie Hamilton
  - Jessica Vinluan
  - Joanna Sulzycki
  - Julia Lopes
  - Rachel Pangilinan

- Sara Ali
- Sarah Greenwood
- Sherline Morris
  
- Concerns related to anti-Semitism
  - A
  - Beata Vertes
  - Dr. Avi Brown
  - Eli Chaimovitz
  - Goldie Weiser
  - Izzy Ferguson
  - Marla Frank-Davis
  
- Letters related to Investigation
  - Aaron Schaffer
  - Arnie Strub
  - Benjy Katz
  - Daniel Kollek
  - Gord Garshowitz
  - Helen Metz
  - Jack Rosenbaum
  - Jay State
  - Joshua Rauchwerger & Michelle Zeller
  - Judi Caplan
  - Judy Rochweg
  - Judy Schwartz
  - Larry Szpriglas
  - Lila Strub
  - Lorne Rochweg
  - Mardi Schwenger
  - Michael
  - Michael Waxman
  - Noah
  - Paul Roth
  - Rabbi Moshe Meirovich
  - Rick Black
  - Robin Zee Xilberg
  - Sandra Seigel

# HWDSB

## Board Meeting

Monday, November 20, 2023

Trustee Board Room

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

20 Education Court, P.O. Box 2558

Hamilton, ON L8N 3L1

- Steve Rosenbaum
- Susan Roth

### Correspondence received end of day November 17, 2023

- Concerns related to anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate
  - Erin Kennelly
  - M.E. Fabrizio
  - Ruth Cameron
- Concerns related to anti-Semitism
  - A 1
  - A
  - AC
  - Alla Rovner
  - Alyse Nishimura
  - D
  - Nata Korjov
  - Soraya Quintela Chusyd
  - Yaakov Morel (2)
- Letters related to Investigation
  - A
  - Alan & Orna Richter
  - Cara Bensimon
  - Cindy Mark
  - Dr. Irwin Fuss and Mrs. Sandra Fuss
  - Dr. Esther Konigsberg
  - Elaine Levine
  - Elissa Press & Benjamin Klein
  - Georgina Katz
  - Gus Alexandropoulos
  - Hanna Schayer
  - Howard and Shelly
  - Inbal Chaimovitz
  - Irene Campbell
  - Janet Weisz

# HWDSB

## Board Meeting

Monday, November 20, 2023

Trustee Board Room

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

20 Education Court, P.O. Box 2558

Hamilton, ON L8N 3L1

- Jisuk Ryoo
- L
- Laura Waltman & Ari Levin
- Liora Malka
- Lorne Richter
- Maggie Norris
- Marisa Kropivka
- Michele Schneider
- Paula Garshowitz
- Romy Friedman
- Tara McAuley & Jeff Templeton
- Vivievv Epstein
- Zach Levine

Correspondence Received End of Day  
November 15, 2023

## Letter

Aidan Purnell

Tue 11/14/2023 05:49 PM

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian, anti-Muslim and antisemitism that is increasingly surfacing in schools.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, “Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end.” Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. Palestinian students and families in our school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel’s “right to defend” after the horrendous events of October 7th.

We are concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB.

We are also deeply concerned, that with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to

the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4000+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental well-being. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to deal with antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken also to shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in our schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel’s ongoing

apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative <sup>77</sup>that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term “terrorist”, which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

1. Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;
2. Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;
3. Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan.

I expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately and the directives soon after. Please add the correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting.

Aidan Purnell

**From:** Alison Jones

**Sent:** Friday, November 10, 2023 7:24 PM

**Subject:** \*\*\*ADD THIS AS CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE NOV 20, 2023 BOARD MEETING\*\*\*

Greetings HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

I'm a Hamilton resident writing in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate increasingly occurring in schools. I'm very distressed by HWDSB's lack of response and seeming indifference to the terror Palestinian and Muslim Hamilton students are experiencing. I cannot imagine the stress these students must be carrying while being acutely aware of the following context that has been widely published.

So many children have been killed by Israel's airstrikes in Gaza over the past month -- almost 5000 at the time of writing -- that their education ministry had to announce the end of the school year (UNICEF). The state of Israel has dropped approximately 25,000 tonnes of explosives on Gaza, the equivalent of two atomic bombs (Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor). Israel occupation forces have been using white phosphorous, which burns down to the bone & is often fatal even when covering only 10% of the body (Amnesty International). Half of Gaza's residential units have been damaged, half of the hospitals are no longer functioning due to the total siege, cutting off fuel, water, and food, and over 150 medical workers have been killed (World Health Organization).

While you may not have given attention to the horrific events in Gaza and West Bank, I assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are trying to survive the crushing grief following unprecedented violence in Gaza: murder, injury, abuse, and displacement of loved ones, loved ones missing, or arrested and held in solitary confinement without trial, as well as collective loss and terror due to the genocide of their people, destruction of family homes, landmarks, churches and mosques, and their lands.

You offered support for Israel's "right to defend itself" after the events of October 7th. It is troubling your statement came at the time Prime Minister Netanyahu stated he would turn Gaza into a "deserted island." It implies support for elimination of the people of Gaza. Statements like yours continue to contribute to manufactured confusion regarding what is now widely described as genocide of Palestinian people (Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention, leaders of UN's Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and countless advocacy groups, scholars, and professionals - for example, see signatories of a Canadian Social Work open letter: <https://bit.ly/SocialWorkersforPalestine>). This kind of misinformation, which amounts to endorsing violence, compounds the trauma students are exposed to.

There is no "right" to commit apartheid and genocide. The violent slaughter of almost 5000 children in a month -- more than total annual deaths of all children in conflict zones worldwide since 2019 (Save the Children) -- is not protection. Few leaders in the province seem to be able to comprehend that as a people experiencing the crime of apartheid (Human Rights Watch) and siege for over 15 years, Palestinians also have a right to resist what Dr. Mads Gilbert, an anesthesiologist with NORWAC, called "exterminationist politics" (see interview <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=6cfzVdxdp4Ns>).

Jewish students and families in HWDSB also deserve to feel safe from prejudice and antisemitism. As part of accomplishing this, you as leaders should work to actively dispel the myth that a state or a colonial ideology is synonymous with Judaism. This not only homogenizes and stereotypes Jewish people, it erases the hard work of Jewish activists who have often been at the forefront of the fight against apartheid (e.g. Jewish Voice for Peace). I encourage you to view the speech of Suzanne Weiss, for example, a Holocaust survivor who spoke at a recent ceasefire protest in Toronto in support of the rights of Palestinians. I have attached a clip for your reference.

To my understanding, with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent on the ongoing genocide against Palestinians. It is deeply troubling that the impact and effects of this genocide has not been named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their health and safety from overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. What steps you have taken to prevent anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools?

There has been silence about the fact that people of Gaza have been caged in what is called the largest open-air prison/concentration camp. What do you call it when over 2 million people are forced into a tiny strip of land, with a cage around them, guarded in the cage at gunpoint, denied any political rights, and held there indefinitely from birth until death? (see the documentary Born in Gaza to learn more). I've heard it called a hostage situation. What do you think? I don't know, because there's only been talk about ~200 hostages. This silence is unacceptable, and frankly, dehumanizing. Staff, senior leadership and trustees must update their knowledge to understand that the events of October 7th, 2023 did not occur in a vacuum. It is past time for leaders associated with education to demonstrate basic awareness of Israel's ongoing Nakba.

Stop ignoring the skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. Even Premier Doug Ford at the Spirit of Hope event on November 2nd, 2023 referred to pro-Palestine rallies as "hate rallies" and labeled the Palestinian flag as a " Hamas flag" — these lies are positioned

to incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, please operationalize the following:

- 1.
2. Publicly declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students; **part**
3. **of this must include retracting your support for Israel's "right" to commit the crime of apartheid and genocidal violence\***
- 4.
- 5.
6. Issue firm, clear directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian
7. racism in words, actions and teaching practices; and
- 8.
- 9.
10. Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge
11. anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan.
- 12.
- 13.
  
- 14.

I also suggest:

-Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge the antisemitism underlying conflation of

Judaism and Jewish people with the state of Israel, Zionism, Netanyahu, Israel's occupation forces,

etc.;

-Explore how to show solidarity with schools, students, and teachers in Gaza.

I expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after. Please add this correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting.

Please confirm receipt of this email. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Alison Jones, MSW

**\*\*\*ADD THIS AS CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE NOV 20, 2023 BOARD MEETING\*\*\***

Joseph, Ameil

Tue 11/14/2023 12:52 AM

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th.

We are concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB.

We are also deeply concerned about the silence from HWDSB as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4000+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term "terrorist", which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

Through a public statement, declare compassion <sup>7-13</sup> and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;

Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;

Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan

We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after.

In collective care for students,

**You do not need to reply to this email  
outside of your work hours**

**Ameil J. Joseph** , MSW, RSW, Ph.D.

(He/Him)

Associate Professor

Holder: Faculty of Social Sciences

Professorship in Equity, Identity and  
Transformation

Academic Director, Community Engaged

Research and Relationships, Office of  
Community Engagement

School of Social Work

McMaster University

[Redacted contact information]

[Redacted contact information]

[Redacted contact information]

## Please add correspondence to Nov 20th board meeting

Andrea Purnell

Sun 11/12/2023 11:09 AM

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

The email I am sending is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly prevalent in schools. I am saddened and frankly surprised by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. I'm unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but I assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

I have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th.

I too, am concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB.

The apparent gap which also causes grave concern is the silence from HWDSB as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4000+ innocent Palestinian children. I am sure students, families and caregivers are growing more despondent that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. I know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, I would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

I witnessed justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

There is documented evidence that the climate of Islamophobia is skyrocketing and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. I have heard the flagrant use of the term "terrorist", which has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, I request you operationalize the following:

Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;

Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;

Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan

In the growing documentation of the genocide of Palestinian people, I expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after.

I look forward to your confirmation of this correspondence not only an indication of its receipt but as a confirmation of the HWDSB's compassion and commitment to Palestinian students, community and humanity.

In collective care for students,

Andrea Purnell

**From:** Ayesha Asghar

**Sent:** Friday, November 10, 2023 4:53 PM

**Subject:** CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE NOV 20, 2023 BOARD MEETING

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th.

We are concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB.

We are also deeply concerned, that with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to

the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4000+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term "terrorist", which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;

Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;

Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan

We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after. Please add the correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting.

In collective care for students,

Your Organization/ Name

**From:** Community Fridges HamOnt

**Sent:** Saturday, November 11, 2023 4:19 PM

**Subject:** ADD THIS AS CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE NOV 20, 2023 BOARD MEETING

To the HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership, and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th.

We are concerned for the safety of Jewish & Muslim students and families in HWDSB. We are also deeply concerned, that with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4000+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fuelled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term "terrorist", which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

1. 1) Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;
2. 2) Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;
3. 3) Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan

We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after. Please add the correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting.

In collective care for students,

*Community Fridges HamOnt*

**From:** D P

**Sent:** Thursday, November 9, 2023 8:40 PM

**Subject:** \*\*\*ADD THIS AS CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE NOV 20, 2023 BOARD MEETING\*\*\*

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th.

We are concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB.

We are also deeply concerned, that with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4000+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term “terrorist”, which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

- Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;
- Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;
- Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan

We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after. Please add the correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting.

In collective care for students,

DP

**From:** Anjali Menezes

**Sent:** Tuesday, November 14, 2023 12:09 PM

**Subject:** CORRESPONDENCE TO BE ADDED TO FOR THE NOV 20, 2023 BOARD MEETING

Dear HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership, and Trustees,

I trust this email finds you all well.

Please find attached an urgent letter for your consideration.

I look forward to seeing your response to the calls from the Community you serve.

In collective concern and love for *all* learners,

Anjali

**Dr. Anjali Menezes**, MBBS, MClined, FHEA, CCFP (She/Her)

Family Physician

**Director, Racialized Medical Learner Mentorship, FHS McMaster**

**Lead, DARE Group Collaborative** [REDACTED]

**PI, McMaster Racialized Resident Mentorship Program**

**Member, Equity in Health Systems Lab**

Assistant Clinical Professor (Adjunct),

McMaster University, Department of Family Medicine

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

*"I feel, therefore I can be free." ~Audre Lorde*

[REDACTED]

*I am a settler on the traditional territories of the Mississauga and Haudenosaunee nations, and within the lands protected by the Dish With One Spoon wampum agreement. It is my responsibility to learn how to practice allyship and how I can leverage my privilege to dismantle the colonial structures of oppression that I have benefitted from, and to do so with humility. Any concerns or critiques of my practice are welcomed.*

**Dr. Anjali Menezes** MBBS, MCIinEd, FHEA, CCFP

Family Physician

Associate Clinical Professor (Adjunct), McMaster University

Citizen Member, Hamilton Police Service Board

---

14 November 2023

## Dear HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership, and Trustees,

Like many of my community members I am troubled by the ongoing violence, increasing and alarming death toll, and overall silence from you over the events in Gaza and Israel. From my own personal experience in equity leadership roles and as the newly appointed community representative for the Hamilton Police Service Board, I can only imagine how difficult it must feel to navigate this conflict. As an educator myself, and as a clinician with a special interest in trauma informed care (and trauma informed education), with a conflict that has been ongoing for over a month, silence is unacceptable.

[October 7<sup>th</sup> marked the deadliest day for Jews since the Holocaust.](#) The weight and enormity of this event cannot be ignored. And this fact highlights both the role of triggering historic severe trauma (which we know is inherited through the narratives and communal memories of community) and the onslaught of new trauma can impact every single facet of our existence. Your [Director](#) and [Chair's](#) Statements from October 10<sup>th</sup> importantly highlight this “horrific terrorist attack.” The national rise in antisemitic hate since this day is, irrespective of the safety you have ensured within your schools, newly triggering.

Missing in your response as educational leaders tasked with safeguarding, welcoming, and ensuring the successes of **all** your students, is any recognition of the violence being experienced by Palestinians collectively, and the *also horrific* deaths of Palestinian children. Palestinians have also collectively experienced the trauma of the [Nakba](#), the forced displacement of 80% of their population and murder of thousands. As horrific events continue to unfold while the world watches, and while across Canada leaders refuse to publicly comment, it is triggering, dismissive, and deeply impactful for Palestinian, Muslim, Brown, and racialized students.

UNICEF has [declared](#) “Gaza has become a graveyard for thousands of children.” While *genocide* has been a term largely avoided by Western news outlets to describe the murder of Palestinian civilians, women, and children, and the direct targeting of schools, hospitals, and densely populated areas in Gaza, this is indeed occurring. Over 100 scholars and organizations have signed a letter calling the [razing of Gaza a genocide](#), and on November 10<sup>th</sup>, by a record vote, the Third Committee of the United Nations approved a draft resolution for Palestinian self-determination outlining the [“relentless genocidal aggression”](#) in Gaza.

I have publicly spoken minimally about these situations because I recognize how polarizing and dangerous it has become for anyone, especially racialized people in our country to speak counter to the Federal narrative. Sarah Jama, and Sabreina Dahab have been made examples of. Yet as educators, silence is not an option, nor has your silence demonstrated impartiality. By publicly acknowledging the terrorist attacks in Israel while failing to likewise acknowledge what is now internationally accepted as the active genocide of Palestinians, the HWDSB has taken a side. While I have read your guidance document on [“How to Support Students During World Conflicts,”](#) this is insufficient. As the death toll mounts, in our modern age, the seize of Gaza, the deep trauma, loss, pain, and hopelessness, is being live-streamed for all of us, including our students, to watch, [with school walk-outs and protests bringing this topic into all learners' lives and](#)

[classrooms](#). As educators, we know that context is everything. I concur with your trauma-informed document that validation is essential. Yet you have provided neither for your students. Without any comment from you, the only local context that has been provided to our children are that the Israeli losses are “horrific” and the ongoing trauma, the ongoing international protests calling for a ceasefire, the live streamed and reporting of horrific violence towards Palestinians, does not even merit a comment. It is because of widespread narratives of differential treatment and systemic and structural oppression such as this that the role of a community representative on the Hamilton Police Service Board was developed. In equity work, our task is to advocate with communities that are otherwise silenced. As educators aspiring to educate equitably, I urge you to do the same.

I full heartedly agree that antisemitism must be proactively addressed. ***I also feel with all of my heart that we must address Anti-Palestinian racism and Islamophobia in our schools. We can and we must be able to hold compassion and acknowledge both losses.*** Recognizing the humanity of one equity-deserving group ***should never require dehumanizing and invalidating the humanity of another equity deserving group.*** I also acknowledge the difficulty to lead when our country feels so polarized. But our task is to lead and educate *all learners in our community and this involves recognizing the humanity of all groups affected by this conflict.* I urge you to:

- Recognize the communities that have been given a voice and have been validated, and recognize the communities that have not.
- Fulfil your obligations to lead, educate, and safeguard *all* children in your care.
- Operationalize the aspirational values as outlined in your Equity Action Plan.
- Lead *courageously*. As educators we lead by example and demonstrate the values we hope our learners will live.
- Open your hearts and practice *radical humanity*. For love will always have more power than hate.

**In response to these concerns, just as you have demonstrated your support and validation for Jewish students in your October 10<sup>th</sup> statements, I request you operationalize the following:**

- Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;
- Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism and Islamophobia in words, actions and teaching practices;
- Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective, as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan

**In collective concern and love for *all* students,**



**Dr. Anjali Menezes**

**From:** Equity Network

**Sent:** Monday, November 13, 2023 12:02 PM

**Subject:** Add as correspondence for Nov 20 board meeting

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. Once again, we are troubled but not surprised by HWDSB's total indifference to and complicity in this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." If a Canadian school board posted this devastating message how would you react? We know you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, yet you lack enough empathy to act when Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people. You should reflect on why Palestinian children don't stir empathy in you. We don't need your response because we know why.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's war mongering "right to defend" rhetoric after the unfortunate events of October 7th.

For clarity, we are deeply concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB. Jewish HWDSB students deserve, like all students, to feel safe and protected. You should act to protect them. We are also deeply concerned and disturbed that, with the exception of the consistently courageous and principled Trustee Sabreina Dahab, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4000+ innocent Palestinian children. We are, once again, disgusted by the inhumanity that prevents you from doing the bare minimum - naming the impacts of this trauma so it can be acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there are incidents of overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fuelled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. **It is important for your**

**staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid.** For safety reasons, it is imperative that they all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is NOT anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested and are protesting at many of your secondary schools as we have stood with your students in protection at such events while HWDSB has pushed them off their school grounds to avoid accountability, placing them in further danger. We have seen flagrant use of the term "terrorist", which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we DEMAND you operationalize the following:

1. Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;
2. Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;
3. Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan

We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after.

**DO NOT FORGET TO ADD THIS CORRESPONDENCE TO THE NOV 20, 2023 BOARD MEETING AS IT IS OUR DEMOCRATIC RIGHT TO BE HEARD.**

In our collective care for students and community,

Equity Network

Add this as correspondence for November 20, 2023 board meeting

Equity Network

Mon 11/13/2023 05:35 PM

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. Once again, we are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." If a Canadian school board posted such a devastating message, how would you have reacted? We know you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank. Why has there been no empathy for Palestinian students and families in your school board who are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people?

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th.

For clarity, we are very concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB. We hope you will take meaningful steps to fight antisemitism and protect Jewish students. We are also deeply concerned that, with the exception of the consistently principled and courageous Trustee Sabreina Dahab, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4000+ innocent Palestinian children. We are appalled that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the <sup>7-28</sup>loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that they all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate. It is humanity.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at your secondary schools. We have stood with them to protect them while you have forced them off of school property, further endangering them and leaving them exposed. We have seen flagrant use of the term "terrorist", which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim. Why does your compassion run dry for Palestinian and Muslim students?

