

**JCRC Team for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Howard County**

 **Public Schools, including Anti-Semitism**

Introduction

In July 2020 the JCRC sponsored a community wide virtual session to identify and discuss social justice issues that the JCRC should study over the next several months. As a result of the input from approximately forty participants, three topics were selected for further action and a team established for each. JCRC established a Team for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Howard County Public Schools, including Anti-Semitism. The Team met monthly starting in August to discuss Anti-Semitism in HCPSS and prepared this final report in March 2021. The members of this Team are: Yale Stenzler and Annie McCormick, co-chairs, Becca Niburg, Dennis Rapport, and Jerry Weinstein.

Team Activities and Findings

Little information was available about what Jewish students attending Howard County Public Schools experienced concerning Anti-Semitism, bias against or toward Jews, hateful comments, intolerance, oral, written, symbolic representations, and/or physical incidents.

The Team was familiar with the Anti-Semitic incident that had occurred at Glenelg High School in May 2018. The Team also reviewed an Opinion piece published in The Washington Post, written by Madeline Rothfield (July 31, 2020) that describes her experience as a Jewish student who attended Glenelg High School. A copy of this Opinion Piece is provided in Exhibit A. No other specific anecdotal or documented cases were available for the Team to examine.

The Team reviewed several HCPSS documents and policies, including the *Policy 1080 Educational Equity and the Implementation Procedures*. This policy and the implementation procedures were approved by the Howard County Board of Education on October 8, 2020.

The Team decided to develop two questionnaires to gather information and data pertaining to how Jewish students are treated by other students, teachers, and administrators in the Howard County Public School System. This effort was not undertaken as a statistically representative or random sample study, but rather as a means to obtain some anecdotal information from Jewish students about their experiences in the HCPSS.

One questionnaire was given to rabbis to complete and the other was a student questionnaire for students in grades 7 through 12. Both questionnaires were sent out on November 18th and responses were received from four rabbis and 26 students by the deadline for submissions, which was December 31, 2020. A detailed summary of the responses is provided in Exhibit B.

Responses from the rabbis were varied and included the following statements: they have had both positive and negative experiences working with school system staff to resolve problems related to Anti-Semitic and/or bias incidents; the school representative did not follow-up as promised; the student was treated better after the parents and the rabbi met with the principal; and some parents did not find administrators responsive at the school level and intervention by HCPSS officials did not result in solutions that kept their children safe.

The responses from the students indicated that many, not all, experienced some form of behavior from other students that could be identified as Anti-Semitic while in public school, including teasing, offensive or harmful jokes, disrespectful or demeaning comments, and/or criticism. There were a very limited number of these incidents involving teachers and/or administrators. Students also experienced some similar problems on-line.

A considerable amount of information in the raw data can be used with the HCPSS to gain a better understanding of the experiences of Jewish students and to develop pro-active plans to eliminate these types of occurrences for all students in Howard County. Excerpts of student responses that were received to the numbered questions are described below:

1. **Experiences with other students** teasing 10 Yes 13 No disrespecting or demeaning 10 Yes 14 No name calling 8 Yes 16 No bullying 6 Yes 18 No criticism 8 Yes 16 No offensive or hurtful jokes 16 Yes 8 No labeled negatively because of your religion 6 Yes 17 No social media 5 Yes 17 No other 5 Yes 17 No
2. **Details of experiences with other students**
* Blatant Anti-Semitic incidences and barely anything done by faculty and staff.
* People at lunch making fun of the stereotypes and telling me that I should have burned with the rest of the Jews and throwing pennies at me, etc.
* In middle school, after class but before dismissal, someone in my class drew swastikas on the board while the substitute teacher was distracted. I'm pretty sure it was meant as a joke.
* Almost all forms of anti-Semitism that I or someone else I know has experienced have been jokes, stereotypes, or something along those lines. I cannot think of any extremely harmful acts committed out of hatred.
* Several comments and offensive language ranging from Holocaust “jokes” to negative verbal comments about Judaism.
* Having people mention derogatory terms for Jewish people around/to me, people bringing up the fact that I am Jewish and making fun of it(teasing), ignorant questions, had someone say “where did you learn that, at camp in Auschwitz”.
* Some kids just make jokes that they think are harmless, but sometimes hurt another's feelings.
* References to gas chambers, jokes regarding Jews being "cheap," jokes regarding Jews and money.
* The stereotypical "Jew joke" always will offend me. Hear Holocaust jokes in the halls.
1. **Experiences with teachers/administrators** teasing 2 Yes 24 No disrespecting or demeaning 6 Yes 20 No name calling 1 Yes 25 No bullying 1 Yes 25 No criticism 4 Yes 22 No offensive or hurtful jokes 6 Yes 20 No labeled negatively because of your religion 3 Yes 23 No stereotyping 7 Yes 19 No other 3 Yes 23 No

