

Alberta Darling
Wisconsin State Senator
Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Finance

Testimony before the Senate Committee on Education

SB 744 & AB 816

March 11, 2020

Thank you, Chair Olsen and committee members.

As the number of living Holocaust survivors and witnesses dwindle, it is up to us to ensure that the unforgivable events of the Holocaust are never forgotten and never repeated.

Senate Bill 744/Assembly Bill 816 adds Holocaust education to the model academic standards for social studies. In addition, it guarantees that Wisconsin students learn about the Holocaust at least once during middle school and once during high school.

Holocaust education is currently required in 11 states with legislation pending in 17 others.

Our goal is to ensure that Wisconsin students understand the important lessons of the Holocaust and the dangerous consequences of rising anti-Semitism and religious bigotry.

This legislation is a necessary step in combatting the documented lack of awareness about the Holocaust among youth. Two-thirds of American millennials surveyed in 2018 could not identify what Auschwitz was, and 22% said they hadn't heard of the Holocaust.

The Wisconsin-based Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education Resource Center is committed to providing materials, programming, and professional development necessary to implement this requirement at no additional costs to schools.

I'd like to thank Bev Greenberg and everyone who traveled to Madison to speak and register in favor of this bill. I know you will hear some amazing testimony today including remarks from Holocaust survivors.

Thank you for taking the time to hear Senate Bill 744/Assembly Bill 816. I hope to count on your support for this important bill.

Lisa Subeck

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

TO: Members of the Senate Committee on Education

FROM: Representative Lisa Subeck

DATE: March 11, 2020

RE: 2019 Assembly Bill 816, relating to: incorporating the Holocaust and other genocides into the state model social studies standards and requiring instruction on the Holocaust and other genocides.

Senator Olson and Members of the Committee on Education,

Thank you for your consideration today of Assembly Bill 816, which requires that the state Superintendent of Public Instruction incorporate the Holocaust and other genocides into the model academic standards for social studies and to develop model curriculum and instructional materials. Under the bill, the state Superintendent must consult with an organization in the state that provides Holocaust education programs to public and private schools and offers tools and training to teachers and with a state agency in another state that has developed model Holocaust curricula. The bill also requires a school board, independent charter school, and private school participating in a parental choice program to include instruction on the Holocaust and other genocides at least once in grades 5 to 8 and once in grades 9 to 12.

12 states currently require Holocaust education, and legislation is pending in at least 17 others. It is time Wisconsin joins this growing list of states. I was startled to learn that two-thirds of American millennials surveyed in 2018 could not identify what Auschwitz was and that 22% said they had never heard of the Holocaust. As a Jewish woman whose family was directly impacted by the Holocaust, this terrifies me. Ensuring such atrocities never happen again requires knowledge and recognition of our past.

I can remember interviewing Holocaust survivors when I was a teenager as part of a youth group project to preserve their stories. They shared survival stories that were nothing short of heroic, but were also those of tragic loss. While they survived the horrors of the Holocaust, they also told of those who did not make it. It was not unusual to talk to survivors who had lost their entire families - who were separated from their parents, siblings, or children as they were led to their deaths.

As the number of Holocaust survivors shrinks, it is up to us to ensure that their plight is never forgotten and that the unforgivable events of the past never happen again. Today's children will likely never meet a Holocaust survivor. While they will not have a chance, as I did, to listen to their firsthand stories, it is incumbent upon us to make sure this history is never repeated.

78TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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As a young adult, I visited the Anne Frank house in Amsterdam and a concentration camp in Belgium during a youth group trip to Europe. And a couple of years ago, I visited Stutthoff concentration camp in Gdansk, Poland, with my family. It is hard to explain the overwhelming feeling of loss and sadness – and fear – visiting these camps invokes. 65,000 people of more than 30 nationalities died there. Some died from the terrible living conditions, slave labor, or disease. Other were tortured or executed by shooting, hanging, or in the gas chambers. I saw large glass cases of their belongings – shoes, clothing, and more – left behind by those who were killed. There was a wall where some of those were held there carved their names. My dad scanned the wall looking for names of his ancestors who lost their lives there. While facing this history is horrifying, it is critical we never forget so these atrocities never happen again.

Anti-Semitic incidents are on the rise in our state and our nation, and more than a quarter of all recorded anti-Semitic incidents in Wisconsin took place among students or on campus. In a recent poll, 22% of millennials said they had never heard of the Holocaust – double the percentage of US adults who said the same. This highlights the need for Holocaust education in our schools.

The time to add Wisconsin to the growing list of states requiring Holocaust education is now. I urge you to pass AB 816 to do our part in ensuring these atrocities are never again repeated.



JON PLUMER

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 42nd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Testimony – **AB 816** – The Holocaust Education Act

Senate Committee on Education
Wednesday, March 11, 2020

AB 816 adds the Holocaust and other genocide education to the model academic standards for social studies in Wisconsin’s public, charter, and private schools at least once during grades 5 through 8 and at least once in grades 9 through 12.