In response to these concerns, we DEMAND you operationalize the following:

1. Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;
2. Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;
3. Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan

We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after.

Please confirm you will be adding this as correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting as it is our DEMOCRATIC RIGHT to be heard and seen by elected officials. The community will not be silenced

In our collective care for students and community,

Equity Network

\*\*\*ADD THIS AS CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE NOV 20, 2023 BOARD MEETING\*\*\*

James K H Beattie

Tue 11/14/2023 09:47 PM

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. I am adding my voice, and the voices of my family, to the growing chorus of concern for the well-being of our children. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm. We have spent a great deal of time and energy discussing these events with our daughters. We would expect them to speak out on these issues, and we're deeply troubled by the messaging (or lack there of) of support for people in crisis, and the retaliation against young leaders who courageously speak up and hold space for the voiceless and the oppressed.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th.

We are concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB.

We are also deeply concerned about the silence from HWDSB as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4000+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term “terrorist”, which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;

Issue directives and clear expectations with your students and staff about interrupting anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions, and teaching practices

Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan

We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after.

In collective care for students and in solidarity with our chorus of young courageous leaders,

James Beattie

\*\*\*ADD THIS AS CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE NOV 20, 2023 BOARD MEETING\*\*\*

Katie King

Mon 11/13/2023 01:43 PM

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th.

We are concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB. We are also deeply concerned, that with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4000+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term "terrorist", which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following: Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students; Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices; Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan.

**We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after. Please add the correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting.**

In collective care for students,

Katie King  
Ward 2  
Hamilton, ON

**From:** Matthew Higginson

**Sent:** Thursday, November 9, 2023 9:35 PM

**Subject:** \*\*\*\*ADD THIS AS CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE NOV 20, 2023 BOARD MEETING\*\*\*\*

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm. The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message.

We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people. We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th.

We are concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB. We are also deeply concerned about the silence from HWDSB as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4000+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing.

We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools. We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards.

In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate. We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet.

We have seen flagrant use of the term "terrorist", which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim. In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students; Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices; Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after.

In collective care for students,

Matthew Higginson  
Parent of two HWDSB students



**From:** Mohammad Samad Zubairi  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 2:17 PM  
**Subject:** Concern

Dear HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership, and Trustees,

Like many of my community members I am troubled by the ongoing violence, increasing and alarming death toll, and overall silence from you over the ongoing events in Gaza and Israel. I can only imagine how difficult it must feel to navigate this conflict. As an academic and educator myself, and as a clinician who cares for children, with a conflict that has now surpassed a month, silence is not acceptable.

October 7<sup>th</sup> marked the deadliest day for Jews since the Holocaust. The weight and enormity of this event cannot be ignored. Your Director and Chair's Statements from October 10<sup>th</sup> importantly highlight this "horrific terrorist attack." The national rise in antisemitic hate since this day is, irrespective of the safety you have ensured within your schools, newly triggering, and speaks to the complexity of the concerns I raise with you now.

What is missing from your response as educational leaders tasked with safeguarding, welcoming, and ensuring the safety and successes of all your students, is any recognition of the violence being experienced by Palestinians collectively, and the *also horrific* deaths of Palestinian children. Palestinians have also collectively experienced the trauma of the Nakba, the forced displacement of 80% of their population and murder of thousands. As horrific events continue to unfold while the world watches, and while Canadian leaders refuse to publicly comment, it is triggering, dismissive, and deeply impactful for Palestinian, Muslim, Brown, and racialized students.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." While *genocide* has been a term largely avoided by Western news outlets to describe the murder of Palestinian civilians, women, and children, and the direct targeting of schools, hospitals, and densely populated areas in Gaza, it is important to note that over 100 scholars and organizations have signed a letter calling the razing of Gaza a genocide, and on November 10<sup>th</sup>, by a record vote, the Third Committee of the United Nations approved a draft resolution for Palestinian self-determination outlining the "relentless genocidal aggression" in Gaza.

I recognize how polarizing and dangerous it has become for anyone, especially racialized people in our country to speak counter to the Federal narrative, locally, Sarah Jama has been made an example of. Yet as an educator, and an equity leader, silence is not an option, nor has your silence demonstrated impartiality. By publicly acknowledging the terrorist attacks in Israel while failing to likewise acknowledge what is now happening to Palestinians, the HWDSB has taken a side. While I have read your guidance document on "How to Support Students During World Conflicts," I urge you to recognize that this is insufficient. As the death toll mounts in Gaza, and in our modern age, the seize of Gaza, the deep trauma, loss, pain, and hopelessness, is being live-

streamed for all of us, including our students, to watch. As educators, we know that context is everything. I concur with your trauma-informed document that validation is an essential response. Yet you have provided neither for your students. Without any comment from you, the only local context that has been provided to our children are that the Israeli losses are “horrific” and the ongoing trauma, the ongoing international protests calling for a ceasefire, the live streamed and reporting of horrific violence towards Palestinians, does not even merit a comment.

I full heartedly agree that antisemitism must be proactively addressed. ***I also feel with all of my heart that we must address Anti-Palestinian racism and Islamophobia in our schools. We can and we must be able to hold compassion and acknowledge both losses.*** Recognizing the humanity of one equity-deserving group ***should never require dehumanizing and invalidating the humanity of another equity deserving group.*** I also acknowledge the difficulty to lead when our country feels so polarized. But our task is to lead and educate *all learners in our community* and this involves recognizing the humanity of *all groups affected by this conflict*. I urge you to:

- Recognize the communities that have been given a voice and have been validated, and recognize the communities that have not.
- Fulfil your obligations to lead, educate, and safeguard *all* children in your care.
- Operationalize the aspirational values as outlined in your Equity Action Plan.
- Lead *courageously*. As educators we lead by example and demonstrate the values we hope our learners will live.
- Open your hearts and practice *radical humanity*. For love will always have more power than hate.

In response to these concerns, I request you operationalize the following:

- Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;
- Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;
- Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan

I expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after.

In collective concern and love for *all* students,

Mohammad Zubairi  
Pediatrician, Hamilton

## PLEASE CONFIRM RECEIPT - CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE NOV 20, 2023 BOARD MEETING

### Project DROC

Sat 11/11/2023 05:11 PM

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees, This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm. The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people. We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th. We are concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB. We are also deeply concerned about the silence from HWDSB as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4000+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools. We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate. We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term "terrorist", which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim. In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following: Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your

Palestinian students; Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices; Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after. In collective care for students,

**From:** Militant Marie

**Sent:** Tuesday, November 14, 2023 6:20 AM

**Subject:** Standing up for what's Right.

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th.

We are concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB. We are also deeply concerned, that with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4000+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term “terrorist”, which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

1. Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;
2. Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;
3. Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan

We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after. Please add the correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting.

In collective care for students,

> Sjanita H.

**From:** Tanya Collins

**Sent:** Tuesday, November 14, 2023 11:46 PM

**Subject:** Please ADD THIS AS CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE NOV 20, 2023 BOARD MEETING

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

I am a child care worker, caregiver, and parent in your community. This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is currently even more emboldened and ubiquitous in HWDSB schools than usual. I am deeply troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. I am unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but I assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

I have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th.

I am concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB. I am also deeply concerned, that with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4600+ innocent Palestinian children. I am disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their wellbeing. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle anti-semitism, I would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

The public has seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 **in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid.** For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic nor is it the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are viciously targeting students who organized walk outs in every school board in Hamilton. I have seen flagrant use of the term "terrorist", which we know has long

been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

It's incredibly disturbing that this board, which has failed so egregiously at rising to the task of dismantling its own systemic racism, is responsible for the care and safety of Palestinian children and youth whose people and families are enduring acute and undeniable genocide, livestreamed for all to see. Yet the board is operating as it always does, as a colonial institution first and foremost.

In response to these concerns, I request you operationalize the following:

1. Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;
2. Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;
3. Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan

I expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after. Please add this correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting.

Please send confirmation that this email has been received.

In collective care for students,

--

Tanya Collins

Hamilton, November 15, 2023.

B”H

Dear Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB),

I hope this letter finds this well.

I am an international trade professional, lived in 4 different countries, speak 5 languages, and have learned that living in coexistence is the base for freedom, democracy, right to come and go as you wish are the core of our Western values.

In the recent past weeks, the above have not been the fact for our Jewish community in Canada, unfortunately. As a Canadian, I never thought I would fear to send my child to school just because it could be an easy target for a terrorist attack. I never thought I would see that in Montreal, a Jewish school and a Synagogue would experience two shooting incidents and a Molotov-cocktail being thrown at in one week. I never thought that students wouldn't feel safe in campuses throughout the country.

Canada has been and is a home for diversity and inclusion. All people should be accepted in a basic human level, without politics being involved. We all feel sad, angry, alone. The request here is simple. Our students, our beloved children, should be seen as equal as any other minority, with the respect they deserve. When I lived in the USA, I experienced Black, Asian, LGBTQ discrimination and Jews have always supported all the other targeted groups mentioned. So why when we are the ones who now suffer with the loss of over 1,400 people who were cruelly murdered in their homes or in a music festival any different?

We all, as citizens of a Western Democracy, value our education system and expect you to reassure us that your schools guarantee the security, well-being, and non-partisan/ideological indoctrination of students. As they navigate themselves in the realms of politics and sociology studies, they MUST read all authors, all lines of thought before making a conclusion and sticking to one ideology. Even after that, it would be unacceptable to bully, physically attack and discriminate any group they don't agree with. That is what we expect our teachers and professors to praise and not a false, misjudged, and biased political view that is perpetuated in most academic halls right now.

I would kindly ask you for my letter to be included in the November 20<sup>th</sup> meeting correspondence.

Yours sincerely,  
G

Correspondence Received End of Day  
November 16, 2023

**From:** Ayesha Khan

**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 10:53 PM

**Subject:** ADD THIS AS CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE NOV 20, 2023 BOARD MEETING

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th. We are concerned for the safety and care of Palestinian students and families in HWDSB.

We are also deeply concerned, that with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4600+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fuelled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term "terrorist", which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

1. Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;
2. Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;
3. Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan

We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after. Please add the correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting.

In collective care of Students,

Ayesha Khan

**From:** Carla Angela Ferrer  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 10:38 AM  
**Subject:** Call for action re: Palestinian genocide

**\*\*Please confirm receipt of this email\*\***

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm. The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th. We are concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB. We are also deeply concerned, that with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4600+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate. We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term "terrorist", which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

- 1) Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;
- 2) Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;
- 3) Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan

As a parent of a student in the HWDSB, I expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately,

and the directives soon after. Please add the correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting.

In collective care for students,

**Carla Angela Ferrer**

*pronouns: she/her/hers, they/them/theirs and siya/niya*



**From:** harley appleton

**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 6:11 PM

**Subject:** Please read at Nov 20 Meeting. Stop anti-Palestinian racism

Dear HWDSB Director, leadership and trustees,

There is a terrible genocide happening to the Palestinian people right now. Also, there is so much anti-Palestinian racism and Islamophobia and it is getting worse and worse. I am sad and worried about Palestinian students, Muslim students and everyone dealing with racism at the HWDSB.

If this was happening to me, I would feel so sick and there's no way I could come to school and focus on anything other than the pain of my own and of my community.

The HWDSB should do everything to support Palestinian students and to educate staff and students properly about Palestine and anti-Palestinian racism. It is not fair that Palestinian rights are not taken seriously by the HWDSB. The HWDSB should make a public statement about their support for Palestinian students and people.

Please reply to this email so I know you have received it.

Harley Collins-Appleton

**From:** Ja'miil Millar

**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 11:27 AM

**Subject:** \*\*\*ADD THIS AS CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE NOV 20, 2023 BOARD MEETING\*\*\*

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and the West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th.

We are concerned for the safety and care of Jewish students and families in HWDSB.

We are also deeply concerned, that with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, specifically the massacre of 4600+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma are not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental well-being. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast, there has been silence and disregard for the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term "terrorist", which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize and incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

- 1.
- 2.
3. Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;

- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
7. Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
11. Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression
12. perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan
- 13.

We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after. Please add the correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting.

In collective care for students,

Ja'mil Millar

**From:** jmulkewich jmulkewich  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 2:52 PM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Letter for HWDSB

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

I am a concerned resident, and a lawyer, and I am writing in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. I am troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

There has been a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th. Of course I am concerned for the safety and care of Jewish students and families in HWDSB. However, I am very concerned that with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4000+ innocent Palestinian children. I am disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. There is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, I would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

There has been justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term "terrorist", which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, I am adding my voice to those who are requesting for you to take the following actions:

Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;

Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;

Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan

There is no time to lose. I expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after. Please add the correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting.

Yours truly,

Jane Mulkewich

**From:** Jennie Hamilton

**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 10:23 AM

**Subject:** Increasing anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate in schools and HWDSB indifference

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is **increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total** indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, **"Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end."** Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have **openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of** October 7th.

We are concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB.

We are also deeply concerned, that with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4600+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is

important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the **events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid**. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We **have seen flagrant use of the term "terrorist", which we know has long been** deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

- 1.
- 2.
3. Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
7. Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions
8. and teaching practices;
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
12. Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda
13. from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan
- 14.

We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after. Please add the correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting.

In collective care for students,  
Jennie Hamilton

**From:** Jessica Vinluan

**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 10:15 AM

**Subject:** ADD THIS AS CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE NOV 20, 2023 BOARD MEETING

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th. We are concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB. We are also deeply concerned, that with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4600+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term "terrorist", which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

1. - Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;
2. - Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;
3. - Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan

We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after. Please add the correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting.

In collective care for students,  
Jessica Vinluan

**From:** Joanna S  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 11:55 PM  
**Subject:**

Dear Hamilton Wentworth District School Board members,

With at least 200 Israeli hostages facing imminent danger and over 10,000 people in Gaza killed (a significant number of them children), these circumstances reflect a broader narrative of human rights, where passivity—yours or mine—can lead to catastrophic consequences. So tonight, despite my desire to catch up on work or school or to go to sleep earlier to mend this darned cold, I chose to spend time writing you this letter in the hopes that you read it and take it into consideration as you carry out your work.

The stories coming from Gaza mirror the horrors of the Holocaust passed on by my family—"You should not complain about formula, our family was given only coffee to feed the baby," my father told me when I called him as a new mother years ago. His words echo in my mind as I read about the child malnutrition and deaths in Gaza long before recent events. My mother's surrogate aunt was deported to Siberia during the second World War, and later my mother, along with her six siblings and my grandfather, fled Communism in Poland to settle in Hamilton in the 1980s; at this time, more than half a million children are expected to leave Gaza, many of whom have already been violently killed, with no set destination like my mother's family had. One would have to be willingly blind to have any knowledge of the Holocaust and to not see history repeating itself today.

Natalie Portman demonstrated great courage a few years ago when she declined the Genesis Prize on the global stage, potentially alienating her extended family and her entire homeland, in order to make it clear that she did not align with Israel's human rights violations in Gaza. She has joined all notable global human and children's rights organizations in doing so. These organizations also condemn the actions of Hamas. As any good therapist will tell you, "Maybe you don't have to choose: maybe it can be both."

Calling for a ceasefire is the only way to reconcile this false binary of possibly choosing the wrong side. I am writing to implore you to lend your voice in support of an immediate ceasefire in the ongoing conflict between Israel and Gaza. By supporting a ceasefire, you will be advocating to halt the loss of innocent lives and ensure that humanitarian aid can reach those in desperate need. It also opens the path for negotiations for the release of hostages and for conducting independent international investigations into alleged war crimes committed by all parties.

I urge you independently and collectively to use your platform to raise awareness about this critical issue. Platitudes inadvertently contribute to the issue by signaling awareness and passive acceptance of the situation. Sadly, some have and will prioritize strategic political alignment or a vague sense of self-preservation over integrity and advocating for children. On the other hand, a clear statement calling for peace as a member of the educational community would signal integrity and improve your public perception and trustworthiness in the community. More importantly, your voice can make a small difference in ending the suffering and paving the way for a lasting peace in the region.

I leave you with two remaining thoughts from other more notable individuals, one historical and one current:

(1)

*First they came for the Communists  
And I did not speak out  
Because I was not a Communist  
Then they came for the Socialists  
And I did not speak out  
Because I was not a Socialist  
Then they came for the trade unionists  
And I did not speak out  
Because I was not a trade unionist  
Then they came for the Jews  
And I did not speak out  
Because I was not a Jew  
Then they came for me  
And there was no one left  
To speak out for me  
— Pastor Martin Niemöller*

(2)

*The situation is catastrophic, with unrelenting bombing and a massive increase in the displacement of children and families. There are no safe places. An immediate ceasefire and humanitarian access are the top priorities to allow much needed aid to children and families in Gaza. We need an immediate humanitarian pause to ensure unhindered and safe access to children in need, no matter who they are or where they are. There are rules of war. Children in Gaza need lifesaving support and every minute counts.*

*A child is a child. Children everywhere must be protected at all times and must never come under attack. We reiterate the United Nations Secretary-General's call to rescind the order for over one million Palestinian civilians to leave northern Gaza and to take all possible steps to provide their safety and protection. Every child deserves no less.*

— UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell

Sincerely,

Joanna Sulzycki

Mother of HWDSB █████ Student

Member of Amnesty International (Hamilton/Burlington Chapter)

Hamilton Community Member

**From:** julia lopes

**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 8:53 PM

**Subject:** Re: ADD AS CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE NOV 20TH, 2023 BOARD MEETING

On Wed, Nov 15, 2023 at 8:51 PM julia lopes wrote:

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th. We are concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB. We are also deeply concerned, that with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4600+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term "terrorist", which we know has long been deployed to

dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

1. Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;
2. Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;
3. Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan

Let's educate and speak up! Respond with confirmation this email was received please.

In collective care for students,  
Julia Lopes

**From:** Rachel P.

**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 10:12 AM

**Subject:** \*\*\*ADD THIS AS CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE NOV 20, 2023 BOARD MEETING\*\*\*

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th.

We are concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB.

We are also deeply concerned, that with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4600+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term “terrorist”, which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

- 1.
- 2.
3. Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
7. Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions
8. and teaching practices;
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
12. Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda
13. from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan
- 14.

We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after. Please add the correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting.

Please confirm the receipt of this email.

In collective care for students,

Rachel Pangilinan

**From:** Sara

**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 6:41 PM

**Subject:** ADD THIS AS CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE NOV 20, 2023 BOARD MEETING

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end."

Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th.

We are concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB.

We are also deeply concerned, that with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4600+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all

understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term “terrorist”, which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

- 1.
- 2.
3. Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
7. Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching
8. practices;
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
12. Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from
13. an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan
- 14.

We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after. Please add the correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting.

In collective care for students,

Sara Ali

**From:** scgreenwood24

**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 2:29 PM

**Subject:** PLEASE ADD THIS AS CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE NOV 20, 2023 BOARD MEETING

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th.

We are concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB. We are also deeply concerned, that with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4600+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term “terrorist”, which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

1. Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;
2. Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;
3. Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan

We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after. Please add the correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting.

In collective care for students,

Sarah Greenwood



**From:** Sherline Morris

**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 12:17 PM

**Subject:** CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE NOV 20, 2023 BOARD MEETING

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th.

We are concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB. We are also deeply concerned, that with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4600+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term “terrorist”, which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

- 1.
- 2.
3. Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
7. Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions
8. and teaching practices;
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
12. Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda
13. from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan
- 14.