**9. Written comments or symbols targeted at Jewish people** Yes 17 (65.4%) No 9 (34.6%)

1. **Where it occurred**

 on personal property 4 on another person’s property 6 on school property 15 on desk 6 In bathroom 10 on whiteboard/chalkboard 6 on cabinet 3 other 10

1. **Online experiences** Yes 8 (30.8%) No 18 (69.2%)
2. **Details of online experiences** video 4 post 5 comment 7 private or direct message 4 other 18
3. **Details online**
* Many incidences of supposed jokes but hurtful comments and posts about the Jewish community or to me directly.
* People telling me and my friend (both of us are Jewish) that we didn’t deserve to live.
* Sometimes friends of Jews think it is okay to make the same jokes about Jewish people that Jews do, and they will comment on their friend's post or direct message them.
* People talking about twitter posts made inappropriate jokes about the Holocaust.

On February 16, 2021 the Team met via zoom with representatives from the Howard County Public School System to discuss the results from the questionnaires. We met with Dr. Kevin Gilbert, Director of the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Marcy Leonard, co-chair of the DEIAC and principal at Wilde Lake High School; and James LeMon Executive Director of Community, Parent and School Outreach. We had provided them with a summary of the results and provided some initial questions for discussion. They recognize that the Jewish students in Howard County have identified some significant problems that need to be addressed. As the school system moves forward in developing programs and services to reduce and/or eliminate bias the needs and concerns of the Jewish Community will receive appropriate attention.

Dr. Gilbert, representing the HCPSS, sent the Team a written response after the meeting. In his letter he indicated that “We agree, that in order for HCPSS to live up to its obligation of diversity, equity, and inclusion, we must ensure that every member of our school community feels valued and included.” He further stated that “the JCRC team presented a survey conducted with Rabbis and Jewish students that gave examples of the frustration exhibited by members of the community, and continued issues persisting.” Dr. Gilbert assured us that “HCPSS will continue to take a firm stance on dealing with instances of anti-Semitism, and other actions of bullying and bias toward any staff and/or student from the Jewish community. If incidents are not being addressed as they should, I would like to be notified immediately so that the district can take the necessary steps to rectify the situation and determine where the disconnect occurred that the bias incident was not addressed fully.” He went on to state that, “Additionally, I want the JCRC team to know that although we are presently elevating our efforts around race and racism, we are not eliminating or ignoring the biases and hate that arises toward other groups, including the Jewish community. Furthermore, we are continuing our work around Holocaust education that is mandated by the state.”

The complete text of the February 16th letter from Dr. Gilbert is found in Exhibit C.

**Recommendations:**

1. The JCRC and the JFHC should continue to ensure that they have representatives on the following Howard County Public School System Committees, and any other committees that seem appropriate:
* Operating Budget Review Committee
* School Calendar Committee
* Social Studies Advisory Board
* Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee
1. The JCRC should inform the Jewish Community that the JCRC will work with students and/or parents to address hate-bias incidents that might occur within the Howard County Public Schools.

1. The JCRC should develop an on-line form and a telephone access means for parents and/or student to report and identify any hate bias incidents, which occur within the HCPSS.
2. The JCRC should develop a written procedure to address oral, written, symbolic representations, and physical incidents within the HCPSS, with specific steps to be taken at the school, central office, and community levels.
3. The JCRC should develop a procedure that identifies and determines which hate-bias incidents should be reported to ADL.
4. The JCRC should continue to meet with representatives from other groups and/or organizations as identified and/or included in the HCPSS definition of “diversity” to develop additional collaborative relationships.
5. The JCRC should continue to pursue and work with the HCPSS on the development and implementation of the anti-bias curriculum, improved educational programs on the subject of the Holocaust, the inclusion of American Jewish history, and the contributions of Jewish leaders in America and around the world throughout history.
6. The JCRC should continue to support the HCPSS as it moves forward in addressing the following topics that have community wide needs and implications:
7. More diversity in teachers and administrators,
8. More recognition of contributions from minority groups/individuals to society,
9. More inclusive history of historically excluded groups/individuals,
10. Improved responses to incidents of prejudice, intolerance, disrespectful behavior (student-student and staff to student)
11. Access to advanced programs and services
12. Discipline procedures and practices

1. The JCRC should sponsor programs for diverse groups of middle school and high school students that encourage the reporting of hate-bias incidents and provides by-stander training.