AB 816 is a necessary step in combatting the documented lack of awareness about the Holocaust and other genocides among youth. Two-thirds of American millennials surveyed in 2018 could not identify what Auschwitz was and 22% said they haven’t heard of the Holocaust. To me, that is unacceptable. If we forget our history, we are bound to repeat it. Atrocities such as the Holocaust and other genocides should never, ever be forgotten. While I understand that genocides are typically already taught in Wisconsin classrooms, we cannot take that for granted. Adding it to the model academic standards ensures that every student in Wisconsin fully understands what the Holocaust means and how many lives it took.

Holocaust education is currently required in 11 states with legislation pending in 17 others. Wisconsin has been an education leader in this country for a long time and adding this requirement continues to move us forward and be an example for other states.

The Wisconsin-based Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education Resource Center is committed to providing materials, programming, and professional development necessary to implement this requirement at no additional costs to schools.

We have heard some concern that since only the “Holocaust” has been mentioned in the bill that other genocides such as the Armenian genocide would not be taught. I take this concern seriously, but believe that the language “and other genocides” covers other genocides throughout history and would allow organizations committed to remembering those genocides to submit their curriculum to DPI to be included, should this bill become law.

Assembly Committee on Education
March 11, 2020

**Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Testimony for Information on Senate Bill 744 and Assembly Bill 816**

Thank you Chairman Olsen and members of the committee for the opportunity to provide information regarding 2019 Senate Bill 744 (SB 744) and 2019 Assembly Bill 816 (AB 816), which would incorporate the Holocaust and other genocides into the state model social studies standards as well as require instruction on the Holocaust and other genocides.

Background

Learning the history of genocides, in particular the Holocaust or Shoah, and the human rights and citizenship lessons from that learning is vital for every Wisconsin school graduate. The Department of Public Instruction has supported this important learning for decades. Studying the whole history of the Holocaust is currently part of our Wisconsin Standards for Social Studies, recently revised in 2018.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) has a transparent and comprehensive process for reviewing and revising academic standards. The process begins with a notice of intent to review an academic area with a public comment period. The State Superintendent's Academic Standards Review Council examines those comments and recommends whether or not to revise or develop standards in that academic area. The State Superintendent then authorizes whether or not to pursue a revision or development process.

Following the State Superintendent's authorization to revise or develop standards, a state writing committee is formed to work on revision or development of those standards for all grade levels. That draft is then made available for open review to get feedback from the public, key stakeholders, educators, and the Legislature with further review by the State Superintendent's Academic Standards Review Council. The State Superintendent then determines adoption of the standards. Additional information on the standards review process can be found at <https://dpi.wi.gov/standards/council>.

The recently revised social studies standards call for all students to learn about historical genocides. In fact, there is specific language related to learning about the Holocaust or Shoah. This language can be accessed on page 43 of the standards, located at https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/standards/New%20pdfs/2018_WI_Social_Studies_Standards.pdf and is copied below. Please note that the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights referenced below was established in large part after World War II because of the Holocaust.

Historical Eras and Themes Students in Wisconsin will learn about the history of Wisconsin, the United States, and the world. When teaching Wisconsin, United States, or World History, the following are topics for exploration:

2. Human and civil rights, including suffrage, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and current and historic genocide, including the Holocaust or Shoah.

Additionally, eras and themes in the social studies standards for US History include the World Wars and Political Science Standard 2 has a learning priority of “Asserting and Reaffirming of Human Rights”. This includes rights for different groups of traditionally marginalized people.

Analysis

SB 744 and AB 816 requires the State Superintendent to incorporate the Holocaust and other genocides into the model academic standards for social studies and to develop model curricula and instructional materials on the same subject.

Under the bill, in developing the model curricula and instructional materials, the State Superintendent must consult with an organization in this state that provides Holocaust education programs to public and private schools and offers educational tools and training to teachers and with a state agency in another state that has developed model curricula on the Holocaust. Finally, the bill requires a school board, independent charter school, and private school participating in a parental choice program to include instruction on the Holocaust and other genocides in its respective curriculum at least once in grades 5 to 8 and once in grades 9 to 12.

Academic standards adopted by the State Superintendent are used to guide instruction. The standards, however, are not required to be adopted by school boards and school boards ultimately approve curriculum.

Another option the committee may want to consider is to add the Holocaust to the list of Wisconsin’s special observance days found under Wis. Stats. 118.02 The United Nations General Assembly has already designated January 27 as International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Many teachers use these special observance days as a teaching opportunity to introduce their students to specific historical persons or events being observed on those days. A list of current observance days in Wis. Stats. 118.02 follows below.

- (1) January 15, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.
- (2) February 12, Abraham Lincoln's birthday.
- (3) February 15, Susan B. Anthony's birthday.
- (4) February 22, George Washington's birthday.