We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after. Please add the correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting.

In collective care for students,

Sherline Morris

[REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 1:19 PM

**Subject:** Schools should be a safe place for all students.

Dear Ms Heater Miller,

Thank you for coordinating the community voices. **I would like to ask that this letter be included in the November 20 meeting correspondence.**

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

"Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented." a quote from Elie Wiesel, the Nobel Peace Prize laureate.

Therefore I'm writing to you.

I am a proud Canadian citizen who was born in Ukraine and proudly raised in Israel. But above all, I'm a proud Jewish mother raising a child who attends the HWDSB. And today I'm afraid!

I am terrified by how easily freedom of speech is used to spread misinformation and hate.

I am terrified by the hateful slogans around high schools that students use without even understanding how harmful they are. Like those of the students from Nora Frances Henderson Secondary School who walked out of class on Nov. 13, 2023

I'm writing to you because I feel that schools should be a safe place for all students. And it is not safe for the Jewish students right now!

I'm asking you to remember how fragile democracy can be and how quickly it can disappear if we allow hateful radical voices to rise above the peaceful and respectful ones.

Those events are not from the European history book or memories of my grandparents who survived the Holocaust. Those hateful walkouts are happening here and now! At our schools!

To those who have already stood firm against Antisemitism, Racism, Intolerance, and Extremism, thank you!

And if you have not yet done so, I beg you to take action now!

Allow all students to feel safe at their school!

Protect them, and educate them about how harmful and dangerous hateful extremism is!

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard.

Regards.  
[REDACTED]

A

**From:** Baya Vertes

**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 12:50 PM

**Subject:** Fwd: A request for HWDSB action on rising antisemitism

Dear HWDSB:

I am writing this letter out of a deep sense of anger, and sadness, because I can see that antisemitism is growing in your schools and is being allowed to fester.

In the last few weeks, members of my family, as well as close friends, have witnessed - and in one incident been the target of - harassment of Jewish students on school grounds. We feel it necessary to hide our identity.

According to HWDSB policy and mandate, racism is not to be tolerated. And yet, there seems to be a certain silence around this particular form of racism, which is toward a very small and non visible minority. It's still racism.

The intimidation of Jewish students at your schools are creating an unsafe environment.

School is a place where students must learn to deplore and to denounce all forms of hate, I ask that the HWDSB get to work immediately to create schools that are depoliticized and free of intimidation.

I also ask that this letter be included in the HWDSB November 20 meeting correspondence, and I thank you for doing so.

Respectfully,  
Beata Vertes

**From:** Arthur Brown

**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 12:04 PM

**Subject:** Letter concerning anti-Jewish hatred in the public school system to be considered at your November 20 meeting

## Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB)

November 16, 2023

Please share this letter with your colleagues at the HWDSB at your November 20<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Dear HWDSB members,

I am writing this letter to implore you to take a strong and vocal stance against race-based hate. In particular, I am imploring you to take an unequivocal stand against anti-Jewish hate. Jews in your city of Hamilton feel isolated and afraid. Amongst ourselves we tell each other that this is what 1939 Germany must have felt like. And then we ask ourselves how will we know it is time to leave.

The October 7<sup>th</sup> massacre has had global effects. What can HWDSB be expected to do? I am asking for one simple, yet apparently difficult, thing. Stand up against hate. Make anti-Jewish hate and intimidation clearly unacceptable in your schools. It really should not be so difficult. Hate can be easily recognized. When Hamas calls for a world-wide day of rage against Jews - it is clearly hate and an attempt to promote violence and intimidation against Jews. It is not hidden. So, as we teach our children: "If you see something say something". Please stand up and say that declaring a day of anti-Jewish hate is wrong and will not be tolerated in your schools.

What about rallies and demonstrations? Groups on your campuses should be allowed to get together and support each other. I would suggest rallies focus on mourning the deaths of innocent civilians on both sides would be appropriate – but why can't that be done in a way that doesn't promote hate. Surely both sides can mourn the loss of innocents. Even innocents on "the other side". Rallies that focus on love and support build society. Rallies that focus on hate break down society.

One problem you need to tackle is that oftentimes demonstrators use hate speech. The popular cry of [REDACTED] and "free Palestine". Are hate speech. To Jews it is a battle cry to totally annihilate Israel and its Jewish population [REDACTED]. Arguments that these phrases have a benign origin and meaning are absurd and hurtful. By way of illustration: the swastika is an ancient symbol sacred to Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. The word svastika, from which swastika gets its origin, means good fortune. But in today's day and age the swastika is one of the most easily recognized symbol of hate and, in particular, of anti-Jewish hate. In the same way, one might try and argue (as White supremacists do) that the Confederate flag merely represents pride in the heritage of the US South. But in reality the flag is a symbol of white supremacy, racism, slavery and segregation. Like it or not, the phrases "[REDACTED]" and "free Palestine" were co-opted by Hamas a well-recognized terrorist organization with a proven track record of anti-Jewish hate and extreme violence against Jews. One may regret that Hamas popularized and co-opted these slogans but they have become the battle cry of Hamas Jew haters. To say anything else is to be blind to reality. You might as well say that a swastika painted on a synagogue

door is an ancient sacred symbol with no ill intent. These phrases should not be allowed to be said on your school properties and school authorities should make it clear that this is hate speech. If you need backup for this approach know that the authorities in Vienna have banned protests that use these phrases as they are considered “a clear call to violence” ( <https://www.reuters.com/world/███-prompts-vienna-ban-pro-palestinian-protest-2023-10-11/> ). Berlin has similarly criminalized the slogan along with slogans like “███” ( <https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/international/europe/1699528989-berlin-criminalizes-slogan-from-the-river-to-the-sea-palestine-will-be-free> ). Notable that Germans are taking these steps against anti-semitism as they, more than most nations, understand the risk of silence in the face of hate.

Parents of students that attend the Hamilton Hebrew Academy (HHA) have been shocked by recent events when our girls volleyball team has played against teams of schools in the HWDSB. At one such game, an otherwise fine sporting event was marred by girls on the opposing team shouting hate speech at the end of a game. It is really difficult for us parents to understand this behaviour. If the girls wanted to make a political statement they could go and shout their slogans to city officials, or to other politicians. Why would they think that young teenage Jewish girls needed to hear it? Obviously the motivation was not political discourse. The clear motivation was to voice hate. To make the Jewish girls (few in number and visitors to the public school) feel hated, isolated and unsafe. The clear intent was to intimidate. There was no other reason for the behaviour. This is all the more inexcusable as the HHA team were invited guests to your school. Proper hosts make guests feel at home. Safe. If this is how Jewish students visiting your school were made to feel how must the Jewish students that attend your schools daily feel. How are you protecting them? Maybe you can dismiss these kinds of episodes as the action of young immature adults? But your coaches, teachers, principals and yourselves are not young and immature. How could you let this happen? How can you let instances of hate and intimidation occur? How do you respond? Do you educate the faculty and students under your control in how hurtful expressions of hate are? Do you teach why anti-Jewish intimidation is wrong?

You need to be clear. You need to be strong. Children are always testing the boundaries for their behaviour? If you are silent or content with lame responses to anti-Jewish hate and intimidation the message is clear – hate will be tolerated. Intimidation of Jews is tolerated. As members of the HWDSB you are charged with educating our next generation. You have a big influence on the kind of world the next generation will build. It’s a big responsibility. I am asking you to strongly condemn anti-Jewish hate. Don’t allow it in your schools. Even a hint of hate should be snuffed out. Silence and inaction allows evil to grow. It makes evil acceptable. What might have happened if Germans would have stood up early on and called out the anti-semitism that took hold of Germany in the 1930s? What will happen if you don’t stand up strongly now?

Dr. Avi Brown, Ph.D.

**From:** Eli Chaimovitz

**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 7:52 AM

**Subject:** Please include my voice in the November 20 meeting correspondence.

Hello ,

I grew up in Dundas, and attended [REDACTED]. I am a Jewish man with 4 kids and my oldest attends [REDACTED].

My other 3 children attend the [REDACTED].

Growing up in this great little town I had to deal with anti-semitism in my high school career.

As I got older and the world matured and the school boards became inclusive to all nationalities and races I've felt positive that my kids growing up here wouldn't have to deal with very much anti-semitism.

Well this doesn't seem to be the case, in the last month at the HWDSB. There has been a lot of HATE motivated FREEDOM of SPEECH in the HWDSB and yet again the JEWISH people are at the end of the stick getting beat on.

The HWDSB is not acting fast enough to get in front of this situation.

It is our responsibility for ALL children in HWDSB to feel comfortable and safe going to school. I know of a few students since the conflict started and the anti-semitism here started that are having major anxiety to attend your schools.

I am reaching out to you today to ask for MY VOICE TO BE HEARD about the growing fear we have for our children having to experience anti-semitism in the HWDSB.

My grandparents were HOLOCAUST survivors, I WILL NOT STAND FOR THIS IN 2023 in CANADA.

Eli Chaimovitz

**From:** Goldie Weiser

**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 2:09 PM

**Subject:** letter expressing deep concern for rising anti-Semitism in the HWDSB

To the HWDSB,

I am a grandchild of four Holocaust survivors, who went through the hell of Auschwitz. While I miss my grandparents with all my heart, I am grateful that they are not alive today, to see how low their precious adopted country, Canada, has fallen.

A country that stands for freedom, tolerance and diversity, freely allowing hate speech, and intimidation against Jews in the universities and publicly funded elementary and high schools. I say freely allowing, because letting students off with "warnings" after committing anti-semitic acts does NOT create deterrence for those who seek to solve conflict through violence and intimidation.

Look no further for proof of this than what has happened to our very own prime minister THIS WEEK, who has condemned acts of violence in protest multiple times, albeit with little action backing his words, who now has had his own security guard attacked just a few short days ago, with one police officer having their eyes gauged by anti- israel protesters.

If the prime minister of our country is not safe today from mobs of anti-israel, anti-semitic protesters ( because anti-zionism is anti-semitism which has been proven in Canada over and over again, through the pro-palestine rallies that have included a [REDACTED] chant and pro Hamas flags at each one) and needs a one hundred bodied security guard to eat in a restaurant, how do you think your Jewish students feel today walking into your schools?

I can tell you how you feel, scared. I know this because I teach after school Hebrew classes to students who attend your public schools. They tell me with tears in their eyes, how the halls of their school, were plastered in pro-palistian posters, but since their school has no security cameras they can't do anything about bringing the perpetrators to justice. How they are harassed by people who used to be their friends, who now mock them daily for being Jewish and for supporting Israel, despite being asked by the principal multiple times not to. Who are told, "Hiter was right" by students IN THEIR CLASSES.

When my daughter attends volleyball meets, girls refuse to high five her or wipe their hands on their clothing after doing so, to show their disgust and hatred toward her Jewish school 's team.

I am the grandchild of immigrants. My grandparents were proud to embrace Canadian values, and fly their Canadian flag. What is being done in our elementary schools to teach Canadian values? What is being done to help new immigrant children understand how we deal with conflict in Canada? Have they been taught that Canada is a country that does whatever we can to make all people feel welcome and included. That all races are treated equally, how hatreds and vandetats from other parts of the world have no place in Canadian society. That the rape and murder of innocents is NEVER JUSTIFIED, and must alwas be condemned by EVERYONE not celebrated in the streets of Missasauga?

Who is teaching them what it means to be Canadian??? I am worried for the future of our country, for if our education system has fallen so low that these acts of pure hatred are allowed to go unpunished or unmentioned; due to fears of offending those who do not believe in Canadian values, we are at risk of losing everything our country stands for now.

I work in a Jewish school in Hamilton and we have had a number of students transfer from your public school this past month, because their parents feel that they cannot count on the school board to keep their children safe. Never again is now. There are children in your school that are frightened to come to school. What are you doing about it?

The school board has shown that it is capable of protecting minorities when it wants to. Look at all the advances you have made toward making all LGBTQ2 people feel comfortable expressing themselves in your schools. I am confident that if the same resources and energy were directed toward banishing anti-semitic rhetoric in your schools, anti-semitism would be a memory of the past. The question is whether the will exists. I am truly hopeful that it does.

I would like this letter to be included in the November 20th meeting.

G. Weiser  
BaSc MaEd

**From:** Izzy Ferguson

**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 7:16 AM

**Subject:** A request for HWDSB action on rising antisemitism

Dear HWDSB:

I am writing this letter out of a deep sense of anger, and sadness, because I can see that antisemitism is growing in your schools.

In the last few weeks, members of my family, as well as close friends, have witnessed - and in one incident been the target of - harassment of Jewish students on school grounds.

I cannot escape a sense that a student's Jewish identity is increasingly the cause - an intolerable and inexcusable cause - of intimidation by other students and that your schools are becoming unsafe for Jewish students.

As a school is a place where students must learn to deplore and to denounce all forms of hate, I ask that the HWDSB get to work immediately to create schools that are depoliticized and free of intimidation.

I also ask that this letter be included in the HWDSB November 20 meeting correspondence, and I thank you for doing so.

Respectfully,  
Izzy Ferguson

**Izzy Ferguson**

**From:** Marla Frank-Davis  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 2:33 PM  
**Subject:** Letter for Nov. 20th session

Dear Trustees,

Please include these comments at your November 20th session

There have been an alarming number of antisemitic incidences throughout schools in Hamilton. In the majority of these instances, nothing has been done, or there has been hesitation on the part of principals and vice principals to address these instances in a timely fashion.

The Hamilton school board has been active in promoting and educating for the rights of aboriginal peoples, <https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/██████████/2022/04/28/every-child-matters-button-raising-awareness-and-funds-campaign-of-2022/>

And for the LGBTQ+community



But has responded slowly if at all to antisemitic incidences in schools. There must be zero tolerance for antisemitism in this school board! Do better. !

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'MSF' in a cursive, stylized font.

Marla Frank-Davis  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 6:54 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Investigation

**From:** Aaron Schaffer  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 6:33 PM  
**Subject:** Investigation

Dear Dawn Danko,

Thank you for all that you do for the youth of Hamilton, and for ensuring that their safety always comes first. I'd also like to thank you for taking the concerns of the Jewish Community seriously at this time, so many children here have been impacted by the atrocities going on in the world right now.

I am a firm believer that hate of any kind has no place in our education system and cannot be tolerated here. I urge you to follow through with a thorough and unbiased investigation into Trustee Sabriena Dahab's antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments, as well as her involvement in the protests. The role of a trustee is not to engage in political activities but rather to create a neutral environment that fosters education. Trustees who's words or actions make any child feel targeted, unsafe, or unwelcome at school must be held accountable.

I urge you to include this investigation as an item on Monday's board meeting. With the current alarming rise in antisemitism, Jewish students must feel safe and supported by the community.

Sincerely,  
Aaron Schaffer

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 1:56 PM  
**Subject:** FW: A call for a fair and impartial investigation into Trustee Dahab

**From:** Arnold Strub  
**Date:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 8:02 AM  
**Subject:** A call for a fair and impartial investigation into Trustee Dahab

Dear Chair Danko,

I am writing you today to request an investigation into the anti-semitic and anti-Israel social media comments by HWDSB Ward 2 Trustee Sabriena Dahab.

My name is Arnie Strub. I am a public school taxpayer living in Dundas.

I find the comments made by Trustee Dahab inappropriate, false and misleading. The HWDSB should be leading the charge for truth by their words and their deeds.

The role of a Trustee should not include engaging in political activities outside of their education mandate. I would hope that Trustees would work to create and foster an educational system that is inclusive, tolerant and ensures the safety of all students.

I urge you to include, as an agenda item, at the next board meeting on November 20, a call for a fair and impartial investigation into Trustee Dahab's actions, activities and language.

Sincerely,

***Arnie Strub***

[Redacted signature block]

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 1:54 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Trustee Sabriena Dahab

**From:** Benjy Katz  
**Date:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 10:30 AM  
**Subject:** Trustee Sabriena Dahab

Chair Dawn Danko

I am writing to as a disappointed but proud member of the Hamilton Community. I've spent the better part of my 62 years here. I have raised a family, own a successful business and I have ( and continue to ) support many charitable causes in this city.

But never, until late, have I been as disappointed in the words and actions of some of those elected and appointed to represent Hamiltonians, in our entirety. In particular those words and actions uttered and carried out by one of your Trustees, Sabriena Dahab. I don't think I need to reiterate them to you. Personal, hateful and biased opinions have no place in this community and most certainly not from a person entrusted with the responsibility as one of your Trustees.

I implore you to strongly recommend a TRANSPARENT and INDEPENDENT investigation into her actions at your next Board Meeting on November 20th.

I look forward to seeing and hearing the outcome of this effort.

Respectfully

Benjy Katz

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 7:21 AM  
**Subject:** FW: Investigation into comments made by Sabreina Dahab

**From:** Daniel Kollek  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 9:06 PM  
**Subject:** Re: Investigation into comments made by Sabreina Dahab

Ms Danko, I have rewritten the letter with the correct appellation.  
Please accept my apologies and discard the previous version.  
Best, Daniel Kollek

Dear Ms. Danko,

I am writing to voice my support for a thorough, unbiased and transparent investigation into comments made by Sabreina Dahab on social media and at protests.

Ms Dahab's trying to cast the investigation as an impingement on her right to free speech is an obvious attempt to sidestep the real issue which is the use of inflammatory rhetoric directed at a specific population. She can be endlessly supportive of a Palestinian state [and many Israelis would agree with her]. What she cannot do is selectively malign one population yet ignore the activities of another. This is the very definition of bias and, when that population is by definition, associated with a race, that bias is racism.

Further Ms. Dahab's use of emotionally loaded terms such as "genocide" and "apartheid", none of which are factually true, lead to an environment of fear and hatred targeted at Jews. Hiding these statements behind political slogans doesn't make them right. Promotion of hatred, even when camouflaged in political rhetoric, is still hate speech and, whether Ms. Dahab is willing to recognize it or not, is fuel for antisemitism.

It is a truism that racists don't think they're racist, they just think that they are speaking the truth. Further I would never a-priori assume malice on the part of anyone. It may well be that Ms Dahab believes what she is saying. That said, even if someone believed all Muslims are terrorists - a common Islamophobic trope - I am sure she (and I) would object to their posting it on social media or shouting it at a protest.

Ms Dahab is a school trustee and all her public activities are subject to scrutiny in keeping with that role. A trustee's obligation, first and foremost, is to create an environment free of any bias, [racial, gender, religious, ethnic or other] in which students are safe and feel safe. Ms Dahab's behaviour is the opposite of that role. It is my expectation that an investigation into her behaviour be an item for the November 20 Board Meeting.

Yours sincerely,  
Daniel Kollek

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 7:24 AM  
**Subject:** FW: Truly Unbelievable

**From:** Gord Garshowitz  
**Date:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 6:50 AM  
**Subject:** Truly Unbelievable

Dear Trustee Danko

Those were my thoughts when I saw the picture and article in the Spectator about a Trustee and students involved in a walk-out.

As a retired teacher and administrator (York Region, 1999), I know the role of a Trustee. Walking out with students is not a part of their trusteeship.

I support the ongoing investigation of Ms Dahab for her part in anti-Semitic social media posts and activities. If she really wants to do something positive about the unfortunate situation in the Middle East, she could educate students that Hamas terror will come to the west, if it is not terminated now.

Some current Hamilton politicians seem to have forgotten they were elected in Hamilton, by the people of Hamilton, for the people of Hamilton. Palestine is not part of Hamilton.

That last statement IS NOT Islamophobic.