The JCRC Team for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Howard County Public Schools, including Anti-Semitism intends to pursue implementation of the recommendations above, pending review and approval by the full JCRC, including members who are also on the Board of Directors of the Jewish Federation of Howard County.

**Exhibit A**

The Washington Post -- Opinion Piece July 31, 2020

By Madeline Rothfield

Four cans of black spray paint abandoned in the woods. That’s all it took to completely reshape my identity.

What marvelous possibilities might have been contained in those cans? Maybe they would have been used by a [Banksy](https://www.instagram.com/banksy/?hl=en)-like vigilante for social commentary; maybe they would have been used to touch up a community park bench. Instead, they were used for spreading hate.

You can read about my high school, Glenelg, in [The Post](https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2019/local/teen-graffiti-hate-crime-divides-maryland-high-school/?itid=lk_inline_manual_5): In the middle of the night in spring 2018, four senior boys graffitied the school with swastikas, the letters “KKK” and slurs about Black, gay and Jewish people. This hate crime reshaped my identity as a Jewish woman by exposing me to anti-Semitism and reinforcing my advocacy for a future of cultural freedom.

I learned a lesson that seems to resonate more and more each day as protesters all over the country take to the streets for equality: Don’t wait for hate to come to you to stand against it.

As a kid, I never thought twice about my multidenominational upbringing. My mom was raised in the Southern Baptist church, and my dad is Jewish. I knew that Mom loved Christmas and that the season began the day after Thanksgiving. With Dad, we would light a menorah and eat chocolate gelt. I understood that other families in my community didn’t celebrate Hanukkah, but that never seemed significant to me.

I never felt different as a kid. But high school taught me that being different makes you a target. In my sophomore year, a boy I’d known for years threw a penny across the room and yelled to a fellow Jewish classmate, “Pick it up. You’re a Jew, right?” The boy laughed and complied, but when our gazes met, his eyes weren’t laughing. Anti-Semitic jokes and insults were frequently directed at me and the 30 other Jewish kids at my school of a thousand. I reasoned to myself that, in a rural area like Glenelg, maybe these kids hadn’t been raised to understand diversity.

All that pent-up prejudice came to a tipping point in the spring of 2018. Black paint coated the school with a thick layer of hate. When I arrived at school that day, I was confused by the heavy police presence. Soon, images of the defacement plastered social media, and students started calling their parents to come pick them up.

I thought it was commonly understood that the swastika represents the slaughter of millions of my people and others under a regime that defined them as subhuman. My Polish ancestors died in Auschwitz, so I knew better than most people the implications of that symbol. For the first time, I felt scared for my life because of my identity. It had never occurred to me that I could be hated simply for being. I knew that racists and neo-Nazis existed, but that was in some far-off world that existed only online. That day, that world knocked on my front door.

What I learned that day is that I cannot afford to hide my identity. What we permit, we promote. If bigots are not challenged when they scorn the religion and ethnicity of others, their abhorrent agenda will continue. I need to be proud of who I am. That means no more laughing at the jokes delivered at my expense, no more shying from conversations about identity and no more hiding. By not standing up for myself, I am agreeing tacitly that it is okay to demean those who are different.

When I went home that day, I turned on the news. That’s when I noticed it. One of the swastikas was painted backward. They had inadvertently (and ironically) painted a Buddhist symbol of good fortune and well-being. That black spray paint had accidentally created something beautiful. Instead of being a stain on my community and dagger into the soul of its people, in my eyes, the symbol was transformed into a hope for a better future if we all take a stand against hate.

*Madeline Rothfield, a recent graduate of Glenelg High School in Howard County, will attend Wake Forest University this fall*

**Exhibit B**

**JCRC Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in HCPSS, including Ant-Semitism – Survey Questionnaire Results**

**Rabbi Responses** – (4)

I have had both positive and negative interactions with HCPSS as a rabbi, and also as a parent of students in HCPSS.

One of our students was the victim of anti-Semitic bullying and vandalism, life threatened and school administrators did not do all possible to protect him, specifically refused to allow him to park where the cameras were, and failed to ensure the student was not forced to be in class with the bullies.