- (5) March 4, Casimir Pulaski Day.
- (5m) March 17, for "The Great Hunger" in Ireland from 1845 to 1850.
- (5r) April 9, Prisoners of War Remembrance Day.
- (6) April 13, American Creed Day.
- (6m) April 19, Patriots' Day.
- (7) April 22, Environmental Awareness Day.
- (7g) The last Friday in April, Arbor Day, except that if the governor by proclamation sets apart one day to be designated as Arbor and Bird Day under s. 14.16 (1), that day shall be appropriately observed.
- (7r) June 14, if school is held, Robert M. La Follette, Sr. Day.
- (8) September 16, Mildred Fish Harnack Day.
- (9) September 17, U.S. Constitution Day.
- (9g) Wednesday of the 3rd week in September, as part of Wonderful Wisconsin Week under s. 14.16 (8), Wisconsin Day.
- (9r) Friday of the 3rd week in September, POW-MIA Recognition Day.
- (9t) Wednesday of the 4th week in September, Bullying Awareness Day.
- (10) September 28, Frances Willard Day.
- (11) October 9, Leif Erikson Day.
- (12) October 12, Christopher Columbus' birthday.
- (13) November 11, Veterans Day.

State Superintendent's Academic Standards Review Council

- Barbara Bales, Director of Strategic Initiatives and Educational Innovation - University of Wisconsin System
- Mike Beighley, District Administrator - Whitehall School District
- Mariana Castro, Deputy Director, Wisconsin Center for Education Research, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- Representative Dave Considine, D-Baraboo - Wisconsin State Assembly
- Dr. Rose Coppins, Former Wisconsin School Administrator, MAPSI Representative
- Jill Gaskell of Blanchardville - Member, Pecatonica School Board
- Barbara Gransee, Director of Pupil Services and Special Education - Adams-Friendship School District
- Anne Heck, Principal - Lake Geneva Middle School
- Jenni Hofschulte of Milwaukee, Parent - Milwaukee Public Schools
- Brian Jackson, President - Wisconsin Indian Education Association
- Dean Kaminski - Principal - Prairie Elementary School, Waunakee Community School District
- Howard Kruschke of Roberts - President, St. Croix Central School Board
- Senator Chris Larson, D-Milwaukee - Wisconsin State Senate
- Heather Mielke of Elkhorn - Math Teacher - Burlington High School
- Senator Luther Olsen, R-Ripon - Wisconsin State Senate
- Desiree Pointer Mace, Professor - Alverno College
- Chris Reader, Director of Health and Human Resources - Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce
- Lisa Sanderfoot of De Pere, Computer and Information Science Teacher - Valley View Elementary School, Ashwaubenon
- Chrystal Seeley-Schreck, Associate Vice-President, Office of Instructional Services, Wisconsin Technical College System
- Amy Vesperman, Superintendent and Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Plum City School District
- Pam Yoder, District Administrator, Belleville School District

John Johnson, Ex Officio Chair, Director, Literacy and Mathematics,
Department of Public Instruction



School Administrators Alliance

Representing the Interests of Wisconsin School Children

TO: Assembly Committee on State Affairs
FROM: John Forester, Executive Director
DATE: March 11, 2020
RE: SB 744 – Incorporating the Holocaust and other genocides into the state model social studies standards and requiring instruction.

The School Administrators Alliance (SAA) opposes Senate Bill 744, relating to incorporating the Holocaust and other genocides into the state model social studies standards and requiring instruction in the Holocaust and other genocides.

Our educators in Wisconsin face some enormous challenges in meeting the objectives we have for K-12 education. In a nutshell, I would characterize these primary objectives as follows:

- To improve student achievement for all students.
- To close those stubborn achievement gaps.
- To make sure all Wisconsin students graduate college and career ready.

We currently have lots of statutory requirements directed at schools, some that help schools to achieve these objectives and some that don't. Every legislative session we see several bills that would create new or expanded instructional mandates. And we all know that there are scores of interest groups that believe that schools should be providing children with instruction in many new subject areas in order to meet laudable public policy goals. In short, these proposals, if adopted, would lead school districts to take time, money and focus away from their primary objectives.

I would just pose three questions for the committee as you consider this legislation:

- First, how will this bill help school districts to meet our education policy objectives?
- Given the very big challenges that we face and the important objectives we are working hard to achieve, "How would you like us to use the precious minutes we have in the limited number of instructional days in each school year?"
- Finally, "Who should be charged with the responsibility of determining the curricular priorities that best meet the unique needs of students in each of the 421 school districts – state policymakers or local teachers, administrators and school boards?"

Thank you for your consideration of our views. If you should have any questions regarding our position on SB 744, please call me at 608-242-1370.