Respectfully,

Gord Garshowitz , Dundas Ontario

Sent by Gord's iPhone

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 6:56 PM  
**Subject:** FW:

**From:** Helen Metz  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 4:20 PM  
**Subject:** <no subject>

Completed letter

The Chair of the Board of Trustees, Hamilton Board of Education

Dear Ms. Danko,

I am writing to express my disappointment in having a school trustee make biased and anti-semitic comments, and participate in protests that are so clearly prejudiced and discriminatory.

How would Ms. Dahab feel if those comments were anti-Moslem? How would the Hamilton Board react if the comments were anti-Black? or anti-Indigenous? or anti-female?

I urge that the Board Meeting of November 20, 2023 include an investigation regarding the anti-semitic and anti-Israel social media comments that Trustee Sabreina Dahab has made. Equally disturbing is her involvement in protests against Jews and Israel. Given her views, why does she choose to live in Canada?

The Hamilton Board of Education states that it seeks to meet the diverse needs of students in their communities. Does this include teaching prejudice and supporting discrimination against one group of people? I believe that all trustees should devote themselves to fostering a sense of safety in all students. Please ensure that this topic is discussed at the Board meeting on Monday.

Sincerely,

Helen Metz

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 6:55 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Antisemitism Investigation

**From:** Jack Rosenbaum [REDACTED]  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 6:23 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Antisemitism Investigation

Dear Dawn Danko,

Thank you for all that you do for the youth of Hamilton, and for ensuring that their safety always comes first. I'd also like to thank you for taking the concerns of the Jewish Community seriously at this time, so many children here have been impacted by the atrocities going on in the world right now.

I am a firm believer that hate of any kind has no place in our education system and cannot be tolerated here. I urge you to follow through with a thorough and unbiased investigation into Trustee Sabriena Dahab's antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments, as well as her involvement in the protests. The role of a trustee is not to engage in political activities but rather to create a neutral environment that fosters education. Trustees who's words or actions make any child feel targeted, unsafe, or unwelcome at school must be held accountable.

I urge you to include this investigation as an item on Monday's board meeting. With the current alarming rise in antisemitism, Jewish students must feel safe and supported by the community.

Sincerely,

Jack Rosenbaum

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 2:58 PM  
**Subject:** FW: November 20 Board meeting: Investigation into Trustee Sabriena Dahab

**From:** Jay State  
**Date:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 2:56 PM  
**Subject:** November 20 Board meeting: Investigation into Trustee Sabriena Dahab

Dear Chair Danko,

I am writing to support the investigation into Trustee Sabriena Dahab's conduct.

I understand that she is accused of antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments, and involvement in protests.

If so, that would be abhorrent conduct warranting imposition of appropriate measures.

This conduct definitely warrants a thorough investigation and if determined to have taken place, then the imposition of meaningful consequences.

Anyone who purports to be involved in public education, which is of utmost importance to our youth, has a high obligation to avoid conduct of the nature under consideration.

Such conduct promotes hate, and discrimination.

It results in fear by students of persecution and even violent action at the hands of those persuaded by such conduct.

This can affect them for their lifetimes.

It is essential as part of our educational system that students must feel safe and protected in the educational environment.

It is very bad for youth to be subjected to such conduct. They can be drawn by it into hateful thinking and action. It can adversely affect them and the community for their lifetimes.

I would request that in good conscience this should be on the agenda for the Monday November 20th Board meeting.

Sincerely,

Jay State

████████████████████

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 7:20 AM  
**Subject:** FW: Urgent Community Concerns

**From:** Joshua Rauchwerger  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 9:18 PM  
**Subject:** Urgent Community Concerns

Dear Chair Danko,

As you are aware, Antisemitism in our community has once again reared its ugly head as a harsh reality after the horrific Hamas terrorist attack in Israel on October 7, 2023. I am writing to express my deep concerns with Sabrina Dehab and am looking to the Board of Trustees to address these issues during a difficult time. This is a crucial moment for our community to stand together and to fight hate in all forms. We urge you and the Board of Trustees to conduct an impartial investigation into Ward 2 Trustee Sabrina Dehab. It is essential to conduct a thorough and unbiased investigation into Trustee Dehab's antisemitic, anti-Israel social media postings and comments as well as her involvement in protests supporting her extreme view points against Israel. A Ward Trustee needs to remain impartial and unbiased and by demonstrating her extremist personal views, it exacerbates an already difficult, unsafe situation within our educational system. It is imperative to hold individuals accountable for their actions especially if they are intimidating and incite hate.

I'd like to remind you as Chair of the Board of Trustees, your role is not to engage in political activities but rather to create a neutral environment that fosters education and ensures the safety of all students. The alarming rise in antisemitism has caused many Jewish students to feel unsafe in the public schools. It is your duty to assist in helping Jewish students feel safe and supported within the education system and it starts at the top.

Please take this opportunity to put this item on the agenda list for your Monday November 20th board meeting.

Thank you kindly,

Regards,

Joshua Rauchwerger & Michelle Zeller

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 7:28 PM  
**Subject:** FW: HWDSB Ward 2 Trustee Sabriena Dahab

**From:**  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 4:20 PM  
**Subject:** HWDSB Ward 2 Trustee Sabriena Dahab

It is with utmost urgency that I am writing to you about one of your Trustees, Sabriena Dahab.

As a proud and long standing member of the Hamilton Jewish Community I must express my alarm at the antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments and participation in protests, including school walk outs in support of Gaza by HWDSB Ward 2 Trustee **Sabriena Dahab**. I understand that an investigation is set to begin regarding these actions and there are discussions within the pro-Palestinian community to rally behind **Sabriena Dahab**, urging the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) to halt the investigation.

**I stand against antisemitism in any form and advocate for a fair and impartial investigation.**

There must be a thorough and unbiased investigation into Trustee **Sabriena Dahab's** antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments, as well as her involvement in protests. She must be held accountable for actions that are clearly perpetuating discrimination and hate.

It is essential that the role of a trustee is not to engage in political activities but rather to create a neutral environment that fosters education and ensures the safety of all students. There has been an alarming rise in antisemitism in our community as well as in surrounding communities and around the world. Jewish students in all schools both elementary, high school and indeed University must feel safe and supported within the educational system.

I urge you to ensure and insist that the subject of this investigation be included in the agenda for Monday's (November 20) Board Meeting.

My late husband Marvin Caplan was a former City Councillor for Ward 1 for Hamilton for many years. He was an active and outspoken member of the community as well as a proud Jew and he would have been horrified at the behaviour of the Trustee Sabriena Dahab.

**Judi Caplan**

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 7:23 AM  
**Subject:** FW: Sabriena Dahab

**From:** Judy Rochweg  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 8:36 PM  
**Subject:** Sabriena Dahab

Dear Chairman Danko

Thank you in advance for reading this email.

I am hopeful that you will continue the investigation into Trustee Dahab so that an unbiased review of her anti-semitic and anti-Israel comments on social media can take place. Individuals need to be held accountable for actions that foster hate and discrimination.

Trustee Dahab should not be using her role as trustee to promote her own political agenda, but rather should make all students, including Jewish students feel safe.

I am hopeful that you will put this issue on your agenda for your Monday, November 20 Board meeting

Thank you for your consideration  
Judy Rochweg

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 7:25 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Investigation into Ward 2Trustee Sabrena Dahab

**From:** DENNIS SCHWARTZ  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 7:23 PM  
**Subject:** Investigation into Ward 2Trustee Sabrena Dahab

Dear Ms.Danko

I have become aware of the blatant anti-Israel and antisemitic comments on Ms. Dahab's social media and her participation in protests including walkouts in support of Gaza. These protests are where words of pure hatred towards Jewish people are shouted out and acted upon.

Firstly, I believe it is the role of a trustee to not engage in political activities but rather to create a neutral environment that fosters education and ensures the safety of all students.

Trustworthiness and honesty are the two important aspects of a leader's character. Integrity and adherence to strong moral principles are also important features of strong leadership.

As I am sure you are aware,antisemitic acts have increased 100% across Canada to such a degree that Jewish children are afraid to go to school,answer the door bell and even walk on the streets.

Ms. Dahabs comments belie the truth. Gaza is not under occupation. Israel left Gaza in 2005, they even dug up the Jewish cemeteries to bring back the dead to Israel proper. Hamas is designated by Canada as a terrorist organization. It is worth repeating. A terrorist organization.Their savagery mutilated, raped , beheaded children and burned some alive in ovens. Over 30 countries are represented in the hostages that were taken. Jewish,Christian,and Muslim alike.This is a crime against humanity!

For over 23 years I was the past Out Reach Chair for Holocaust Education in Hamilton and surrounding cities. My committee worked very hard to help annihilate hatred. I brought survivors to schools and helped to put out the flames of antisemitism when called upon by the police department and the school boards. I know what hate can do and I was never as afraid as I am now for our children and the many who have been attacked both verbally and physically.

Words used by Ms. Dahab only add to the hate that has sadly permeated our society. Lies have no place in our school system. Hate has no place in our school system.Therefore it is critical to have an unbiased investigation into Ms. Dahab's actions of discrimination and hate. Please do not enable her to continue and please hold her accountable for her abusive words and actions.

Please make sure Ms. Danko that this item is brought forth at the board meeting on Monday November 20, 2023.

I thank you in advance for understanding the necessity and urgency of this email. As our Holocaust survivors say "Never again" is now.

Most Sincerely

Judy Schwartz  
Past Chair of the Hamilton Jewish Community Out Reach Committee

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 6:55 PM  
**Subject:** FW: antisemitic comments and posts by Trustee Sabriena Dahab

**From:** Larry Szpirglas  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 4:49 PM  
**Subject:** antisemitic comments and posts by Trustee Sabriena Dahab

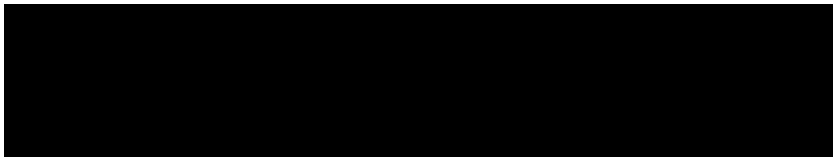
Dear Ms Danko,

I am sending this email to you regarding the actions of Trustee Dahab. Her actions regarding her recent comments and posts and her support and participation in hate based protests regarding the Hamas Terrorist attacks leading to the murder of 1400 innocent Israeli civilians is repugnant. I believe the Board has a responsibility to conduct a thorough and unbiased investigation into Trustee Sabriena Dahab's antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments, as well as her involvement in protests. It is important to note the role of a trustee is not to engage in political activities but rather to create a neutral environment that fosters education and ensures the safety of all students. In this case a failure to perform in that mandated role is most egregious and supports the alarming rise in antisemitism. The Board is accountable for the safety and security of all its students, teachers and administrative staff. They all deserve to feel safe and supported within the educational system. Trustee Dahan's actions are in no way consistent with that responsibility and mandate.

I am urging you to include a discussion of the Trustee's hate activities as an agenda item on the Board's November 20 th meeting. Hate should not have a place in Hamilton nor should those who are in leadership roles have the license to promote it. Please hold this person accountable for this reprehensible behaviour which only perpetuates discrimination and hate.

Sincerely

Larry Szpirglas



**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 1:55 PM  
**Subject:** FW: A call for a fair and impartial investigation into Trustee Dahab

**From:** Lila Strub  
**Date:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 8:03 AM  
**Subject:** A call for a fair and impartial investigation into Trustee Dahab

Dear Chair Danko,

I am writing you today to request an investigation into the anti-semitic and anti-Israel social media comments by HWDSB Ward 2 Trustee Sabriena Dahab.

My name is Lila Strub. I am Jewish and an educator with the [REDACTED]

I am also the lead educator for Holocaust education program with Margaret's Legacy (in affiliation with J Hamilton).

I find the comments made by Trustee Dahab inappropriate, false and misleading. The HWDSB should be leading the charge for truth by their words and their deeds.

The role of a Trustee should not include engaging in political activities outside of their education mandate. I would hope that Trustees would work to create and foster an educational system that is inclusive, tolerant and ensures the safety of all students.

I urge you to include, as an agenda item, at the next board meeting on November 20, a call for a fair and impartial investigation into Trustee Dahab's actions, activities and language.

Regards,  
Lila Strub

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 7:21 AM  
**Subject:** FW: Board Meeting Agenda Nov 20

**From:** Lorne Rochweg  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 9:03 PM  
**Subject:** Board Meeting Agenda Nov 20

Hello Dawn Danko

In all the years my children went enrolled in schools run by the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board, I never felt compelled to write to the Chair of the Board of Trustees. However circumstances have changed and I feel compelled to write.

I find it very distressing that an elected representative is using their role as a trustee to promote their anti- Semitic and anti- Israel comments on social media. These people need to be held accountable for the hate they are promoting.

The Board should be ensuring that their Trustees create a neutral educational environment that ALL students feel safe and supported in.

Given the circumstances I feel a thorough investigation into Trustee Dahab's egregious comments must be undertaken by the HWDSB. Her comments perpetuate discrimination and hate. I implore you to have this investigation as part of your Board Meeting agenda.

Thank you for reading my email.

Lorne Rochweg  
Ancaster

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg

**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 7:35 PM

**Subject:** FW: Support the Investigation into Trustee Sabriena Dahab's antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments

**From:** Mardi Schwenger

**Date:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 7:30 PM

**Subject:** Support the Investigation into Trustee Sabriena Dahab's antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments

Dear Chairwoman Danko,

An investigation is set to begin regarding the antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments and participation in protests, including school walkouts in support of Gaza, by Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) Ward 2 Trustee Sabriena Dahab. There are now discussions within the pro-Palestinian community to rally behind Dahab, urging the HWDSB to halt the investigation.

It is paramount that there is a thorough and unbiased investigation into Trustee Sabriena Dahab's antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments, and her involvement in protests. People must be held accountable for their actions that encourage discrimination and hate. Her role as a Trustee is to create a neutral environment that fosters education and ensures the safety of all students, yet she is engaging in political activities that are inciting hatred and antisemitism. All students must feel safe and supported within the educational system, and anywhere in Canada.

This issue must be an item for the Board Meeting on Monday, November 20. If it is not, I fear for the safety of our children, their families and for the community at large.

Thank you for your service, and for giving this matter the attention it deserves.

Sincerely,

Mardi Schwenger

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 8:04 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Investigation into Trustee Sabriena Dahab's Antisemitic and Anti-Israel Social Media Comments

**From:** Michael  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 4:01 PM  
**Subject:** Investigation into Trustee Sabriena Dahab's Antisemitic and Anti-Israel Social Media Comments

Chair Danko,

It is imperative that a thorough investigation be conducted into Trustee Sabrina Dahab's antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments, as well as her involvement in protests regarding same. I strongly support this investigation. Individuals must be held to account for actions that perpetuate discrimination and hate. After all, the role of a trustee is not to engage in political activities but rather to create a neutral environment that fosters education and ensures the safety of all students. The alarming rise in antisemitism is everywhere, and Jewish students have the right to feel safe and supported within the educational system. This issue must be an item for Monday's (November 20) Board Meeting.

Sincerely Yours,

**Michael S. Waxman, B.Comm., M.B.A.**  
**President**  
**Waxman Capital**

██████████  
████████████████████

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 7:27 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Concerns Regarding Sabriena Dahab and Antisemitism

**From:** Michael [REDACTED]  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 7:23 PM  
**Subject:** Concerns Regarding Sabriena Dahab and Antisemitism

Good evening Miss Danko,

I hope this email finds you well.

Recently, I obtained information from the Hamilton Jewish Federation about HWDSB Ward 2 Trustee Sabriena Dahab's actions regarding the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. From what I heard, she has made biased social media comments and demonstrated in protests that have posed antisemitic and anti-Israel views.

As someone who is Jewish, who has family in Israel, and who currently attends a school owned by the HWDSB school board—[REDACTED]—I am concerned about Trustee Sabriena Dahab's actions. She is not only publicly displaying her biases as opposed to maintaining a neutral stance, but she is also encouraging hatred against my people through her actions. Ever since the conflict in the Middle East began, I have remained alert for a potential rise in antisemitism, especially in my school, and I have always wanted to do whatever I can to fight it. I worry that Miss Dahab's actions may contribute to this rise.

Therefore, I am sending you this email to request that you please take action to prevent the fueling of hatred and promote proper behaviour among trustees. I believe there should be a thorough and unbiased investigation into Trustee Sabriena Dahab's antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments, as well as her involvement in protests. Individuals, especially with roles as honourable and public as Miss Dahab's, should be held accountable for actions that perpetuate discrimination and hate.

Furthermore, as a trustee, I believe her role is not to engage in political activities, but rather to create a neutral environment that fosters education and ensures the safety of all students. Every student deserves to be in a peaceful, inclusive, and safe environment in schools, and especially given the alarming rise in antisemitism, Jewish students like I should be no exception.

Finally, I heard that a Board Meeting is happening on November 20. Please make this an item for the Board Meeting to raise attention to these concerns and issues.

Thank you for giving attention to my email. With my suggestions, I hope that you take appropriate action to stop any source of fuel for hatred, especially antisemitism, in the school environment. If you have any questions or require any clarifications, please feel free to reach out to me.

Kind regards,

Michael [REDACTED]

|

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 7:51 PM  
**Subject:** FW:

**From:** Noah [REDACTED]  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 7:44 PM  
**Subject:** <no subject>

Hi Ms Danko,

My name is Noah [REDACTED] and I am a student [REDACTED]. I am also president of [REDACTED] a local Jewish youth group. Something of concern that has recently come up in meetings here is the marked rise in antisemitism and Islamophobia coinciding with recent global events, namely the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

I am not here to try and solve one of the most complicated conflicts in our modern era. However, I do think that Sabreina Dahab's involvement in student demonstrations and use of her "personal platform" to deliver a one-sided account of recent events while claiming to not represent the wider school system cannot be tolerated.

She is inextricably linked to her position, and I think that her appearance at school walkouts signals that she is aware of this.

It is every Canadian citizen's right to free speech, as indicated in the Charter of Rights and freedoms, but the position of trustee demands neutrality and support of all students, especially in times as trying as these.

I think that this is an extremely important issue, and I ask that this be an item for your next board meeting.

Thank you so much for your consistent protection of all students in the HWDSB board,  
Noah [REDACTED]

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 8:02 PM  
**Subject:** FW: re:HWDSB Ward 2 Trustee Sabriena Dahab

**From:** Paul Roth  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 4:16 PM  
**Subject:** re:HWDSB Ward 2 Trustee Sabriena Dahab

To Chair Danko,

It is my understanding that the role of a trustee is to create a neutral environment which ensures the safety of all students, not to engage in political activities.

I humbly request the Board ensure an impartial review of Sabriena Dahab's actions. Antisemitism has no place in the school system, or in fact in our society at large. Please act accordingly, and ensure Jewish students feel safe and supported within our education system.

Sincerely,

Paul Roth  
Dundas, Ontario

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 1:47 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Sabreina Dahab

**From:** moshe meirovich  
**Date:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 1:18 PM  
**Subject:** Sabreina Dahab

Dear Chair Dawn Danko,

I am writing to express my deep concern about Trustee Sabreina Dahab's most recent antisemitic comments involvement in protests linked to the October 7th massacre of civilians in the State of Israel by the terrorist Hamas militia.

To espouse the battle cry [REDACTED] calls for the obliteration of the sovereign Jewish state. This is outright antisemitism! Jewish students must not be subjected to this blatant Jew hatred.

In her public position as a Trustee she must remain neutral when it comes to global politics. Her actions and comments inevitably impact all families and students in the greater Hamilton area.