Oakland Mills High School never followed up with me as promised.

I will go with positive because there have been situations where the school system was responsive, but also there have been times when I felt less well received by HCPSS.

The student was treated better after the parents and I met with the principal.

Parents did not find administrators responsive on the school level and intervention by HCPSS officials did not result in solutions that kept their children safe.

Many interactions and they are mixed depending on the personalities involved

Please rate each of the following on a scale of 1-5 (5 = thoroughly, 3 = somewhat, and 1 = barely or never mentioned). Most Curriculum items scored 1 and 2 with an occasional 3.

Often the materials used about Israel, current events and history are biased towards a radical Palestinian perspective that lacks historical and factual context and makes Jewish students uncomfortable.

There is inconsistent study of the Holocaust across classes, grades and schools, often a "Holocaust' book is one of many multi-cultural options offered, and thus chosen only by the Jewish students, so that those who most need to learn about the Holocaust fail to do so.

**Student Responses -** 26 responses 10 responses (grades 7 and 8) and 16 responses (grades 9-12)

**Schools Attended --** Elementary Schools – 13;Middle Schools – 9; High Schools - 7

**1. Experiences with other students** teasing 10 Yes 13 No disrespecting or demeaning 10 Yes 14 No name calling 8 Yes 16 No bullying 6 Yes 18 No criticism 8 Yes 16 No offensive or hurtful jokes 16 Yes 8 No labeled negatively because of your religion 6 Yes 17 No social media 5 Yes 17 No other 5 Yes 17 No

1. **Details of experiences with other students**
* Blatant Anti-Semitic incidences and barely anything done by faculty and staff.
* One student made a rude joke about Israel and some refused to acknowledge Hannukah after being corrected.
* People at lunch making fun of the stereotypes and telling me that I should have burned with the rest of the Jews and throwing pennies at me, etc.
* In middle school, after class but before dismissal, someone in my class drew swastikas on the board while the substitute teacher was distracted. I'm pretty sure it was meant as a joke.
* I have not had any bullying or other issues that I can remember.
* Almost all forms of anti-Semitism that I or someone else I know has experienced have been jokes, stereotypes, or something along those lines. I cannot think of any extremely harmful acts committed out of hatred.
* I guess just teasing and stuff like that.
* Several comments and offensive language ranging from Holocaust “jokes” to negative verbal comments about Judaism.
* Having people mention derogatory terms for Jewish people around/to me, people bringing up the fact that I am Jewish and making fun of it(teasing), ignorant questions, had someone say “where did you learn that, at camp in Auschwitz”.
* One time in elementary school I was called to the office because a classmate apparently made a very Anti-Semitic comment. I didn’t actually hear the comment, so I don’t know what it was.
* Some kids just make jokes that they think are harmless, but sometimes hurt another's feelings.
* References to gas chambers, jokes regarding Jews being "cheap," jokes regarding Jews and money.
* The stereotypical "Jew joke" always will offend me. Hear Holocaust jokes in the halls.
* A few people, every once in a while, will make hurtful jokes about the Holocaust.
* Occasionally students would make an Anti-Semitic joke, not directly at any person, but rather just a joke made in bad taste about Jews
1. **Frequency of experiences with other students** Never 7 (26.9%) Once 6 ( 23.1 %) 2-5 times 2 (7.7 %) 6-10 times 4 (15.4%) once a month 0 more times than I can remember 7 (26.9%)
2. **Reported incidents with students**
* The student wrote an Anti-Semitic joke over text and he got lunch detention as punishment.
* The principle was informed and talked to the students but that was it.
* We had a substitute teacher that day, and they did not know what to do after they were informed, and I do not know if the issue went any further. I also do not remember a lot of what happened because it was three years ago.
* I am aware of an incident where Swastikas were spray painted by students at Howard High School. However, I did not personally experience it and I do not know what disciplinary actions were taken.
* Not really just sometimes like Nazis, swastikas, something I can't remember.
* Every Jewish student in my class was called to the office to make sure they were ok and I assume the student who made the comment was disciplined but I don’t actually know for sure.
* They were taken to the principal's office and got detention.
* No, teachers don't care, teachers hear racist comments about students and don't respond.
* No. None of the incidents were made repeatedly by the same person, nor were did it go so far as to prompt further action.
1. **Experiences with teachers/administrators** teasing 2 Yes 24 No disrespecting or demeaning 6 Yes 20 No name calling 1 Yes 25 No bullying 1 Yes 25 No criticism 4 Yes 22 No offensive or hurtful jokes 6 Yes 20 No labeled negatively because of your religion 3 Yes 23 No stereotyping 7 Yes 19 No other 3 Yes 23 No
2. **Details of experiences with teachers/administrators**
* Teachers have made jokes about the holocaust and referenced other stereotypes in a non-educational manner.
* Some years I have trouble making up the work I missed for the second day of Rosh Hashana.
* Teachers making insensitive remarks or holocaust jokes. Also, multiple inappropriate Nazi references.
* The only thing I have really experienced from teachers is purposely calling on me when discussing topics in school that involve Jews. It has ranged from everything from asking me to explain the story of Hanukkah to purposely calling on me when we were talking about the Holocaust.
* My 3rd grade teacher was Jewish.
* Had a teacher that gave me a hard time for missing school on holidays and having to ask for make-up work.
* Friends have mentioned unpleasant names calling, mostly teasing and derogatory terms.
1. **Frequency of experiences with teachers/administrators** Never 15 (57.7%) Once 1 ( 3.8 %) 2-5 times 3 (11.5 %) 6-10 times 4 (15.4%) once a month 1 (3.8%) more times than I can remember 0 other 2 (7.7%)
2. **What happened with teachers/administrators - intervention?**
* Nothing happened.
* Just during classes, they will make references like “children today being turned into little Hitlers or Nazis” or just not teaching the content in a sensitive matter thus making an accidental offensive comment.
* I have never heard of a situation where a teacher is given intervention training to stop their behavior.
1. **Written comments or symbols targeted at Jewish people** Yes 17 (65.4%) No 9 (34.6%)
2. **Where it occurred**