Statement in Support of 2019 Senate Bill 744

Thank you for the honor of addressing the Senate Committee on Education. On behalf of the Superintendent of Schools of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and our nearly 28,000 students in 102 schools, in 10 counties of Southeastern Wisconsin, I would like to state our strong support for the passage of Senate Bill 744 to require the state superintendent of public instruction to incorporate the Holocaust and other genocides into the model academic standards for social studies and to develop model curricula and instructional materials on the same subject.

The Holocaust, or Shoah, is a seminal event in the history of mankind. More than six million men, women, and children were intentionally, systematically, and ruthlessly exterminated for the singular reason that they were Jewish. Millions of others were also put to death. While we cannot change what happened, we must acknowledge that the Holocaust was not an inevitable event. Through a thorough and comprehensive study of the Holocaust and other genocides of history, we can learn valuable lessons and insights applicable to contemporary times that must be passed on to today's students...our leaders of tomorrow...so that history does not repeat itself. So that groups of people are not targeted for death due to their race, ethnicity, or religion.

We believe in the necessity of Holocaust education, in our schools taught with a recognition and understanding of the history of our Church, taught through the lens of the Catholic worldview, and taught in accord to the principle of solidarity that "highlights in a particular way the intrinsic social nature of the human person, the equality of all in dignity and rights and the common path of individuals and peoples towards an ever more committed unity." (Pontifical Council on Justice and Peace, Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church (2005), No. 192)

We appreciate that while the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction will establish the base standards, individual school districts will have the flexibility to decide when Holocaust Education is most appropriate in their community.

We enjoy a genuine, growing partnership with the Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education Resource Center that allows our schools direct access to reliable, authentic instructional resources. We further partner with HERC to provide direct teacher training. We look forward to our continued journey together on this shared mission.

In closing, please let me reiterate: just as we support the requirements of Act 143 for all schools, the Superintendent of Schools of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee supports requiring Holocaust education in all schools in the State of Wisconsin.

Thank you,

Bruce Varick
Associate Superintendent
13 March 2020

OFFICE FOR SCHOOLS

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WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

TO: Senator Luther Olsen, Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Education

FROM: Kim Vercauteren, Executive Director, Wisconsin Catholic Conference

DATE: March 11, 2020

RE: Support for Senate Bill 744/Assembly Bill 816, Holocaust and Genocide Education

The Wisconsin Catholic Conference (WCC) appreciates the opportunity to offer testimony today on behalf of the Roman Catholic bishops of Wisconsin in support of Senate Bill 744 and Assembly Bill 816. These bills incorporate the Holocaust and other genocides into the state's model social studies standards for education and require Holocaust and genocide instruction for certain grades at public, charter, and private schools participating in the parental choice programs.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that:

Actions deliberately contrary to the law of nations and to its universal principles are crimes, as are the orders that command such actions. Blind obedience does not suffice to excuse those who carry them out. Thus, the extermination of a people, nation, or ethnic minority must be condemned as a mortal sin. One is morally bound to resist orders that command genocide. (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2313)

It continues, "[e]very act of war directed to the indiscriminate destruction of whole cities or vast areas with their inhabitants is a crime against God and man, which merits firm and unequivocal condemnation." (CCC, no. 2314)

While we appreciate that the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction has revised the current model academic standards to incorporate instruction on human rights, the Holocaust, and other genocides, the WCC takes this opportunity to acknowledge its support for the continued inclusion of these subjects in our state academic standards as required under SB 744/AB 816.

Under the bills, a school board, independent charter school, and private school participating in a parental choice program must include instruction on the Holocaust and other genocides at least once in grades 5 to 8 and once in grades 9 to 12. While the WCC does not generally support mandates imposed upon private schools, in this instance, the subject matter is of such great importance that our duty to educate and condemn genocide compels our support for SB 744/AB 816. We appreciate that these bills allow for the school to utilize discretion in developing its curriculum based on the model provided.

We urge your support for Senate Bill 744 and Assembly Bill 816. Thank you.

LYNN DZIADULEWICZ

EDUCATOR, CATHOLIC MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL, WAUKESHA, WI

RESIDENCE: 9556 BEVERLY PLACE, WAUWATOSA, WI 53226

**PERSONAL STATEMENT OF MARCH 11, 2020 IN SUPPORT OF
SENATE BILL 744 ON HOLOCAUST & GENOCIDE EDUCATION**

Thank you for considering this bill. I am communicating my support of Senate Bill 744 because, as a teacher and parent of young adults, I know that lessons on the Holocaust are what will help future generations avoid horrors of the past. When I first heard about the bill, I was very pleased because I have long believed our state should set a mandate for all students to be taught about the Holocaust. But when I got to read the bill itself, I was thrilled because the bill does two things that I believe are especially important:

1. **Ensures that students in Wisconsin will learn about the Holocaust and genocides at least two times during their secondary years (grades 5-12).** So often I have students in my classroom who tell me that they have never learned about the Holocaust before. I also frequently find that students do not know or do not correctly remember details they have previously learned about the Holocaust. Ensuring that students learn about the Holocaust at two different points in their middle and high school years increases the likelihood that every Wisconsin student will have learned about the Holocaust and will have been corrected on any of their misunderstandings of the material by the time they graduate.
2. **Calls for the setting of specific educational standards, which will support teachers in their quest for solid and truthful material to be used in teaching the Holocaust.** With so many poor, and sometimes downright untruthful, sources of information readily available to teachers and students this is a key concern in today's world. I am gratified to see that the bill requires the establishment of standards which are to be set by the state in collaboration with local and national expert resources. Organizations like HERC (The Holocaust Education Resource Center) which is based in Milwaukee - and other national organizations that frequently partner with HERC, will be able to assist in establishing the very best practices and materials for educating our students. These organizations have exceptional

track records of providing outstanding seminars for teachers, education programs for direct contact with students, resource materials, follow up support and even grants for funding educational projects, field trips and the purchase of school materials. In my experience as a participant of several national seminars, I have asked and learned that I am one of very few Wisconsin teachers who have taken advantage of these programs which fully cover the cost of each teacher's seminar, travel expenses, lodging, food and materials (consisting of a wide array of carefully selected high quality books, videos, teaching manuals, etc.).

In the past six years since my return to full-time teaching (I spent nine years as a substitute teacher in Wauwatosa), I have sought out professional development programs for educators of the Holocaust. Why? I am not positive, but I believe that my interest and concern for the topic developed from the point when I first saw *Movietone* newsreels, shown as part of a unit on World War II in my high school's U.S History class. The haunting images and big questions about how humans can treat other humans in that way has always fueled my interest.

Sadly, I do not believe that today's students in Wisconsin are consistently being exposed to material about the Holocaust in the same way that my generation was. Each time I begin a unit on the Holocaust in one of the senior or junior level courses I teach, I briefly survey my students to gauge how much they already know. When I do this, I find that there are wide gaps in experiences – some students seem to have learned quite a lot, either in middle school or at an earlier point in high school, while others know very little. Every student needs to know what happened during the Holocaust by the time he or she graduates from high school. It is the only way we can ensure that a similar event never takes place in our future.

Note: Besides being able to rely on HERC as an outstanding resource and means of learning more about the effects of the Holocaust and antisemitism in my community, I have had the honor and privilege of participating in some of the most highly regarded Holocaust education programs for teachers in our nation. Through my participation in programs such as the Bearing Witness Summer Institute in Washington, D.C. (sponsored by the ADL, Georgetown University, USHMM, USSCB and NCEA) and The Olga Lengyel Institute (TOLI) in New York, I gained a much deeper appreciation for how impactful and critical lessons learned about the Holocaust can be while I discovered ways to make my own teaching on the subject more relevant and powerful for my students. I would love to see more Wisconsin teachers take advantage of these programs. With the passing of SB 744 I believe more teachers will be incented to apply to these kinds of programs or to attend one of many satellite seminars brought to our state, by these same organizations, and generously offered to educators free of charge.

Jeremiah Everet
2766 N 53rd ST
Milwaukee, WI 53210-2316
8th Grade student
Milwaukee School of Languages

Hi, my name is Jeremiah Everett. I am speaking in favor of Senate Bill 744. Before I begin my statements, I just want to thank HERC and Chris Cowels for letting my social studies class receive the opportunity to go to their education center. A word that is important is genocide, genocide means the killing of a group of people from a specific ethnic group. I think the Holocaust is important because it was a time where people weren't treated fairly because of their religion. I also think that it is important because students should learn about difficult times in history and how discriminated and segregated the past was.

While the Holocaust was in place Jewish individuals were the group that was being killed, and at the end of the Holocaust, approximately 6 million Jewish individuals were murdered. Jews weren't the only group that was targeted, in fact, millions of others were getting targeted for racial, political, ideological and behavioral reasons. More than one million who perished were children. Jews were also forced to live in specific areas of the city called ghettos. Ghettos were places of terrible poverty and during periods of population growth, ghettos had narrow streets and crowded houses.

My final reason why I think the Holocaust is very important is that students and adults should know that many suffered, and many were killed. The person I believe that had a lot to do with causing the Holocaust as a dictator and an instigator is named Adolf Hitler. Hitler came to power because he was a motivational speaker to the Germans because they lacked confidence. In January of 1933, Adolf Hitler was appointed chancellor, and Germany believed they found their new savior for their nation. Hitler promised the Germans a better life in Germany, but it didn't turn out to be the life they wanted after all, because he was a racist man and sent the Nazis to kill Jews. In conclusion, I would like to talk about how students are applying what they learned into their lives. Students are applying what they learned about the Holocaust into their lives by speaking and protesting about racism and discrimination. Just recently, students from Syracuse University protested about racism and 30 students were placed under temporary suspension. I don't feel that they should've been suspended because they were trying to make a change against these horrific actions that are happening in the present.

Natalie White
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Prairie du Chien, WI 53821
ncwhite33@gmail.com
608-212-0561

Testimony in support of Senate Bill 744

Dear Committee Chair Senator Olsen and Members of the Senate Committee on Education,

My name is Natalie White. I have been teaching at Prairie du Chien High School for the past seven years. This is my third year teaching Holocaust Studies as an elective for juniors and seniors. When my colleague Nina Grudt and I first proposed this course, it was to address the lacking education our students received in regard to the Holocaust. Accordingly, we sought resources and professional development opportunities that would help us prepare a curriculum. Our mission was to increase understanding of the Holocaust and other genocides and extinguish the anti-Semitic rhetoric we were seeing and hearing in our school hallways.

In my first year of teaching, I walked into my classroom one day to find a swastika drawn across half my white board. As the only Jewish teacher in the school, I was horrified. I called the Anti-Defamation League for support and the next day I addressed the issue with each of my ninth grade classes. Nobody came forward as the perpetrator of this act, but nonetheless, it became a teachable moment for all my students.

I do not believe the individual who drew a swastika was motivated by hate; it was purely an act of ignorance. Many of our Wisconsin students are ignorant to the significance behind symbols or gestures or words. But ADL data shows there has been a 48% increase in anti-Semitic incidents reported in the US since 2016. Some of those, including 57 in our own state, are part of the 344 incidents reported in K-12 schools in 2018 alone.

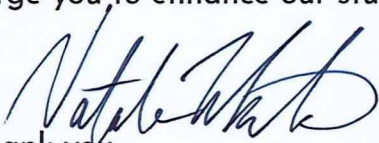
As an educator, my objective is to combat this ignorance. Lessons in Holocaust Education translate into lessons in *civil rights*, *human rights*, and social emotional learning. My students incorporate artwork and poetry analysis into their understanding of individual testimonies in the USC Shoah Foundation Archive. They use the ADL's Pyramid of Hate to discuss the escalation of hate that can lead to violence and genocide both in the Holocaust and in recent incidents. My students become empathetic learners not only in regard to victims of the Holocaust, but when discussing LGBTQ+ rights, modern genocides, and issues that impact our local community.

I am fortunate to have a supportive principal, Andy Banasik, who sees the value in offering this elective Holocaust course. As a teacher, I appreciate local control when it comes to curriculum guidelines that enable teachers to create unique courses that address standards. However, in regard to Holocaust Education, the current social studies standard is simply insufficient to cover the breadth, magnitude and complexity of this atrocity.

Mandating Holocaust Education is the only way to ensure Wisconsin teachers will have access to resources and professional development adequate to appropriately address this topic. I've had the privilege of attending several programs to improve my own knowledge and pedagogy, but I have had to seek these opportunities out-of-state. Teachers must have the support of DPI in order to effectively educate our students.

Holocaust Education emphasizes the powerful impact individual choices can have. You have the choice today to make a difference in creating a more understanding, compassionate, and informed population of young adults. This is a crucial step to eliminating further acts of hate and prejudice in our schools, communities, and the world.

I urge you to enhance our students' public education by voting in favor of SB 744.



Thank you.

Testimony for Senate Bill 744

Good Morning, thank you for hearing us today. My name is Yvonne Audi and I am a teacher at Milwaukee School of Languages a 6-12 high school in Milwaukee that has French German and Spanish immersion students. (Address 4280 S 122 Greenfield, 53228)

I am speaking in favor of Senate bill 744.

For years, Holocaust education was taught exclusively by Jews. But that is changing today. I am a Christian Palestinian. My mom's family came to this country in 1914 to escape the Turks and WWI. My dad's family came here in 1946 after they left their homes during the creation of the Israeli State.

My mother's brother was a nineteen-year old Sargent in the U.S. 7th Army in May 1945. His unit liberated Dachau Concentration camp. This camp processed more than 220,000 prisoners. Most of them died of starvation and disease. He never spoke of the horrors he saw until I was in college studying history. He described to me the emaciated skeletal survivors of that camp. Most of all, 40 years later, he remembered the smell.

I have been working with the Nathan and Esther Peltz Holocaust Education Resource Center for four years. They have provided resources for my classroom including a wonderful trunk filled with Holocaust literature and posters, as well as sending speakers to my classroom. HERC has provided Holocaust survivors to talk to my students along with field-trips to a synagogue and the Jewish Museum Milwaukee.

Working with HERC has allowed my students enriching experiences they would not have had otherwise. Through HERC, I learned of Echoes and Reflections, a program provided by Yad Veshem in Jerusalem. Yad Vashem is bringing me to Jerusalem this summer along with educators from all over America to study Holocaust education. I will be bringing that information back to teachers in Milwaukee Public Schools.