I respectfully request that this matter be presented at your upcoming November 20th meeting.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Moshe Meirovich -Spiritual leader Congregation B'nai Israel St. Catharine's, ON

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 7:20 PM  
**Subject:** FW: school board and anti Israel /anti semitism

**From:** Rick Black  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 7:19 PM  
**Subject:** school board and anti Israel /anti semitism

Anti semitism is rampant it seems in our country and community.  
Words can be more dangerous than swords and that is why all malicious comments are important.

we live in a country of tolerance -lets keep it that way.  
"-the role of a trustee is not to engage in political activities but rather to create a neutral environment that fosters education and ensures the safety of all students"  
For this reason, the board needs to assess the role of HWDSB Ward 2 Trustee Sabriena Dahab and her inflammatory rhetoric

Rick Black

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 6:56 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Investigation into Trustee Sabreina Dahab's Conduct

**From:** robin zilberg  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 4:19 PM  
**Subject:** Investigation into Trustee Sabreina Dahab's Conduct

Urgent Matter: Investigation into Trustee Sabreina Dahab's Conduct

Dear Dawn Danko,

I trust this message finds you well. I am reaching out to bring your attention to the ongoing investigation into the conduct of Trustee Sabreina Dahab.

I wholeheartedly endorse the inquiry into her antisemitic and anti-Israel actions on her part. It is my firm belief that a trustee should remain impartial and refrain from displaying any political affiliations. Regrettably, her recent actions have created an environment where Jewish students no longer feel secure at school.

I earnestly request that this matter be included as a crucial agenda item in the upcoming Board Meeting scheduled for Monday, November 20.

sincerely,



Robin Zee Zilberg



**S. A. Seigel, MD, FRCPC**

**Consultant Paediatrics**

Medicine Professional Corporation

Nov 16, 2023

Dear Chair Danko,

I am writing to you today to request an investigation into anti-Semitic comments and anti-Israel social media comments by HWDSB Ward 2 Trustee Sabriena Dahab. I find the comments made by Trustee Dahab inappropriate, false and misleading. The role of Trustee should not include engaging in political activities outside of their educational mandate.

I am a general pediatrician who has spent my career promoting the wellbeing of children.

It is important that ALL children can learn in an atmosphere that is inclusive, tolerant and safe. I am concerned that Trustee Dahab's comments may have a negative effect on mental and physical health of some of the students in the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board and make them feel unsafe and unsupported.

I urge you to include a call for a fair and impartial investigation into Trustee Dahab's actions, activities and language as an agenda item at the next board meeting on November 20.

Sincerely,



S. Seigel, MD, FRCPC

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 7:22 AM  
**Subject:** FW: Hate and Living in fear has no place in our society

**From:** Steve Rosenbaum  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 8:38 PM  
**Subject:** Hate and Living in fear has no place in our society

Hello Chair Danko,

I am writing you today because you can make a difference. As a trustee, our expectation is that all students are made to feel welcome in a public school. Unfortunately, the terror attack on October 7<sup>th</sup> has created a platform for true hatred and antisemitism in our school systems across the GTHA. My son is a Teaching Assistant at McMaster University and he was shocked and saddened by how the leadership of his [REDACTED] used the atrocities in Israel and slaughter of families as a springboard for cheering for freedom of the Palestinian people and that the acts of terror were justified. Did the Canadians protest in defense of the Russian population when Ukraine was attacked? Did Canadians protest in defense of Afghanistan or Iraqi populations caught in the cross fire after 9-1-1? Why do Canadians feel it appropriate to justify terror when it involves Israel?

My parents were both survivors of the Holocaust. My father was Chairman of Yad Vashem Canada for 10 years. Our entire family is shocked at how antisemitism has been accepted by so many Canadians marching and celebrating terror. Trustee Sabriena Dahab's use of social media and their position of trust as a platform for furthering this celebration of terror has NO PLACE in our school system and does not represent what Canada used to be, and can be once again. Your help making the Trustee accountable for breeding and inciting hate is a good first step for the Hamilton Jewish communities' healing process. So many of us don't know who to trust anymore and don't have faith in our legal and public representatives. An investigation must continue and an unbiased review of the words, publications and actions of trusted leaders in our society be held accountable. Stopping an investigation this important to our culture and security should not be an option or consideration. In our cancel culture, our minorities are protected now more that ever...except the Jewish community. We need your help to restore our faith in our charter of rights and freedoms with the understanding that hate and antisemitic rhetoric is NOT accepted by our society and has NO place in our public schools and universities.

Thank you in advance and we trust in your leadership.

Steve Rosenbaum  
Founder, President

**SHIELD RESTORATION SERVICES**

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 4:01 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Sabriena Dahab's Antisemitism

**From:** susan roth  
**Date:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 3:54 PM  
**Subject:** Sabriena Dahab's Antisemitism

Dear Dawn Danko,

I am writing to you as a concerned citizen who is worried about the growing Antisemitism in our community. This is being fuelled by Trustee Sabriena Dahab's antisemitic and Anti-Israel social media posts. The role of the trustee is to create a safe neutral environment for all students. Her actions are doing the opposite; perpetuating hate and discrimination.

I insist that this item be on the Agenda for Monday, November 20th's Board Meeting. We need to ensure that our students feel safe and valued no matter what their ethnic or racial background is.

There is no place in our community for Hate and that includes Jew Hate!

Sincerely,

Susan Roth,  
Dundas, Ontario

Correspondence Received End of Day  
November 17, 2023

**From:**

**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 4:50 PM

**Subject:** ADD THIS AS CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE NOV 20, 2023 BOARD MEETING

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th.

We are concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB. We are also deeply concerned, that with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4600+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term “terrorist”, which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

1. Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;
2. Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;
3. Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan

We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after. Please add the correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting.

In collective care for students,

Erin Kennelly

**From:** Mara Fabrizio  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 12:07 PM  
**Subject:** Keeping Muslim students safe

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We are unsure if you have paid attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank, but we assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" after the unfortunate events of October 7th.

We are concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB. We are also deeply concerned, that with the exception of one trustee, the HWDSB has been silent as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4600+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term “terrorist”, which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

- 1.
- 2.
3. Through a public statement,
4. declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
8. Issue directives with
9. your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
13. Include ongoing education
14. and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action Plan
- 15.

We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after. Please add the correspondence to the Nov. 20th school board trustees meeting.

In collective care for students,

M.E.Fabrizio, MSc (Education)

**From:** Ruth Cameron  
**Sent:** Friday, November 17, 2023 12:34 PM  
**Subject:** Public Statement

HWDSB Director, Senior Leadership and Trustees,

This letter is in response to the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim hate that is increasingly surfacing in schools. We are troubled by HWDSB's total indifference to this harm.

The Ministry of National Education in Gaza declared on October 31, 2023, "Due to the martyrdom of many of our students, the 2023/2024 academic year has come to an end." Imagine a Canadian school board having to post such a devastating message. We have only seen you pay attention to the traumatic events in Gaza and West Bank through the lens of withdrawing support for student advocacy for a ceasefire, and end to the massacre, but we also assure you that Palestinian students and families in your school board are living through the immense grief of collective loss due to the genocide of their people.

We have seen a lot of support from your senior team and Trustees who have openly sided with Israel's "right to defend" settler colonialism after the unfortunate events of October 7th.

We are concerned for the safety and care Jewish students and families in HWDSB. We are also deeply concerned about the silence from HWDSB as it pertains to the ongoing genocide, and specifically the massacre of 4000+ innocent Palestinian children. We are disappointed that the impact and effects of this trauma is not named, acknowledged and acted upon by HWDSB. The silence further isolates Palestinian and Muslim students at a time when HWDSB should be prioritizing their mental wellbeing. We know there is overt Islamophobia and targeted racism fueled by anti-Palestinian propaganda across the HWDSB. In addition to taking proactive steps to battle antisemitism, we would like to know what steps you have taken to also shut down anti-Palestinian hate and Islamophobia in your schools.

We have seen justified outrage and grief for the loss of Israeli lives across Ontario school boards. In contrast there has been silence and disregard about the collective annihilation of the Palestinian people, culture and history. It is important for your staff, senior leadership and trustees to acknowledge the events of October 7th, 2023 in the context of Israel's ongoing apartheid. For safety reasons, it is imperative that all understand supporting Palestinian students, families and their allies is not anti-semitic or the language of hate.

We cannot ignore the climate of skyrocketing Islamophobia and the fact that people are already viciously targeting students who protested at Saltfleet. We have seen flagrant use of the term "terrorist", which we know has long been deployed to dehumanize, incite violence and hatred towards Black, Indigenous, racialized communities, Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim.

In response to these concerns, we request you operationalize the following:

Through a public statement, declare compassion and a promise of protection for your Palestinian students;

Issue directives with your students and staff about zero tolerance for anti-Palestinian racism in words, actions and teaching practices;

Include ongoing education and training for staff and students to dismantle and challenge anti-Palestinian propaganda from an anti-racist/anti-oppression perspective as per the HWDSB Equity Action

Plan

We expect to see the public statement from HWDSB immediately, and the directives soon after.

In collective care for students,

Ruth Cameron

**From:** O

**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 11:10 PM

**Subject:** Events at [REDACTED]: A Letter to the HWDSB Board of Trustees

To Ms. Danko,

My husband and I submitted the heartfelt letter provided below to [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] School on October 23rd, and we subsequently sent a follow-up email on November 2nd. Unfortunately, as of today, we have not received any acknowledgment or response from [REDACTED] or any representative from the school. This lack of communication is shocking, upsetting, and disheartening, particularly considering the school's commitment to fostering an inclusive environment and its explicit human rights policy addressing the prompt resolution of discrimination and harassment.

In light of recent events, including a terrifying rise in antisemitic acts within the Jewish community and a distressing incident involving our friend's [REDACTED] child at [REDACTED] Recreation Centre just recently, it is crucial that we promptly address these issues. At the recreation centre, our friend's visibly Jewish son, wearing his "kippah," was harassed by another boy who made explicit threats, declaring that his family would find our friend's family and kill them. We are deeply troubled by the severity and implications of such behaviours left unaddressed.

Given the gravity of the situation, we kindly request that you include the letter below in the upcoming meeting of the HWDSB Board of Trustees scheduled for November 20th.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Thank you for your attention to this matter.

To [REDACTED],

*We are writing to you with deep concerns about [REDACTED] recent experiences at [REDACTED] over the past two weeks.*

*Our Jewish community is currently facing an escalated security threat, marked by an increased police presence in our neighbourhood. Simultaneously, our family overseas lives in constant existential danger. We have heard personal accounts from friends who narrowly escaped being killed, while other loved ones are serving on the front lines of a terrible conflict. [REDACTED] own grandfather is confined to a bomb shelter for most of the day, unable to risk leaving the house for even a few minutes. These events weigh heavily on [REDACTED].*

*On October 13th, which coincided with the international "Day of Rage" targeting the Jewish community, [REDACTED] shared with us an incident involving a fellow student, [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] made comments regarding the ongoing conflict, justifying the brutal actions of Hamas against*

*innocent Israeli civilians and placing the blame on Israel for the collective suffering of Palestinians. Instead of promoting a constructive dialogue, ██████ insisted that ██████ change her opinion to consider the other side. ██████, showing maturity beyond her years, expressed her understanding, acknowledged the suffering of many Palestinians, and firmly maintained that nothing justifies Hamas' acts of terrorism. We initially tried to overlook this incident, assuming that ██████ likely did not have a comprehensive understanding of the situation.*

*However, it has come to our attention that ██████ has repeatedly approached ██████, making rude and unwarranted remarks about ██████ support of Israel, despite ██████ requests to stop.*

*Today, after an incident involving the display of Palestinian flags around the school, ██████ once again remarked that it is "good" for ██████ to see these flags. This situation has now escalated to the point where ██████ feels increasingly targeted, helpless, and unsupported in her current environment.*

*Today, ██████ approached you for support, ██████. In the current climate, the exclusive display of Palestinian flags sent a concerning message, leaving her feeling scared and vulnerable. Instead of displaying empathy or validating her concerns, you mentioned that you didn't know who was responsible and asked ██████ to inform you if she finds out anything else. This response did not adequately address this challenging situation. ██████ came home in tears today.*

*At this point, we can no longer tolerate this behaviour from ██████, which has clearly crossed the line into bullying and taunting on an extremely sensitive topic. We urgently request swift action on this matter.*

*With thanks,  
O*

████████████████████

November 15, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

I am the mother of two sons that attend public [REDACTED] School in Hamilton Ontario. That school is a part of the Hamilton Wentworth School Division. I am writing this letter to speak to two incidents that involved my younger son who is in [REDACTED]

On Wednesday, November 8, 2023, during a [REDACTED] class, the teacher was introducing the lesson about 20<sup>th</sup> century History. She displayed images that were used many years ago post WW2 and the Holocaust. There was very little discussion or comments made from the teacher about these images. There was no explanation to the students why she was showing them. To this day my son still cannot tell me what the lesson was supposed to be about. As these images are being displayed a girl in my son's class began to cheer and make comments like; "I love Hitler; he's, my man!" Many students heard these comments, and my son told the teacher. Her response was, "I did not hear anything"; she continued with the class. After the class was over, my son and another student, both are Jewish, went to speak with the teacher to express their disgust and shock after hearing these comments. The teacher did not seem at all phased by what the two boys were telling her and in fact made light of the situation saying that in the past she referred to one of her students as Hitler. She did end up sending the girl to the office. Once at the office, the Vice Principal called down my son and the other student; to hear "their side of the story." I spoke with that vice principal that day to express my utter disgust with what had taken place. His response was that an investigation needed to take place before anything disciplinary actions could be taken.

The next day, during another class that my son has with the same girl another incident took place. She was talking with a group and as my son walked by, she said; [REDACTED], oh wait I can't say that because there is a Jew right here" referring to my son. Again, my son goes down to the office with some other students willing to tell the same Vice Principal what they heard. This time, instead of making another phone call; I drove to the school to directly speak with the administration. Speaking with the Vice Principal, the Interim Principal, I conveyed very strongly that what is happening in their school is completely unacceptable. I continued to say that the girl needs to have severe consequences for her words/actions and the History teacher also needed to be spoken to about her role in all that transpired. Both administrators agreed that action needed to be taken. While they could not confirm anything, the girl was not back to school the following Monday [REDACTED]

During my meeting with the administrators, I said that I do not want my son to attend [REDACTED] class with this teacher until she apologizes to my son for her complete nonchalance attitude to this whole event. It has been three school days and not one attempt has been made to rectify this situation. Other teachers have approached both of my sons to let them know how upset they were to hear what happened and how ashamed they are of their colleague. I do not want disciplinary actions taken with regards to the teacher; I would like her to be educated in the Holocaust and the history of the Jewish people so that this will never happen to another student in one of her classes.

A

Dear Board of Trustees,

I am writing to voice my concern regarding antisemitism in HWDSB schools.

At my child's school, there has so far been two rallies supporting Palestinians. The way these rallies are advertised and the content of them are highly concerning. These rallies, while they have been "peaceful" call for the wiping out of a country and a people. They create an environment where kids don't feel safe in their own school.

I am not writing to argue the politics of the situation, but no matter what side you are on, using chants like [REDACTED] is calling for the elimination of a country and all the people in it. Calling Israel defending itself after a horrific attack "genocide" is false. Any research on what genocide is shows that what Israel is doing is not genocide.

And to call it genocide incites hatred against Israel by perpetuating the idea that the country is committing genocide.

Again, I could delve deeper into the facts but it would just seem like I am arguing what is true and what is not. This isn't an argument of one side over the other. It is an urging to educate students of all faiths and cultures about antisemitism and the history of the Middle East and what genocide is.

The danger in allowing rallies like this is, without education is that students who do not know the facts and history will just believe what they hear and it will become fuel for hate.

With the sharp increase in antisemitism across Canada and the world, it is incumbent on the schools to educate students on antisemitism and to provide an environment where all students can feel safe.

I also urge schools to be on the alert for antisemitic incidents, as I have heard of incidents at schools elsewhere in Ontario. In some of these cases, the school did not respond accordingly to hate-motivated events. Any type of hate speech or bullying must be taken seriously and acted up on accordingly. Anything less is just not acceptable.

The world is a scary place right now. School should be a safe haven.

Thank you for your help in this matter.

AC [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Hello,

My name is Alla. Both my children attend a public elementary school. Since the beginning of this war we have growingly anxious about the wellbeing of our families and friends back in Israel, but also growingly concerned for our childrens' wellbeing and safety in our neighborhood and community, here in Hamilton.

The school we go to is small so everybody knows everybody else, and while I teach my children every day to be tolerant, respectful and mindful of all people around them, I cannot know for sure what other children hear in their homes.

In order to keep them safe, but still maintain a level of routine in face of these tragic events, I have been driving both of them to and from school everyday so I can prevent them encountering any outbursts of hate and antisemitism simply because we are Jewish born in Israel.

Unfortunately, just two weeks ago, we witnessed a car bearing a huge Palestinian flag over it , illegally parked in front of the school, just when school was over and everybody was coming out. My children and I experienced sadness and anxiety witnessing that. For my son, I brought back painful and very vivid memories of the constant abuse and bullying he'd suffered throughout the previous year by a boy that targeted him specifically because of his religious affiliation and nationality.

Our out of school activities have suffered severely as well - We no longer walk to and from school, we try not to go out and I most certainly don't allow my children to just be outside unsupervised. I chaperone every school outing to be sure my children are safe. I'm back to looking over my shoulder, assessing every anomalous movement and avoiding social gathering and large crowds.

We immigrated to Canada to give our children a calm and balanced childhood, surrounded by people from all over the world, who respect each other, and now we find ourselves hiding again, suspicious again, back to old habits of suspicion and mistrust. My children are being robbed of yet another year of their childhood, only this time it's not Force Major, but the consequence of pointless hate and disregard for human life.

In all of this, I'd like to commend our wonderful principal, and our school staff. These people work fiercely every day to maintain a safe and attentive environment for all of our children, regardless where they come from, and keep all of our children safe.

Best regards,  
Alla.

-----Original Message-----

From: Alyse Nishimura

Sent: Friday, November 17, 2023 4:15 PM

Subject: antisemitism

Hello,

Thank you for taking the time to read my email.

I would like this letter to be included in the November 20th meeting communication.

This is a challenging email to write because antisemitism is often nuanced and misunderstood as many Jews are not visible minorities. This is something that I have personally been navigating my entire life, as I have often been the only Jewish person in many different contexts.

Now as a parent, we live in a multicultural community and we are working at instilling curiosity, kindness and acceptance for all humans. We are teaching our children to be proud to be Jewish and to show up authentically. However, when my child was given a blue ribbon to wear in support of Israel he wore it until it was time for school. As a saw the blue ribbon on the floor my heart broke a little knowing that they didn't feel comfortable wearing that at school.

This was preceded by an event at school that my son was adamant he didn't want us to address at school, when a peer had called him out for being Jewish and then commented "free palestine" to him when he confirmed he was. This became a bigger issue when other older students were called over when they learned he was "from Israel". As a Mother this broke my heart that my son was being forced to navigate a global conflict on the school yard, on his own. It goes directly against what we have been working so hard to instill in him of embracing people's differences and being curious. As a human, this broke my heart because children should be playing at recess not having political conversations. As a Jew this broke my heart because this is a common feeling many Jews. Always having to be the one explaining, standing up to the majority and often having to do this on their own. This was challenging as parents to know how to support him with this. We want to empower him and we don't want these situations to be left ignored as it only perpetuates this issue.

We would hope that the same values of kindness, acceptance, and curiosity would be values that the public schools we send our children to are teaching.