 on personal property 4 on another person’s property 6 on school property 15 on desk 6 I in bathroom 10 on whiteboard/chalkboard 6 on cabinet 3 other 10

1. **Details of written comments or symbols**
* A couple years ago five seniors vandalized Glenelg High School with swastikas, and racist and homophobic comments.
* Swastikas were drawn on the whiteboard at the front of the classroom.
* The incident at Howard High School as mentioned earlier.
* It was in words.
* Swastikas and heil Hitler written on school magazines in art class and also on papers.
* Swastikas written on others’ papers and keyed into car.
* Someone at my school drew a very large swastika in the snow, I believe they were punished, however it was hurtful to see that people found it funny.
* There have been a lot of instances of students drawing or spray painting a swastika on school property.
* Special Ed kid drew swastikas in another school’s bathroom.
* Swastikas drawn on multiple students' papers, one time left a piece of paper in a spot where I would see it.
* Glenelg HS students spray painted Swastika on sidewalk.
* There was a time in middle school for a month where you would walk into a bathroom and there would be easily five swastikas drawn on the bathroom wall.
* There was an instance of a student drawing swastikas and other symbols on the bathroom stalls.
1. **Frequency of written comments or symbols**  Never 9 (34.6%) Once 7 ( 26.9 %) 2-5 times 6 (23.1 %) 6-10 times 1 (3.8%) once a month 0 more times than I can remember 3 (11.5%) other 0
2. **Was student disciplined**
* No (*several responses*)
* The seniors all got charged with jail time.
* I am not aware of that.
* No discipline.
* I never told any teacher, if I had I would have been pulled into a meeting with the peer, who would have then found a way to get into a fight with me without suffering any repercussions, I don't think that a teacher ever saw any of the pieces of paper with swastikas drawn on them.
* No as they could not figure out who it was.
1. **Online experiences** Yes 8 (30.8%) No 18 (69.2%)
2. **Details of online experiences** video 4 post 5 comment 7 private or direct message 4 other 18
3. **Details online**
* Many incidences of supposed jokes but hurtful comments and posts about the Jewish community or to me directly.
* People telling me and my friend (both of us are Jewish) that we didn’t deserve to live.
* Sometimes friends of Jews think it is okay to make the same jokes about Jewish people that Jews do, and they will comment on their friend's post or direct message them.
* People talking about twitter posts making inappropriate jokes about the Holocaust.
1. **Frequency of online experiences** Never 14 (53.8%) Once 1 ( 3.8 %) 2-5 times 4 (15.4 %) 6-10 times 1 (3.8%) once a month 2 (7.7%) more times than I can remember 3 (11.5%) other 1 (3.8%)
2. **Disciplined for online occurrences**
* No (*several responses*)
* I am not aware of any situation where they were disciplined.
* Hate comments on line in general, not related to HCPSS students.
1. **Curriculum -** Please rate each of the following on a scale of 1-5 (5 = thoroughly, 3 = somewhat, and 1 = barely or never mentioned).
2. Jewish leaders in American History
3. Jewish leaders in world History
4. Jewish contributions in the area of science and technology
5. Jewish individuals in music, literature, the arts, sports
6. Literature by Jewish authors and/or the life of Jewish individuals
7. The Holocaust (pre, during, post)
8. The State of Israel
9. Israel and the Palestinians
10. Jewish leaders and civil rights
11. Jewish and Muslim relationships
12. Jews and Israel in current events