I connect the Holocaust to social justice issues my students in Milwaukee face in their personal lives. We work on diversity and tolerance along with standing up rather than standing by. I had a conversation recently with two of my high school students. They saw our HERC Educator in the school and remembered her from our social studies class. They told me that because of the Holocaust lesson on being an upstander rather than a by stander, they have stopped students from being bullied by others. They said the lessons they learned have staid with them and they apply them to their lives today.

Holocaust education is incredibly important and should be in every school in our state. There are many resources for schools and districts to use to present this information to students in and engaging manner.

Thank you for listening and please vote yes on Senate Bill 744, because every student in this state needs to learn about diversity and tolerance.

Marvin J. Tick

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March 6, 2020

Hon. Alberta Darling, Vice Chair
Wisconsin Senate Committee on Education
State Capitol
Madison, WI
Sen.Darling@legis.wisconsin.gov

Dear Senator Darling:

Thank you for being the lead Wisconsin Senate sponsor for AB 816 and to Representative Jon Plummer as sponsor in the Wisconsin Assembly. This bill "requires the state superintendent of public instruction to incorporate the Holocaust and other genocides into the model academic standards for social studies and to develop model curricula and instructional materials. It passed the Assembly unanimously with wide support.

I am attending this Senate hearing to bolster the testimony of Nancy Kennedy Barnett, a member of the Board of the Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education and Resource Center (HERC Milwaukee). I have co-chaired HERC's Kristallnacht Memorial Program for the last 4 years.

Like Nancy Kennedy Barnett, my father was a Holocaust Survivor. He was lucky enough to get out of Nazi Germany after the Kristallnacht and come to the US. He watched over the two days of November 8-9, 1938 in Berlin as throngs attack his father's specialty linen shop and looted it empty. That evening 10,000 Jews were first sent to Concentration Camps.

Later my father served in the US Armed Forces (1944 -1946) in World War II as a member of a special military counterintelligence unit known as "the Ritchie Boys". He was sent back to Europe in very critical missions to help close out the war. He also served in 1946 on the prosecution team at the first Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunals. He later dedicated his life to teaching about the Shoah and served on community boards promoting tolerance.

Far too often I hear of some horrific hate activity directed against some group. It could be Neo Nazi's marching in some community, it could be a racist hate crime, or it could be public statements clearly untrue about blocks of people. The question is what can a community do and how-to best deal with the problem?

The heart of AB 816 provides the answer. The bill's educational components provide guidance, methodology, tools and resources to help our teachers deal with these situations, with knowledge and training. I join Milwaukee HERC standing ready to support this program through our research and survivor speakers, and our programming now recognized nationwide as second to none.

Thank you once again for your support. I would ask that a copy of this letter be added to the record.

Sincerely,

Marvin J. Tick

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March 9, 2020

Senate Committee on Education
Wisconsin State Capitol
2 East Main Street
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Chair Olsen, Vice-Chair Darling, and Members of the Senate Committee on Education,

I write on behalf of ADL and urge you to support Assembly Bill 816 (“AB 816”) and Senate Bill 744 (“SB 744”) – legislation that would require the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (“Superintendent”) to incorporate the Holocaust and other genocides into the model academic standards for social studies and to develop model curricula and instructional materials.

There is a clear need for Holocaust and genocide education in Wisconsin, especially as studies show that such tragedies are fading from memory. According to a 2018 survey, 22 percent of American millennials have either never heard of the Holocaust or are unsure whether they have heard of it. Furthermore, only 35 percent of Americans know about the Armenian Genocide.

ADL supports the Committee’s efforts to address the current need for Holocaust and genocide education in Wisconsin. Our office hopes to work with the Committee to ensure the proposed legislation equips educators to present Holocaust and genocide studies in a productive way that will foster long-term, lasting impact.

Founded in 1913 in response to an escalating climate of antisemitism and bigotry, ADL is a leading anti-hate organization with the timeless mission to protect the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment for all. Today, we fight all forms of hate with the same vigor and passion by exposing extremism, delivering anti-bias education, and fighting hate online. Through Echoes & Reflections – a national partnership with USC Shoah Foundation and Yad Vashem – ADL provides educators with professional development and educational materials to introduce students to the complex themes of the Holocaust and to understand its lasting effect on the world.

In recent years, ADL has tracked heightened levels of biased-based incidents in Wisconsin schools, which include Nazi and Holocaust imagery, symbols, references and language. For example, we have received reports of students posting pictures online while giving Nazi salutes, vandalizing school property with swastikas, circulating online memes about Jews and ovens, and using other Nazi rhetoric when threatening Jewish students. The increase in antisemitic incidents is also reflected in ADL data. From 2016 to 2018, ADL tracked a 48 percent increase in K-12 school antisemitic incidents.

These incidents do not occur in a vacuum. They come at a time when we are also seeing an expansion of hate groups, a resurgence of Holocaust denial, and remarkably low awareness among youth about the Holocaust and other genocides. For example, a recent Pew Research Center study revealed that a majority of American teens could not answer basic questions about the Holocaust. Not only does Holocaust and genocide education provide important historical lessons, it can help students grow as responsible individuals as they develop critical thinking, empathy, and social justice skills.