Alyse Nishimura

From: D  
Sent: Thursday, November 16, 2023 11:55 PM  
Subject: Jewish students at HWDSB

Dear HMiller [REDACTED]

I am responding to HWDSB's invitation to parents of Jewish students to comment on whether they experience antisemitism at school, during the current Israel-Hamas war.

[REDACTED]

Many thanks,  
D

[REDACTED]

\*\*\*\*\*

My Jewish child would like it if fellow students did not \*assume\*, without having had any mutual conversation on the topic, that because my child is Jewish, s/he is supportive of Israel's actions in Gaza.

Education about antisemitism should make clear that being Jewish does not dictate one's attitudes to the war; just as being Palestinian or Arab doesn't dictate one's position on the Hamas massacre.

Furthermore, in the context of the October 7 massacre and of the current war in Gaza, education about antisemitism should go hand-in-hand with education about anti-Palestinian or anti-Arab racism.

For example, I heard about a Jewish student who demanded that another student take off their kaffiyeh, with the justification that the wearing of a kaffiyeh is hurtful to Jews. Anti-racism education should make clear that the wearing of a kaffiyeh is a legitimate, peaceful expression of solidarity with Palestinians.

**From:** Valery Korjov  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 6:51 PM  
**Subject:** Hate speech

Dear HWDSB trustees,

I am a resident of Hamilton, ON, and my daughter is a student at [REDACTED] school. I wanted to share our recent experience in school, as it involved hate speech towards my daughter, because of her and immigrated to Hamilton, ON a year ago from Israel. It came to my origin. We are newcomers attention that my daughter has been harrassed for quite some time during recess, by other students. persuading every day to discuss political matters during recess, and have been These students gather my daughter to reply to them on which side of the Israel/Palestine conflict she is. Today my daughter came home from school very stressed, as the same students started to address to her that Israel are that [REDACTED] school will not be a safe terrorists and baby murders. I never expected environment for my daughter. I ask the Board to bring back a safe school environment that is depoliticized and free of intimidation. These remarks are hate speech, and my daughter is now afraid to she is very emotional and stressed. I will bring this to the principal's attention as well, but I ,go to school will appreciate you taking this with seriousness and hearing voices of children who come to school to will be targeted and provoked to be involved learn and be engaged, and not be afraid and hide so they verbal violence in conversations that bear

Thank you for your time,

Nata Korjov

**From:** Soraya Quintela Chusyd  
**Sent:** Friday, November 17, 2023 9:12 AM  
**Subject:** Antisemitism

Dear Ms. Miller,

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing as a parent and as a teacher, as I was made aware that Anti Semitism will be discussed at HWDSB. I'd like to express my concern in light of recent events and the rise in antisemitism globally. As a Jewish mom, I am very concerned for my daughters' future. It is clear that there is very little understanding about Jewish history globally and locally. The recent events of October 7<sup>th</sup> impacted us deeply. We are grieving the loss of people who were murdered brutally in their homes and kids who were murdered at a music festival. We are afraid as we watch the rise in antisemitism in the US, Russia, France, and very close to us in Montreal. Our Jewish community in Hamilton have come together, as we can only find support in one another. I have heard from other Jewish moms in our group that kids have been singled out recently at school for being Jewish. My daughters are [REDACTED]. I am glad that they have not been directly affected by the recent events but I am concerned about what can happen if we don't take action now. No child should be singled out at school because of their religion.

As an Occasional teacher [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] I just signed up for the workshop offered by OTF "Holocaust Education [REDACTED] Supporting the New Social Studies Curriculum". I'd love to know how antisemitism is integrated in the curriculum as I believe education is the only way to reduce this wave of hate the Jewish community is feeling. I hope my concerns are considered and Jewish students and staff feel supported by HWDSB.

Kind regards,

Soraya Quintela Chusyd

**From:** yaakov morel

**Sent:** Friday, November 17, 2023 12:51 PM

**Subject:** Letter concerning Hate speech and vandalism at Hamilton public school to be considered at November 20th meeting

Dear HWDSB members,

My name is Rabbi Yaakov Morel, and I am speaking as the principal of the Hamilton Hebrew Academy, the Jewish school [REDACTED]

I wanted to bring to your attention, and hope will be shared at your coming meeting, a number of incidents that have occurred at a number of your elementary schools.

Our elementary school senior volleyball team has been fortunate to have been grandfathered in many years ago to be part of the HWDSB Athletics leagues. We are grateful that you have given our students the opportunity to play sports such as volleyball and basketball.

Since our first game we have had numerous incidences occur which include the [REDACTED] after winning their game taking out a Syrian flag and taking team pictures with the flag. This occurred immediately following the October 7th massacre in Israel. Our parents, staff and students who were personally affected from the horror in Israel watched in disbelief as this was happening. After letting the [REDACTED] coach know she didn't see the issue of taking a picture with the flag. As well, a number of the players and spectators from [REDACTED] screamed out "Free Palestine."

Following this incident we contacted the Athletics Administration who cancelled the upcoming [REDACTED] game for the boys. Their hearts were in a good place but they could not provide solutions which included any information following the incident in how they dealt with the issue. We asked that spectators not attend future games but since they had a policy of inclusion they had to let everyone in.

Our parent body even though scared for the safety of their children felt it was important their children continue playing to teach them not to run away from hate but fight it with kindness. Why should our children lose out on an opportunity when they have not done anything wrong?

Every game following our parents attended. We still continued to have incidences at each school from "free Palestine" yelled at our players and their parents, then students running away after screaming it. Our parents cars were vandalized such as an Israeli flag ripped off our parents van.

We contacted the Hate Crime unit who opened up an investigation.

We urge you to please work with us and ensuring not only that all our students stay safe but all the Jewish students in the board feel safe and supported especially during this difficult time. Sports should not have any political or personal views shared on the court. Children should be able to come and play safe from any physical and verbal abuse. The court should be an environment where kids can have fun, build their skills and learn how to work together and support one another.

We urge you to involve the Jewish community in conversation and education and hope that this will be taught in all schools under your board.

Thank you so much for listening.

Yaakov Morel

--

Rabbi Yaakov Morel  
Principal  
Hamilton Hebrew Academy

[Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]

**From:** yaakov morel

**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 8:43 PM

**Subject:** Letter concerning anti Jewish and threatening incident in Hamilton to be considered at November 20th meeting

Dear HWDSB members,

Our [REDACTED] son [REDACTED] is enrolled in basketball at [REDACTED] Rec on Thursday night through the city of Hamilton. On Thursday October 26th, I took him to his class as he did the previous week. [REDACTED] has been wearing a baseball cap to class and did not have anything on him that identified him as Jewish, however, I, [REDACTED] father was wearing a kippa (skullcap) on my head. A little boy in his class came up to him and said, "You know Jews, you are a Jew. They are going to come to Canada and find you and kill you". This child is dropped off by a mom who is wearing a hijab and burka. [REDACTED] found this weird and confusing and only in the car on the way home did he tell me what had occurred. We immediately contacted the [REDACTED] facility to report the incident. They followed up with the coach and contacted the family to inform them of what had happened, however, this was the only action they felt to be necessary. We made a police report, and the police were wonderful however, from our understanding, this is classified as a hate bias and nothing really can be done as the child is under 12. They also contacted the family and issued a warning. Last week was the first class following the incident. Both myself and my wife attended with [REDACTED]. Someone who looked like a manager attended the class( she previously had not been present); no one said anything to us, not this manager or the coach, eye contact (by the woman who I assume to be a manager)was avoided and it was as if this traumatic event never happened. The child's parents were both there. They both ignored us and shockingly did not offer any form of apology. This really is unacceptable, and I am shocked that there are no disciplinary policies in place for hate. Thank god [REDACTED] is sweet and relatively innocent enough to be able to brush this off however as parents, we are shaken. This is the reality we are now living through on a daily basis as we leave our homes and have to think twice whether to hide any hint of our Judaism. Can you explain to us what the HWDSB can do to ensure incidents of hate have no place in any city facility or school?

I appreciate you listening and value your time.

I look forward to a better tomorrow filled with respect, kindness and support.

Yaakov Morel

--

Rabbi Yaakov Morel  
Principal  
Hamilton Hebrew Academy

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Dawn Danko, Chair of the Board of Trustees**  
Hamilton Wentworth District School Board (“HWDSB”)

██████████  
██████████

**Re: Trustee Sabreina Dahab and climate of anti-semitism at Hamilton public schools**

Dear Chair Danko,

I am writing to you as it has come to my attention that the Board of Trustees is seeking input from local parents about the presence of anti-semitism in local Hamilton public schools. It goes without saying that I am writing this letter in my personal capacity and to convey as best I can the suffering that my child is enduring at your schools.

It is understood that the Board will be considering local parents’ input at a public meeting on November 20, 2023. Please place this letter before the Board. ██████████  
██████████

This letter shares my personal experience and requests that the Board take action to immediately suspend Trustee Sabreina Dahab to stop the climate of anti-semitism locally from further deteriorating.

*Background – anti-semitism at the HWDSB before October 7, 2023*

The fact is that the HWDSB has allowed a climate of anti-semitism and anti-Israeliness hatred to develop for some time now even before the massacre that took place in Israel on October 7, 2023. I first became aware of the problem locally in June 2023, at the conclusion of our child’s ██████ grade at ██████████ School in ██████████ Hamilton. My child advised me that all year long, boys in his class and at nutrition break told him he has to say “allah” and that if he does not, he is basically lying. This revelation came about after the child was observed muttering this phrase under their breath – and when we asked about it – it all came out. My child stated that his classmates constantly accused him of stealing things when he fails to correctly proclaim “allah”. The principal and teachers were completely unaware that such religious coercion was taking place at the lower grades of ██████████ School.

In September 2023, my child entered ██████ grade, also at ██████████ School but they ceased invoking the phrase “allah” when I explained that this is not something that’s required of anyone in school. Very soon, I was advised that children were constantly accusing my child of stealing various objects and lying, even when it was obvious that no objects were removed from anywhere. The common denominator between the classmates in grade █ and grade █ is that the majority of the students are not Jewish while my child is visibly of Jewish descent given their frequent use of Hebrew lettering and art when given a chance to express it. There is an obvious strain of anti-semitism running through this type of bullying in light of known anti-Jewish canard of the dishonest Jew that appears repeatedly throughout history.

The teachers and principal are completely unable to recognize the obvious signs of anti-semitic bullying even after they were repeatedly warned by both the child and me. The bullying has affected the child’s

self esteem, causing them to hate their own appearance because it is different than the appearance of the bullying children. The child frequently comes back home crying. I do not feel this is a safe environment for my child to be in.

*Anti-semitism at the HWDSB and Hamilton in general after October 7, 2023*

The atmosphere of fear and anti-semitic hate in Hamilton and the HWDSB has considerably deteriorated since the events of October 7, 2023. By way of background, I have family in Israel, who was directly attacked on Oct. 7 and survived only by miraculous chance despite terrorists entering their village. Given the enormity of the 1200 lost souls in Israel on a single day, I was shocked to see that children in my child's class have started wearing the black and white checkered keffiyah headscarves. This is a controversial and nationalistic symbol which is not appropriate in an inclusive classroom, especially after the events of October 7 where similarly dressed terrorists committed atrocities. The riding of ██████████ ██████████ which includes ██████████ School has itself been disgraced by the fact that its provincial MPP representative was exposed as a Hamas sympathizer, earning herself censure of the Ontario Legislature and expulsion from the provincial NDP party.

Belatedly, it appears that the HWDSB is now recognizing that its Board of Trustees may have been comprised by the actions of Trustee Dahab. An examination of the public evidence demonstrates that Trustee Dahab has contributed to the deterioration of inclusivity in Hamilton and heightened anti-semitism at the HWDSB particularly in the immediate aftermath of the murder of 1200 lives in Israel and the kidnapping of over 200 men, women, children, babies and the elderly.

Within hours of the terror attack on October 7, Trustee Dahab reposted on "X" (formerly known as twitter) an invitation to a protest in Toronto celebrating the Hamas terror attack.<sup>1</sup> The repost comprised of a poster promoting the protest which used a photograph of Hamas activists riding an Israeli jeep which in all likelihood involved murdering its occupants and/or any individuals who may have been in the vicinity when the vehicle was commandeered. The phrase "All out for Palestine" can be interpreted as counselling the commission of a terrorism offence in the context of the events of October 7, 2023 which involved a widespread assault involving thousands of terrorists and sympathizers from Gaza breaking out of the border fence to kill people. The image of that poster remained on Trustee Dahab's X stream which was visible to the public until October 24, 2023, a period of almost two and a half weeks.

That particular Toronto protest was unsanctioned and condemned by ██████████ ██████████ and other representatives as glorification of terrorism.<sup>2</sup>

There are reasonable grounds to believe that Trustee Dahab has discredited or compromised the integrity of the Board of Trustees by promoting an unsanctioned protest in Toronto that glorified a deadly Hamas terrorist attack. The reposting by Trustee Dahab of a poster glorifying violent attacks upon Israelis compounded the discredit to the Board as it is arguably an instance of terrorist propaganda as defined by section 83.222(8) of the *Criminal Code of Canada*.

At 10:24 PM on October 7, 2023, as the scale of the atrocities committed by Hamas was becoming ever clearer, Trustee Dahab posted the following individual view post on X:

<sup>1</sup> Exhibit "A" and "B"

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/israel-hamas-palestinian-rallies-1.6990890>

75 years of violent occupation and apartheid and the expectation is that Palestinians will be passive observers in their genocide?

A liberated Palestine in our lifetime is possible, in Shaa Allah [Palestinian flag emoji].<sup>3</sup>

This posting remains on Trustee Dahab's X stream and is visible to the public to date.

There are reasonable grounds to believe that Trustee Dahab failed to respect the differing views of trustees, staff, students and the public who legitimately would object to murderous terrorist attacks upon innocent civilians, including children and babies, as part of a "liberation" of Palestine and furthermore that Trustee Dahab has called upon god to deliver this outcome with such violence in the future (the phrase in Shaa Allah is translated to mean "god willing").

At no point in this particular X posting does Trustee Dahab acknowledge that Hamas' actions in all likelihood constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity contrary to Canadian law. The failure to acknowledge the barbarity of Hamas' actions while at the same time excusing it disrespects thousands of students, staff, members of the public and Trustees who object to murderous terrorism.

Trustee Dahab's expression of personal views have brought discredit to the Board and compromised its integrity because they excuse terrorist violence, glorify the murder of innocent civilians, including children, and invokes god to liberate Palestine using these abhorrent methods.

As a Trustee, Ms. Dahab is held to a higher standard compared to a private citizen because her actions and statements convey that the Board stands behind her in full approval and support. It is then unsurprising that anti-semitism flourishes in the HWDSB and Hamilton under cover of various political arguments that seek to glorify murder, rape, terrorism and kidnapping.

Trustee Dahab's actions have glorified international terrorism and violence. Her statements have sought to excuse the murder of 1200 innocent civilians, including babies and the kidnapping of over 200 individuals, including some Canadians for ransom. She has promoted unsanctioned protests glorifying terrorism using terrorist propaganda that have been condemned across the political spectrum. The accumulation of her actions has discredited the Board and compromised its integrity by associating it with support of Hamas terrorism.

It is also known that multiple HWDSB teachers have posted on social media in support of Hamas and terrorism and used vulgar language to attack politicians that have stood against anti-semitism. For example, HWDSB [REDACTED] Teacher [REDACTED] [REDACTED] on [REDACTED] when he condemned [REDACTED] as an anti-semite and Hamas supporter. On X, [REDACTED] then wrote:

That's rich coming from a racist, misogynist, homophobe, transphobe, oppression-laden, meat bag like @fordnation. It's like someone took Trump and dialed up the stupid. How many MPPs are going down with the Greenbelt Grifter?<sup>4</sup>

---

■ [REDACTED]  
■ [REDACTED]



**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Friday, November 17, 2023 5:59 AM  
**Subject:** FW: Letter to HWDSB board of trustees

**From:** Alan Richter  
**Date:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 11:05 PM  
**Subject:** Letter to HWDSB board of trustees

To Ms. Danko,

I am writing to you deeply concerned about the current situation in our city, schools, and community. We watched the events on October 7th unfold, aghast at the horrors inflicted by Hamas on innocent civilians, including holocaust survivors, babies, and the vulnerable. We have always felt safe in Canada, believing our elected officials would stand by us through these times.

It was heartbreaking to see our own MPP, Sarah Jama, immediately tweet false and inflammatory comments about Israel while the blood was fresh on the ground, with no acknowledgement of Hamas's barbaric acts and how they would have affected her own constituents. Her tweet, days before Hamas's 'international day of rage' was seen as a justification of the violence, and created a sense of fear in the Jewish community, many of whom live in her riding.

We are once again shocked and frightened at the behaviour of our Ward 2 School trustee, Sabriena Dahab. Ms. Dahab has not only openly made inflammatory comments, causing us fear for our children's safety in our public schools, but has actively participated in walkouts with students, clearly voicing her political views while condemning others. This trustee has not spoken out against other world conflicts, but targets Israel alone, clearly indicating an anti-semitic lens. The job of a trustee is to play the role of a neutral party, fostering safe schools and strong education, rather than abusing their platform to promote their own one sided political agendas. Her anti-semitic words and behaviours have struck fear into the hearts of the very families she is supposed to represent, at a time when hate crimes against Jewish communities worldwide have risen at an alarming rate.

I understand that the board is meeting on November 20th. Ms. Dahab's actions have created an environment where we no longer feel safe sending our children. I insist this be brought to the board's attention. A thorough investigation into this behaviour and swift action is necessary in order to ensure that our communities feel confident that HWDSB schools are safe spaces for our children.

We thank you very much for your time and consideration, and look forward to the day where our children feel safe in school once again.

With thanks,

Alan & Orna Richter

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 6:54 PM  
**Subject:** FW: NOV 20 Board Meeting vote :: Accountability for actions that perpetuate hate and discrimination

**From:** Cara Bensimon  
**Date:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 5:17 PM  
**Subject:** NOV 20 Board Meeting vote :: Accountability for actions that perpetuate hate and discrimination

Dear Dawn,

It is my understanding that an investigation is underway into the antisemitic and anti-Israel social media activities in support of Gaza, by HWDSB Ward 2 Trustee Sabriena Dahab.

With two school aged children in the HWDSB I feel personally responsible to address this issue and urge you to ensure the item is on the agenda for a vote regarding a fair and impartial investigation.

Holding individuals accountable for actions that perpetuate hate and discrimination is paramount. As a leader in our community, we look to you for doing what is right and fair. Your role as Chair and the role of your Trustees is not to engage in political activities, but simply to create a safe environment for learning. Trustee Dahab has undermined this simple framework in the worst way possible. At a time when Jewish children are becoming increasingly afraid to go to class, we need your support.

Sincerely,

Cara Bensimon

Cara Bensimon  
Executive Director  
Hamilton Jewish Family Services

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 6:43 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Trustee Dahab Investigation

**From:** Cindy Mark  
**Date:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 6:20 PM  
**Subject:** Trustee Dahab Investigation

Dear Chair Danko,

It has come to my attention that there will be an investigation regarding the antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments and participation in protests, including school walkouts organized by HWDSB Ward 2 Trustee Sabriena Dahab. I have also been informed that there has been pressure put on the HWDSB by the pro-Palestinian community to put a halt to the investigation.

I insist that the HWDSB complete a thorough, unbiased and exhaustive into Trustee Dahab's antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments as well as her involvement in protests on and off school property. Elected individuals need to be held accountable to all of their constituents to provide unbiased support especially when they have been elected to act on behalf of the vulnerable, impressionable students of our city. Trustee Dahab is perpetuating hate and discrimination in our schools.