Most Curriculum items scored 1 and 2 with an occasional 3, with the exception of the Holocaust (16 were 3 and above).

1. **Other comments**
* Nothing students have said has affected any teaching methods or information. I wanted to start a Jewish club at my school but was too scared of being singled out as the one Jewish kid. Hopefully some changes will be made because this is truly unacceptable.
* Having students learn more info about the Holocaust rather than the stuff that everyone knows.
* There's a chance that more of these subjects were covered or were covered to a higher degree, but I just don't remember well.
* The main problem is Holocaust education. If this year were normal, I would have spent 2 days covering the Holocaust out of the 360 in U.S. History. It was taught a little bit in English class one year, but it was more about the story and details in the literature we read about the Holocaust specific to the individual in it. The teachers would never relate it to the Holocaust as a whole, and in my opinion, the students got very little education about the Holocaust in those English units.
* I learned more about the holocaust in school than I did in Hebrew school also I think that classes should be shorter.
* I have found that administration does not take Anti-Semitic remarks or actions very seriously. Moreover, I would’ve loved to have been able to learn about Jewish people or Israel in school, beyond just the Holocaust. I’m hoping that will change for future students.
* In my experience in Howard county, I have not received an in-depth education on Jews in history apart from the holocaust.
* I feel that HCPSS is a safe place for Jews. There haven’t been any egregious attacks on any Jews that I know, including myself, and everyone seems very accepting of our faith. It would be nice to learn more about Judaism in my courses, though as HCPSS is a secular institution, I’m not sure how much can be done about that.

Exhibit C



March 3, 2021

Yale Stenzler, Co-chair Jewish Community Relations Council Team Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in HCPSS, including Anti-Semitism

Dear Mr. Stenzler and Members of the JCRC Team- DEI in HCPSS, including Anti Semitism,

This letter is a follow up to our meeting on February 16, 2021, held virtually between members of the JCRC Team and Mr. James LeMon, Ms. Marcy Leonard, and me. We want to thank you for your time and appreciate the opportunity to discuss your concerns as they relate to DEI being inclusive of students, families, and staff within the Jewish community. We agree, that in order for HCPSS to live up to its obligation of diversity, equity, and inclusion, we must ensure that every member of our school community feels valued and included.

Of chief concern in our meeting was the racism petition presented to our district by over 400 members of the Howard County community, including current and former students, and the lack of voices from the Jewish community in that petition, but also, the appearance that our system is not doing enough to address the concerns of our Jewish students, staff, and families in the system, while raising our level of work on combating institutional racism and issues of race within HCPSS as a response to the petition. To highlight this point, the JCRC team presented a survey conducted with Rabbis and Jewish students that gave examples of the frustration exhibited by members of the community, and continued issues persisting.

HCPSS will continue to take a firm stance on dealing with instances of anti-Semitism, and other actions of bullying and bias toward any staff and/or student from the Jewish community. If incidents are not being addressed as they should, I would like to be notified immediately so that the district can take the necessary steps to rectify the situation and determine where the disconnect occurred that the bias incident was not addressed fully. Additionally, I want the JCRC team to know that although we are presently elevating our efforts around race and racism, we are not eliminating or ignoring the biases and hate that arises toward other groups, including the Jewish community. Furthermore, we are continuing our work around Holocaust education that is mandated by the state. Attached with this letter is a letter and resources sent to JCRC in January 2019, which highlights much of the work we are doing to uphold this commitment.

I want to thank the JCRC and the Jewish Federation of Howard County for your continued support, and I look forward to our future work together. If you have any further questions, please reach out to me at kevin\_gilbert@hcpss.org.

Sincerely,

Kevin F. Gilbert, Ed.D. Director Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion