



# The Jewish Federation OF EDMONTON

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You may have heard last Friday about teaching guidelines materials from 1984 that were of deep concern and offensive to our community; they called for balance when presenting genocide, including Nazism. After seeing this in the news, Becca, a Grade 12 student, informed me of an incident she experienced related to this 'balancing viewpoint' put forward by a classmate in her Zoom classroom this past year. Her teacher was ill-equipped to handle the situation and moved it along. With great courage and wisdom, Becca told the teacher about the impact of this on her as a Jewish student. She was very disappointed the teacher did not deal with the issue. She was dismayed that it would have gone unchecked had Becca not raised it to her. Advocacy begins with a one-to-one interaction, and I commend Becca for her moral compass and courage to confront the situation.

I will not go into the details of the document in question. However, we appreciated Minister Adriana LaGrange unequivocally and swiftly had it removed and ordered for a review of all curriculum documents when this came to light. The [Edmonton Journal](#), [CBC Edmonton](#), and [Global Edmonton](#) interviewed Federation spokespeople about the issue. When we met with the minister on Monday afternoon (along with our counterparts in Calgary), her understanding of the issue heartened us. She spoke with us about the need to remember and learn from the Holocaust, and we are looking forward to more conversations about the curriculum soon.

This discussion was so timely given that it is officially Holocaust Education Week.

While we typically have not delivered Holocaust Education in the fall, we joined Calgary to offer a virtual symposium and have 1,200 students from eight schools taking part. We could further offer our newly gained exhibition for *Stars Without A Heaven: Children of the Holocaust* as part of the Maspik sponsored panels from Canadian Society for Yad Vashem. This week and next, schools are featuring this exhibit so students are interacting with the panels throughout the day. We will have further panelled exhibits coming to the downtown Stanley A. Milner Library in January. If you can spare an hour or two and you are interested in being a guide when we exhibit these panels, please contact Jenn Magalnick at [magalj@edjfd.org](mailto:magalj@edjfd.org). We will need many volunteers in the future and appreciate the efforts of the Holocaust Education Committee, who guided them this past week.

Many of you have asked about March of the Living. Open to high school students, grades 10-12, young adults between 21 and 40, and adults, the trip is planning to run this year. If you have any interest and will want to know more, please let us know by filling out [this form](#).

There will be an information session from Toronto this Thursday and we will have one forthcoming as well once we have sorted our coast to coast details out.

With weather on my mind, I would be remiss not to speak of the catastrophic flooding taking place in British Columbia. If you want to support relief efforts there, our friends in Vancouver have set up a BC flood relief fund. You can donate [here](#).

What much may not realize is we are here to help make connections through events, awareness campaigns and even personal ones. Long-lost friends found each other through our Facebook account this week when one messaged us in search of the other. They had not seen or talked to each other in 45 years! Now, they will catch up and renew this friendship. All this and more are possible because of your support through the UJA campaign.

Shabbat Shalom Edmonton.

*D. Lewitt*

Stacey