To my knowledge the role of an elected Trustee is to create a neutral environment that will foster the safety of all students. It is Jewish student' rights that they feel supported and safe. Trustee Dahab is not creating this type of environment by pushing her own agenda. She is giving power to others to continue spreading hate.

There is a Board Meeting for HWDSB on November 20th, I implore you to deal with this issue directly and stand for the rights of all students to learn in a safe environment free of hate and discrimination.

Cindy Mark  
Chair, Board of Directors  
Hamilton Jewish Family Services

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Friday, November 17, 2023 5:57 AM  
**Subject:** FW: Investigation into Sabriena Dahab's activities

**From:** Irwin Fuss  
**Date:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 7:49 PM  
**Subject:** Investigation into Sabriena Dahab's activities

Dear Ms. Danko

We understand that there is a proposal for an investigation into the actions of Ward 2 school trustee, Sabriena Dahab for her online and public activities in promoting anti-Israel and anti-Semitic causes. As Board Chair, we urge you to place this item on your agenda for the forthcoming Board meeting on November 20.

In the current climate, locally and worldwide, it is more important than ever that hate speech and actions attributed to Ms Dahab must have consequences. The role of an educator, whether a teacher, principal or trustee must be fair and impartial. Politics and personal beliefs have no business in a classroom, school yard or School Board.

We look forward to seeing the outcome of this investigation.

Dr. Irwin Fuss  
Mrs. Sandra Fuss

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 7:30 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Sabriena Dahab

**From:** Esther Konigsberg  
**Date:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 7:25 PM  
**Subject:** Sabriena Dahab

Dear Ms. Danko,

It has come to my attention that HWDSB Ward 2 Trustee Sabriena Dahab has been promoting antisemitic and anti-Israel sentiments through social media comments and participation in protests, including school walkouts in support of Gaza/Hamas.

It is of utmost importance that a thorough and unbiased investigation into Trustee Sabriena Dahab's antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments, as well as her involvement in protests, proceed. We must hold individuals accountable for actions that perpetuate discrimination and hate.

Furthermore, the role of a trustee is not to engage in political activities but rather to create a neutral environment that fosters education and ensures the safety of all students. There is an alarming rise in antisemitism and Jewish students must feel safe and supported within the educational system.

It is imperative that this be an item for Monday's (November 20) Board Meeting.

Yours Truly

Dr. Esther Konigsberg MD CCFP

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Friday, November 17, 2023 10:21 AM  
**Subject:** FW: Investigation of Trustee Sabreina Dahab

**From:** Elaine Levine  
**Date:** Friday, November 17, 2023 at 10:18 AM  
**Subject:** Investigation of Trustee Sabreina Dahab

Dear Dawn Danko, (Chair of the HWDSB Board of Trustees)

I am deeply concerned about Trustee Sabreina Dahab's serious breaches of the HWDSB Code of Conduct for Trustees, specifically her antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments. She has also participated in school walkouts, pro-Palestinian protests, and public support for a ceasefire in Gaza.

As a trustee, she has an obligation to create a safe neutral environment for all students to participate and learn. Her actions perpetuate hate and discrimination for Jewish students and the Jewish community, creating a hostile learning setting where Jewish students do not feel safe.

Trustee Sabreina Dahab is antisemitic and there is no place on the Board of Trustees for a representative who is not respectful of all concerned. Trustees must uphold inclusivity and the dignity of the office and conduct themselves in a professional manner. The Trustee Code of Conduct states that they shall at all times act with decorum and be respectful of other Trustees, staff, students, and the public. Trustee Dahab has not fulfilled the values obligation and she must be held accountable. Her actions are unacceptable and must be stopped immediately.

I insist that a thorough and unbiased investigation into Trustee Dahab's breach of conduct be included in the November 20<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting. The HWDSB must not halt the investigation due to pro-Palestinian pressure supporting Sabriena Dahab.

As a local community member for the past 50 years who has had three children go through the public school system, I urge the Board to take the necessary action and essential steps to promote tolerance, inclusivity, and safety within our community. The alarming rise in antisemitism is extremely distressing and Jewish students must feel safe and supported within the education system.

Sincerely

Elaine Levine

Dundas Resident

**From:** elissa press  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 7:23 PM  
**Subject:** Antisemitism and HWDSB

Dear HWDSB Board of Trustees,

On October 7th, Hamas terrorists illegally entered Israel and brutally murdered more than 1200 men, women, children, babies and elderly.

This same day, school board trustee, Sabriena Dahab, endorsed the actions of Hamas by posting on X (formerly Twitter): "75 years of violent occupation and apartheid and the expectation is that Palestinians will be passive observers in their genocide?"

While antisemitic social media comments are unacceptable and should not be tolerated, the fact that a school board trustee made these comments is even more abhorrent.

We are supportive of the HWDSB's investigation into the behaviour of Sabriena Dahab. Investigations are both an appropriate and necessary response to employee misconduct. People MUST be held accountable for their actions, especially authority figures.

To condone and contextualize what happened October 7th is unconscionable. The massacre that took place was NOT about freedom or human rights. This was an outright slaughter of innocent civilians. It was an attack by an internationally recognized terrorist group; murdering, butchering, raping, burning, and kidnapping civilians. Hamas is clear in their intent to destroy both Israel and the Jews.

Moreover, by conflating Palestinians with Hamas, Ms. Dahab also undermines legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people.

Someone whose moral compass only responds to the death of one civilian group but not another has no right to be a school trustee. School Trustees are supposed to focus on student achievement, well-being and equity, and are instrumental in identifying the needs and priorities of their community.

If this is any reflection as to how 'equity' and the priorities of our community will filter into our school boards and schools, how can we trust that our children will learn in an inclusive environment that supports their well-being? Is this the response to murder we will see or wish to see echoed in our schools?

As a result of the war in the Middle East, antisemitism has been increasing to alarming levels. HWDSB has the obligation to ensure that the school environment continues to be a safe space.

We currently have three children in the HWDSB - [REDACTED]. Last year, when one of our daughters was in grade [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] she experienced several antisemitic incidences (she found a swastika in the playground at recess; was told by another student that someone in their class didn't vote for her for student council because she is a Jew; and received a Snapchat Story posted by another student, while at school, 'liking' Hitler). This year, on October 23rd, our daughter in grade [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] and her friends saw several Palestinian flags posted in various hallways and more prominently outside of the school's main office, which, given the current situation in the Middle East, can be intimidating, isolating and hurtful and can exacerbate community tensions (in this same context, it would be wrong to plaster Israeli flags up around the school). In both of these instances, letters were written to the principals imploring them to look into the systemic issues driving antisemitism and to take concrete actions to ensure that the student body is respectful, tolerant, compassionate, and educated so that antisemitism is not further amplified.

The importance of policies that support meaningful education that teach students to think critically, including about the use of language within a school system cannot be over-emphasized. Language such as 'genocide', 'apartheid', 'settler colonialism' and 'anti-zionism' have specific meanings and are being misused and manipulated to foster hatred. A genocide is an intentional destruction of a people. Israel is targeting a terrorist organization, Hamas, that uses Palestinian civilians as human shields. While the death, devastation and destruction in Gaza is truly heartbreaking and constitutes a human tragedy, it is not a genocide. Apartheid refers to a policy or system of segregation or discrimination on the grounds of race or ethnicity. Using the word apartheid to describe Israel confuses nationality with race. Arab Israelis can serve in the supreme court in Israel and have the same rights as Jewish Israelis with the exception of being required to serve in the army. While racism exists in Israel and has gotten worse under the present Israeli government, this is not apartheid. Settler colonialism refers to colonialism in which the indigenous peoples of a colonized region are displaced by settlers who permanently form a society there. While one can argue

against the legitimacy of the settlements being built in the West Bank, this does not make Israel a colonial state. Jews are indigenous to Israel. Like the Palestinians, the Jewish claim to Israel is no less valid. Israel is a refugee state and not a colonial state. Zionism is the belief in the development and protection of a Jewish nation, i.e., Israel. One can question the legitimacy of the Israeli government without being deemed antisemitic, but to question the legitimacy of the state is quite different. This rhetoric is the 'new' antisemitism that is infiltrating higher education and has infiltrated our schools. We implore the HWDSB to continue to uphold policies that support human rights and inclusion of all students and people.

We also reiterate our request that the HWDSB look into systemic issues driving antisemitism within their schools so that mechanisms and supports can be put into place to ensure that all students- including students who are Jewish- feel a part of the HWDSB community and can learn in an environment free from hate.

We kindly request that you include this letter as part of your November 20th meeting correspondence.

Sincerely,

Elissa Press & Benjamin Klein

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Friday, November 17, 2023 5:58 AM  
**Subject:** FW: Trustee Sabriena Dahab

**From:** Georgina Rosenberg Katz  
**Date:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 9:17 PM  
**Subject:** Trustee Sabriena Dahab

Dear Chair of the Board of Trustees, Dawn Danko,

I am writing to you today in regards the investigation into Sabriena Dahab's recent antisemitic and anti-Israel posts and actions.

I am originally from Toronto but have lived in Dundas now for the last 11 years. I am grateful for this welcoming and multicultural city. I am the child of two Holocaust survivors. Rather than growing up with bedtime stories, I grew up with constant stories of the atrocities that my parents endured in Auschwitz, in labour camps and in other concentration camps. I grew up without grandparents or relatives thanks to antisemitism. So for me to know that a Hamilton School Board Trustee is spewing antisemitic rhetoric online and to students is abhorrent. Freedom of speech does not equate to hateful speech. No one would dare use hateful and discriminatory language against any other minority nor would it be allowed. Why is it that only discrimination that isn't worthy of repercussions is the discrimination against Jews and of Israel? It should not be tolerated now.

My understanding is that a trustee's role, as described on the Ontario School Trustee website, is "to maintain a focus on student achievement, well-being and equity". There is nothing equitable about Trustee Dahab's words and actions.

It is imperative that a thorough and unbiased investigation take place into Trustee Sabriena Dahab's antisemitic and anti-Israel rhetoric, as well as, her involvement in protests. She must be held accountable for her actions that perpetuate discrimination and hate.

I demand that this item be on the agenda for this Monday November 29<sup>th</sup>'s Board meeting

Yours truly,

Georgina Katz  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**From:** Gus Alexandropoulos

**Sent:** Friday, November 17, 2023 10:27 AM

**Subject:** Sabreina Dahab's Public Statements

My wife and I are residents of Ward 2, and we are not impressed with Ms. Dahab's public statements regarding the current situation in the Middle East. Ms. Dahab was elected to be a school board trustee whose responsibilities are to address the educational needs of the children in Ward 2. She was not elected to opine on complex international affairs over which she has no direct control. If Ms. Dahab wishes to address political issues outside the purview of her elected position. I suggest she consider resigning and pursuing a career in international politics. As it stands, her activist behaviour is out of step with the code of conduct of her current role as a school board trustee.

Thank you for your time.

Gus Alexandropoulos

**From:** Hanna Schayer

**Date:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 4:45 PM

**Subject:** HWDSB Investigation

Dawn Danko

Chair of the Board of Trustees

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

This is a critical juncture for the Jewish community. We have been beset by antisemitic rhetoric and extreme Israel bias for a war we did not start.

Regardless of any one individual's feelings about the Israel-Hamas conflict, as professionals representing your Board, their concern should be for the welfare of all the students in whose best interests they purportedly serve.

I can say unequivocally that the actions of Trustee Sabriena Dahab helps foster a sense of exclusion and fear among Jewish students. Furthermore they reinforce and encourage, intentionally or not, the growing Jew hatred these students are facing.

An impartial and thorough investigation of her actions are not only warranted but necessary to restore faith in the integrity of HWDSB.

As such I encourage you to include the investigation as an agenda item at the Monday, November 20th Board meeting.

Our Jewish students deserve, as do all students, an educational experience that sees and values them. No one should be afraid to go to school; to hide their identity; to be harassed and bullied and to be represented by someone who cannot or will not see them as equally worthy of a safe and secure school environment.

B'Shalom,

In Peace,

Hanna Schayer

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Friday, November 17, 2023 10:57 AM  
**Subject:** FW: Trustee Sabriena Daha

**From:** Howard Brown  
**Date:** Friday, November 17, 2023 at 10:55 AM  
**Subject:** Trustee Sabriena Daha

Dear Chair Danko,

It is imperative that we keep our schools safe and free of political biases that can be damaging to children of minorities. I cite one event that occurred two weeks ago at a Mississauga public school where an eleven year-old Jewish girl was swarmed in the school yard by more than thirty students who threatened her with racial slurs. The event left her traumatized and in need of on-going support so that she could return to her classes.

In the interest of all children, it is incumbent on the school boards to insist that their trustees do not use their positions for political inflammatory purposes that only stoke the flames of hate.

Please do all in your power to initiate a thorough investigation into the anti-semitic comments of Trustee Sabriena Daha.

Howard and Shelley Brown

██████████  
████████████████████

**From:** Inbal Chaimovitz

**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 5:38 PM

**Subject:** \*\*Please include my letter in the November 20th meeting correspondence\*\*

Dear HWDSB members,

\*\*Please include my letter in the November 20th meeting correspondence\*\*

I am a Jewish woman with 4 kids. My oldest attends [REDACTED].

My other 3 children attend the [REDACTED].

As an Israeli who arrived in Canada 16 years ago, I have never felt anti-semitism, Until this last month unfortunately.

Not only does Hamilton as a city experience anti-semitism, to the point we are afraid to leave our homes but now our kids are not safe in their schools, in YOUR school—the place where kids need to feel safe at every given moment.

Well, this doesn't seem to be the case, in the last month at the HWDSB. There has been a lot of HATE-motivated SPEECH and ACTIONS targeting our kids in the HWDSB and the responses are none existing and simply disgraceful and dishonourable.

The HWDSB is not acting fast enough to get in front of this situation.

Our responsibility is for ALL children in HWDSB to feel comfortable and safe going to school. I know of a few students since the conflict started and the anti-semitism here started are having major anxiety to attend your schools.

I am reaching out to you today to ask for MY VOICE TO BE HEARD about the growing fear we have for our children having to experience anti-semitism in the HWDSB.

Our family, HOLOCAUST survivors, WILL be ashamed of what is happening in Canada in 2023.

Inbal Chaimovitz.

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Friday, November 17, 2023 9:49 AM  
**Subject:** FW: Trustee Sabrina Dahab

**From:** Irene Campbell  
**Date:** Friday, November 17, 2023 at 9:44 AM  
**Subject:** Trustee Sabrina Dahab

Chair Danko

I am very upset that the HWDSB, Ward 2 Trustee Sabrina Dahab, is using her position to make antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments plus her involvement in protests.

I understand there is to be an investigation into Trustee Sabrina Dahab's antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments, as well as her involvement in protest.

It is important to hold individuals accountable for actions that perpetuate discrimination and hate.

I also want to remind you that the role of a trustee is not to engage in political activities but rather to create a neutral environment that fosters education and ensures the safety of all students. There is an alarming rise in antisemitism, making it clear that Jewish students must feel safe and supported within the educational system.

I urge you Dawn Danko that you insist this be an item for Monday's (November 20) Board Meeting.

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 5:01 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Sabriena Dahab

**From:** Janet Weisz  
**Date:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 4:53 PM  
**Subject:** Sabriena Dahab

Dear Ms Danko

I am writing in response to the anti-semitic and anti-Israel comments by school trustee Sabriena Dahab.

School trustees should represent all individuals in the system. They should not be participating in protests that are political on school property and encouraging students to participate in events supporting terrorist organizations.

Schools must be safe for all students regardless of religion, colour, sexual preferences etc.. By allowing trustees to have agendas the system is at great risk for the safety of all students .

Violence of any kind should not be accepted and certainly never glorified.

We must not allow the perpetuation of hate and discrimination at any level in our community of Hamilton.

School trustees are elected to foster EDUCATION not support and encourage political views in vulnerable students.

I urge you to support an unbiased investigation into trustee Sabriena Dahab's posts on social media and her involvement in the protests.

Regards

Janet Weisz MD FRCPC  
Assistant Professor  
McMaster Children's Hospital

**From:** jisuk ryoo

**Sent:** Friday, November 17, 2023 10:55 AM

**Subject:** Concern as jewish family

Good morning,

My two beautiful boys are currently [REDACTED]. This school is great and we are so happy with school.

However I saw one of older kids wearing free Palestine tshirt and my heart sank.

I'm not talking about high school kids are doing strike in front of their school.

I'm talking about these actions happening in elementary school as well.

As more and more ant semantic activities are growing, I'm frightened for my kid's safety.

My [REDACTED] son is in a same class with the boy who has older sibling wearing free Palestine t shirt.

I feel like we are going back to Nazi era where Jew had to hide their identities to be safe.

We rather [REDACTED] than be harmed or killed.

Please take it seriously what kind of fear Jewish families are doing through in public.

Sincerely,

Jisuk Sabbag

Nov 16, 2023

ATTN: HWDSB Board of Trustees, Director Petrazzini

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great sadness that I find myself compelled to write this letter. Following the barbaric attacks of October 7th by the Hamas terrorist group against innocent Israeli civilians, we have seen a profound increase in antisemitic incidents in Canada and across the world. Most concerning, in some cases, this hate has been spewed by local leaders including HWDSB trustee Sabreina Dahab. On October 7th, at 10pm, Ms. Dahab posted on twitter with the following words, "75 years of violent occupation and apartheid and the expectation is that Palestinians will be passive observers in their genocide?" There can be no other interpretation of this message, other than Ms. Dahab's support and justification of the atrocities of that day committed by an internationally recognized terrorist organization.

As a Jewish family in Hamilton, with multiple children in the HWDSB school system, it is hard to feel safe and supported in the environment that has been created by these words and actions. It appears as though Ms. Dahab has since removed this tweet, but she has continued to share her harmful ideology, and no apology has been issued to the Jewish community that she has harmed.

Based on the Hamilton Police Board statistics, the number of hate crimes against Jewish groups in Hamilton was 8 times greater than any other religious group in 2022. This statistic is staggering considering the relatively small Jewish community here. I believe this information should be used to inform HWDSB initiatives addressing hate in the school system. Our community feels antisemitic incidents within the school system are largely being ignored and are not being appropriately addressed.

Drastic change is needed and time is of the essence to ensure all students and families feel safe.

I am calling on the HWDSB to immediately issue a strong and meaningful public statement denouncing hate of all forms, including those specifically against Jewish students and families. This is crucial to ensure that HWDSB can fulfill their goal of creating an environment where all students and families feel safe, supported, and protected.

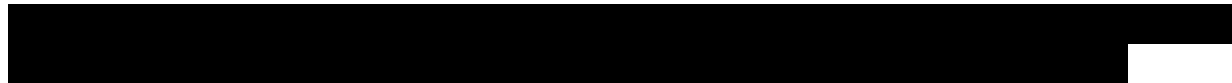
As part of the effort to create a safe and supportive environment, all members of HWDSB (including Trustees) must refrain from any words or actions promoting hate or causing harm, including communicating messages or participating in public events that intimidate or target any students or families of HWDSB. I am calling on the board to implement defined and meaningful reporting and escalation protocols that invoke actual change and real responses to antisemitic and other hate actions. As a first step, Ms. Dahab should be compelled to apologize for the harm she has caused Jewish families across the board.

Understanding history is an important way to combat hate and promote understanding. I ask that HWDSB deliver meaningful education for all educators and students regarding antisemitism and the history of the Jewish people. Part of this initiative should include an official recognition board-wide of International Holocaust Remembrance Day along with relevant education, initiatives and awareness at the school level for all children.

I trust that the concerns of the Jewish community will be taken seriously and addressed by the board in order to fulfill its goal to create a safe and inclusive environment for all.

Sincerely,

L



**From:** Laura Waltman

**Sent:** Friday, November 17, 2023 11:19 AM

**Subject:** URGENT - for inclusion at November 20 Trustee Board Meeting

To the Board of Trustees for the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board,

We request that the following material be included in the November 20th 2023 meeting correspondence.

We are writing as parents of 2 children in the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board and as members of the Hamilton community. Attached is a letter from 5 families with children at [REDACTED] School sent on October 24, 2023 after an incident that occurred at our school the previous day. When this event occurred, there was an immediate and empathetic response from school officials acknowledging the incident (response attached). Unfortunately, to the best of our knowledge, there have been no actions taken or communicated to us since then either by the school or schoolboard. We called for education on antisemitism for children and communication to families in the HWDSB community to acknowledge that this is a rising issue. We wanted to understand the plan to prevent these incidents at school and in the community.

HWDSB clearly communicates that it wants all children to feel safe at school. In the last 12 months our son has witnessed 4 antisemitic incidents at his school. Each of these had been reported. How can our families continue to feel safe with these events on the rise and no action by the schools or schoolboard? With access to social media and content on the internet we worry that these incidents may go beyond words and images as there have been calls for violence towards Jews. We have always practiced our religion and culture openly and our children have proudly shared their traditions with their friends. We find ourselves questioning whether it remains safe for our children to continue to do so.

As an institution, you state your commitment to equity and inclusion. Your leadership should embody those values. The posts of Sabreina Dahab, as a representative of the HWDSB, are problematic and divisive. Elements of her posts are clearly antisemitic. Her own words calling for the "necessary work of teaching and taking leadership in difficult times like these" speak clearly for her intent to represent what she believes should be taught in our school which is unacceptable. To allow her to continue to represent the community further alienates the Jewish children and families and breaks down our trust in the HWDSB.

The events on October 7<sup>th</sup> have accelerated the urgency for clear and unequivocal action. In the school board communication on October 10, you stated "the ongoing commitment to upholding human rights for all and creating an environment that is safe, inclusive and respectful for all HWDSB students, staff and families". We have yet to see actions that ensure that this applies to our children.

We ask once again that the schoolboard communicates its plan to combat anti-Semitism and to ensure the safety of our children.

Sincerely,

Laura Waltman and Ari Levin [REDACTED]

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Friday, November 17, 2023 9:52 AM  
**Subject:** FW: Investigation of Trustee Sabriena Dahab

**From:** Liora Malka  
**Date:** Friday, November 17, 2023 at 8:42 AM  
**Subject:** Investigation of Trustee Sabriena Dahab

To the Chair of the Board of Trustees, Dawn Danko:

I am writing to you to express my view in the importance of a thorough and unbiased investigation into Trustee Sabriena Dahab's behaviour, mostly notably her antisemitic and anti-Israel comments on social media and her support and participation in protests and school walkouts.

Ms. Dahab, in her role as trustee, should not be engaging in political activities. Her actions are disturbing and counterproductive in creating a neutral environment that fosters education and safety of all students. She must be held accountable for her behaviour in perpetuating discrimination and hate and accordingly should be subject to a fair and impartial investigation.

I have firsthand experience of the damaging effects when dangerous bias enters the classroom. My son attends university where the professor has expressed her anti-Israel and antisemitic views and supported attendance at Pro-Palestian rallies during class. This has created an environment where he feels unsafe and has extreme anxiety in attending class. Considering the alarming rise in antisemitism, Jewish students must feel safe and supported within the education system at all levels.

Please include the investigation of Ms. Dahab as an agenda item at the next Board meeting on November 20<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you for your consideration.

Liora Malka



# Beth Jacob Synagogue

AFFILIATED WITH THE UNITED SYNAGOGUE OF CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM

LORNE RICHTER  
President

[REDACTED]

November 17, 2023  
4th of Kislev, 5784

Attention: Dawn Danko  
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Re: Sabriena Dahab, HWDSB Ward 2 Trustee

We are reaching out to you with regards to an urgent matter – the investigation of the antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments and participation in protests, including school walkouts in support of Gaza, by the above-named HWDSB Ward 2 Trustee.

We are seeking support from the HWDSB to not halt but to begin the investigation. It is vital that a thorough and unbiased investigation be completed. The HWDSB must show their students that individuals are held accountable for their actions especially when they perpetrate discrimination and hate.

Sabriena Dahab needs to be reminded that the role of a trustee is not to engage in political activities but to create a neutral environment that fosters education and ensures the safety of all students.

We insist that our voice be heard and want this investigation to be an item on your agenda at the November 20<sup>th</sup> board meeting.

Yours truly,

*Lorne Richter*

Lorne Richter,  
President

Your values. Your tradition. Your shul.



**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Friday, November 17, 2023 10:18 AM  
**Subject:** FW: URGENT: Attn Dawn Danko

**From:** Maggie Norris  
**Date:** Friday, November 17, 2023 at 9:58 AM  
**Subject:** URGENT: Attn Dawn Danko

To: Dawn Danko, Board of Trustees Chair

Dear Trustee Danko,

I am writing to you regarding a very disturbing matter that needs to be addressed. As you are aware, our children's education is of utmost importance. The education they receive needs to promote inclusivity, tolerance, and safety within our community. When you have a representative of the public school board who cannot abstain from engaging in harmful antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments and protests, action needs to be taken. You need to **hold Trustee Sabriena Dahab accountable** for perpetuating discrimination and hate. This is not someone who can represent a fair and equitable public school board.

There needs to be an **unbiased and impartial investigation**, and an assessment of whether you want someone who cannot maintain a neutral environment that fosters education and safety of all students representing the school board. There has been an alarming rise in antisemitism in the past few months and ALL students need to feel safe and supported within the educational system.

I urge you to **make this an item** to be discussed at the board meeting on Monday November 20.

We will not stay silent and allow this unacceptable behaviour by Trustee Dahab be brushed under the rug. The future of our children and their education depends on unified voices speaking out against antisemitism, hate and discrimination.

Sincerely,

Maggie Norris

**From:** marisa kropivka

**Date:** Friday, November 17, 2023 at 10:47 AM

**Subject:** Urgent matter: investigation into Trustee Sabreina Dahab's Conduct

Dear Dawn Danko,

I trust this message finds you well. I am reaching out to bring your attention to the ongoing investigation into the conduct of Trustee Sabreina Dahab.

I wholeheartedly endorse the inquiry into her antisemitic and anti-Israel actions on her part. It is my firm belief that a trustee should remain impartial and refrain from displaying any political affiliations. Regrettably, her recent actions have created an environment where Jewish students no longer feel secure at school.

I earnestly request that this matter be included as a crucial agenda item in the upcoming Board Meeting scheduled for Monday, November 20.

Sincerely,

Marisa Kropivka

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 4:59 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Investigation into the antisemitic rhetoric

**From:** Michele Schneider  
**Date:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 4:52 PM  
**Subject:** Investigation into the antisemitic rhetoric



Chair of the Board of Trustees, Dawn Danko

Dear Chair Danko,

Thank you for launching an investigation into Trustee Sabriena Dahab's antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments, as well as her involvement in protests. This is so important to have an unbiased and thorough investigation and to hold individuals accountable for any actions that perpetuate discrimination and hate.

The role of a trustee is not to engage in political activities but to rather create a neutral environment that fosters education and to ensure the safety of all students.

The rise of antisemitism is horrendous and to have it encouraged by a member of your trustees is sad! Jewish students and parents should be able to feel safe in their school environment as well as on the streets of their country, especially in a country like Canada. This kind of behaviour is unacceptable.

As a learning institution one should be thoroughly researching unbiased history and from that to teach and not to spread hatred.

Most importantly the lessons on kindness, caring and tolerance for all people should be first and foremost. Teaching our students to think and question for themselves and not join the masses without understanding the whole picture is one of the most important lessons in life.

I urge you to read this letter at the trustee meeting on Monday November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

Thank you,

Michele Schneider

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Friday, November 17, 2023 5:59 AM  
**Subject:** FW: Important Agenda Item- November 20 Board of Trustee's Meeting

**From:** Paula Garshowitz  
**Date:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 9:49 PM  
**Subject:** Important Agenda Item- November 20 Board of Trustee's Meeting

To: Ms. Dawn Danko,  
Chair, Board of Trustees  
Hamilton Wentworth District School Board

I am writing to you to support the investigation for alleged breaches of the school board's code of conduct by Ward 2 Trustee, Sabriena Dahab, by making antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments and participated in at least one political protest with students in Hamilton. This investigation must be thorough and unbiased. It is of utmost importance to the Hamilton Jewish community, and to all residents of the City of Hamilton, that individuals elected to represent them as School Board Trustees are held accountable for their actions that perpetuate discrimination and hate.

The role of a trustee is to create a neutral environment that fosters education and ensures the safety of **all** students. It is not their role to engage in political activities. The recent rise in antisemitism is alarming and Jewish students **must** feel safe and supported within the educational system. As an elected representative, Ms. Dahab is supposed to be the community's advocate for public education, focusing on student achievement, well-being and equity. She is supposed to make decisions that benefit the board's entire jurisdiction while representing the interests of her constituents. I would argue that the electorate of Ward 2 did not elect her as a trustee to represent her own personal discriminatory and hateful views on social media, or to encourage students to walk out of class to attend any sort of protest.

I urge you to place this important item on the agenda for Monday's (November 20) Board of Trustees Meeting.

Sincerely

Paula Garshowitz

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Friday, November 17, 2023 10:24 AM  
**Subject:** FW: Letter in support of HWDSB Ward 2 Trustee Investigation

**From:** Romy Friedman  
**Date:** Friday, November 17, 2023 at 10:22 AM  
**Subject:** Letter in support of HWDSB Ward 2 Trustee Investigation

To Chair, Dawn Danko,

I am writing this letter as a Hamilton and HWDSB community member. I have deep concerns regarding the postings made by Ward 2 Trustee Sabriena Dahab. As a Jew, I find these postings inappropriate and deeply unsettling, given that she uses her official position of power to encourage divisiveness instead of inclusivity. While I support free speech, she is using her public position of trust and authority to promote this speech and is thus not neutral. The first line of her X (Twitter) bio is "HWDSB Ward 2 Trustee". She has posted about rallies to "End the Genocide in Gaza" never mentioning that Hamas, a terrorist organization, has played a major role in allowing the genocide to unfold. We can promote our opinions and thoughts, but I feel it is not acceptable to perpetuate discrimination and hate. Having been subjected to antisemitism myself, I am feeling very scared and troubled by what I am seeing and experiencing around me, especially in regard to our schools, which should be places of learning free from bias and hate.

I know that it is a board focus of HWDSB to promote a sense of belonging and inclusiveness, and for this reason I think it is absolutely imperative that there is an unbiased investigation into these comments and involvement in protests. The role of a trustee is not to engage in political activities but rather foster open communication, respectful dialogue and a safe environment for all. Jewish students might be a much smaller minority, but we deserve to feel safe and supported within our schools.

For these reasons, I insist that this be an issue for Monday's Nov 20<sup>th</sup> board meeting.

Thank you.

Regards,  
Romy Friedman

Friday, November 17, 2023

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB)

20 Education Ct

Hamilton, ON L9A 0B9

Dear members of the HWDSB,

We are writing as Hamilton parents to share our concerns with antisemitism in our publicly-funded educational institutions.

Our children are students at [REDACTED] which is a Jewish day school. Within this setting, they have developed a strong and positive Jewish identity coupled with awareness of and respect for human diversity.

Our decision to pursue private religious education was motivated by antisemitic experiences that we and our oldest child experienced in JK and SK several years ago. These incidents occurred in the Kindergarten of a public school elsewhere in Southern Ontario and were instigated by school staff. Following these incidents, our family decided to relocate to the Jewish community of Hamilton and enroll our children in the [REDACTED]. Upon graduating from the [REDACTED], we have decided that we will be sending our children to Jewish high school – the closest being over an hour away in Toronto – because we do not have confidence in the HWDSB's ability or willingness to ensure that secondary school is a safe environment for Jewish students.

Recently, I have served as a parent volunteer for our girls' volleyball team. I have personally observed several instances of unsportsmanlike behaviour directed by Muslim students on other teams to our players. As just one example, at a volleyball match at [REDACTED] School a group of Muslim students approached my 10-year-old daughter yelling "free Palestine" before laughing and running away. This should never be acceptable, let alone days after the horrific events of October 7.

As Jews, it is not our responsibility to educate the school board in what antisemitism is and how it may present in myriad forms. Although antisemitism is one of the most problematic and virulent forms of discrimination in our society today, to our knowledge the HWDSB does not have policy specific to antisemitism nor does published information on human rights and equity even note antisemitism – though consideration is explicitly given to ableism, anti-classism, anti-racism, gender identity, and gender equity (<https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/about/equity/>).

We hope that the HWDSB will take this opportunity to reflect upon our concerns, and those of other parents, to ensure that our public schools are safe for all students. **Action must be taken.**

We request that this letter be included in the November 20 meeting correspondence.

Sincerely,

Tara McAuley and Jeff Templeton

**From:** Gustavo Rymberg  
**Sent:** Friday, November 17, 2023 2:10 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Trustee Sabreina Dahab crucial agenda item for upcoming Board Meeting Nov 20th

**From:** Vivienne Epstein  
**Date:** Friday, November 17, 2023 at 1:54 PM  
**Subject:** Trustee Sabreina Dahab crucial agenda item for upcoming Board Meeting Nov 20th

Dear Dawn Danko,

I am reaching out to you in support of the ongoing investigation into the conduct of Trustee Sabreina Dahab.

I wholeheartedly endorse the inquiry into her antisemitic and anti-Israel actions on her part. The role of a trustee should be to remain impartial and refrain from displaying any political affiliations. Her conduct and her recent actions contribute to an environment where Jewish students no longer feel secure at school. By taking this stand, she is explicitly supporting one community against another, demonstrating lack of impartiality which should be her responsibility within her position.

Furthermore, by virtue of her conduct, she is contributing to the alarming rise and danger of antisemitism.

I strongly request that this matter be included as a crucial agenda item in the upcoming Board Meeting scheduled for Monday, November 20.

Sincerely,  
Vivienne Epstein

To the Chair of the Board of Trustees, Dawn Danko,

I am disturbed to have received news that the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) may be being pressured, now or in the future, to halt the investigation into HWDSB Ward 2 Trustee Sabriena Dahab regarding her serious and reoccurring breaches of the Trustee Code of Conduct; specifically regarding her antisemitic and anti-Israel social media comments and her participation in protests, including school walkouts in support of a ceasefire in Gaza.

I am writing this letter to stress the importance of the investigation continuing in a thorough and unbiased manner. We are Canadians, we must hold individuals accountable for spreading Arab and Islamic propaganda that is false or misleading and for perpetuating discrimination and hate.

Based on my independent research, Trustee Sabriena Dahab is in serious breach of Principles 2, 7, and 8 of the Trustee Code of Conduct. Furthermore, she is violating both the Values section of the Trustee Policy Manual and her obligation to promote a culture that supports student success through multicultural understanding.

Antisemitism is once again running rampant across our world and many Jewish people do not feel safe anymore. The HWDSB Trustees have an obligation to provide all students with a safe environment to participate and learn; Jewish students do not feel safe.

I insist that an item for the November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Board Meeting be either the investigation or emphasizing that an undeterred investigation is a necessity.

This is not a time for political niceties; Trustee Sabriena Dahab is antisemitic. You have a radical racist on your Board of Trustees who is using her influence to indoctrinate and radicalize the students you are responsible for, thereby creating a hostile environment for Jewish students and the Jewish community; this is unacceptable, inexcusable, and must be stopped immediately.

This conduct discredits and compromises the integrity of the Board of Trustees. As an extremist, Trustee Sabriena Dahab shows no respect and no tolerance of differing points of view when expressing her individual views. Her actions and speech not only lack decorum and respect, but are a grave injustice to those she has indoctrinated, to Jewish students experiencing fear and hate as a result of the environment she has helped to create, to Canada, and to the non-Muslim world.

I hope the investigation continues, undaunted by external pressure, and results in Trustee Sabriena Dahab being sanctioned with suspension for the remaining period of her four year term and that the HWDSB do everything in its power to mitigate the damage she has done to the students and to the community.

Hamilton Community Member,  
*Zach Levine*

Please Note,

On the second page of this letter I have included Natan Sharansky's "3D" test, which can be used to distinguish between legitimate criticism of Israel from antisemitism, and some important facts that are often misrepresented, lied about, or completely ignored in Arab and Islamic propaganda. I suggest this second page be distributed to all board, staff, teachers, students, and parents in the school district.

### 3D Test of Anti-Semitism:

#### Demonization, Double Standards, Delegitimization

##### Recognizing the "New Anti-Semitism"

Moreover, the so-called "new anti-Semitism" poses a unique challenge. Whereas classical anti-Semitism is aimed at the Jewish people or the Jewish religion, "new anti-Semitism" is aimed at the Jewish state. Since this anti-Semitism can hide behind the veneer of legitimate criticism of Israel, it is more difficult to expose. Making the task even harder is that this hatred is advanced in the name of values most of us would consider unimpeachable, such as human rights.

Nevertheless, we must be clear and outspoken in exposing the new anti-Semitism. I believe that we can apply a simple test - I call it the "3D" test - to help us distinguish legitimate criticism of Israel from anti-Semitism.

The first "D" is the test of demonization. When the Jewish state is being demonized; when Israel's actions are blown out of all sensible proportion; when comparisons are made between Israelis and Nazis and between Palestinian refugee camps and Auschwitz - this is anti-Semitism, not legitimate criticism of Israel.

The second "D" is the test of double standards. When criticism of Israel is applied selectively; when Israel is singled out by the United Nations for human rights abuses while the behavior of known and major abusers, such as China, Iran, Cuba, and Syria, is ignored; when Israel's Magen David Adom, alone among the world's ambulance services, is denied admission to the International Red Cross - this is anti-Semitism.

The third "D" is the test of delegitimization: when Israel's fundamental right to exist is denied - alone among all peoples in the world - this too is anti-Semitism.

##### -Natan Sharansky (2004)

Facts Often Misrepresented, Lied About, or Ignored in Arab and Islamic Propaganda:

- Anti-Zionism, in the world today, is antisemitic.
- Israel is not an apartheid; Israel is a democracy with a population demography of 73% Jews, 21% Arabs, and 6% other; Israeli citizens have equal rights.
- Gaza has been self-governing since 2005, when Jews were forcibly evicted by Israel; with their newfound autonomy they elected a genocidal cultist group to lead them, Hamas. Gaza can be considered an independent state.
- Civilian collateral damage during war is not genocide and is acceptable according to international law.
- Before 1948 both Jews and Arabs lived in 'all of the areas' of the British Mandate of Palestine, including the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem.
- In 1946 Jews paid over 50% of property taxes in Mandatory Palestine. Almost half of the land was public land, owned by no one and administered by the British.
- The areas the world calls the 'West Bank' and 'East Jerusalem' were ethnically cleansed of Jewish Palestinians between 1920 and 1948 by Arab mobs, militias, and governments. By 1948, the Gaza Strip was also ethnically cleansed of Jewish Palestinians.
- Slogans involving 'Free Palestine' are antisemitic. Palestine is a geographical area and anyone who lives in the area can be called 'Palestinian'. It is important to note, Arabs are not natives of the area.