ADL Midwest

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Mandating Holocaust and genocide education in Wisconsin would be a critical step forward. To that end, and based on model legislation from around the country, ADL encourages the Committee to consider the following suggestions to strengthen the bill and maximize its intended effectiveness:

Define Genocide

As currently drafted, the bill does not define the term “genocide.” To ensure that the academic standards fully incorporate the study of other genocides, ADL recommends including a definition to “genocide” similar to the Illinois Holocaust and Genocide Commission Act. In addition, ADL recommends revising the definition of Holocaust by replacing the phrase “men, women and children” with the term “individuals.”

Outline Goals and Objectives

ADL recommends amending the bill to specifically list the learning goals and objectives for Holocaust and genocide education. These additions will guide the creation and implementation of the “curriculum and instructional materials” referenced in the bill. Currently, other than a basic reference to “the Holocaust . . . and other genocides,” the bill does not provide any details regarding the required content of instruction. As a result, even the most cursory coverage of the Holocaust would technically satisfy the requirements of the bill. In order for this important legislation to have its intended effect in Wisconsin, the requirements for the curriculum should be more robust. Including educational goals and objectives in the bill will provide helpful guidance as the Superintendent and school districts craft academic standards, curriculum, and lesson plans.

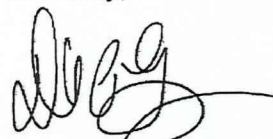
Consult National Holocaust Organizations

ADL recommends amending the bill to encourage consultation with a broad spectrum of Holocaust education partners. In addition to Wisconsin-based organizations, there are many national organizations with expertise in Holocaust education – such as the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, USC Shoah Foundation, and Echoes & Reflections – and this amendment will ensure that the Superintendent uses research, best practices, and resources from a variety of subject-matter-expert organizations.

Again, ADL applauds the Wisconsin Legislature for its efforts and commitment to join the growing list of states that require Holocaust and genocide education. We urge the Committee to support SB 744 / AB 816, and to consider making it even stronger and more effective by implementing the recommendations outlined in this letter.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



David Goldenberg
Regional Director
ADL Midwest

ADL Midwest

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Testimony for Senate Bill 744

Good Morning, thank you for hearing us today. My name is Yvonne Audi and I am a teacher at Milwaukee School of Languages a 6-12 high school in Milwaukee that has French German and Spanish immersion students. (Address 4280 S 122 Greenfield, 53228)

I am speaking in favor of Senate bill 744.

For years, Holocaust education was taught exclusively by Jews. But that is changing today. I am a Christian Palestinian. My mom's family came to this country in 1914 to escape the Turks and WWI. My dad's family came here in 1946 after they left their homes during the creation of the Israeli State.

My mother's brother was a nineteen-year old Sargent in the U.S. 7th Army in May 1945. His unit liberated Dachau Concentration camp. This camp processed more than 220,000 prisoners. Most of them died of starvation and disease. He never spoke of the horrors he saw until I was in college studying history. He described to me the emaciated skeletal survivors of that camp. Most of all, 40 years later, he remembered the smell.

I have been working with the Nathan and Esther Peltz Holocaust Education Resource Center for four years. I have taken Toli satellite seminars and connect with HERC each year. They have provided resources for my classroom including a wonderful trunk filled with Holocaust literature and posters, as well as sending speakers to my classroom. HERC has provided Holocaust survivors to talk to my students along with field-trips to a synagogue and the Jewish Museum Milwaukee.

Working with HERC has allowed my students enriching experiences they would not have had otherwise. Through HERC, I learned of Echoes and Reflections, a program provided by Yad Veshem in Jerusalem. Yad Vashem is bringing me to Jerusalem this summer along with educators from all over America to study Holocaust education. I will be bringing that information back to teachers in Milwaukee Public Schools.

I connect the Holocaust to social justice issues my students in Milwaukee face in their personal lives. We work on diversity and tolerance along with standing up rather than standing by. Holocaust education is incredibly important and should be in every school in our state. There are many resources for schools and districts to use to present this information to students in an engaging manner. I am hoping to work with HERC this summer to produce accessible lessons and assessments that Wisconsin teachers can use for Holocaust education.

Thank you for listening and please vote yes on Senate Bill 744, because every student in this state needs to learn about diversity and tolerance.

Hello my name is Natalie White. I have been teaching at Prairie du Chien High School for the past seven years. This is my third year teaching Holocaust Studies as an elective course for juniors and seniors.

In my first year of teaching, I walked into my classroom one day to find a swastika drawn across half my white board. I was horrified. I called the ADL for support and the next day I confronted each of my ninth grade classes. Nobody came forward as the perpetrator of this act, but nonetheless, it became a teachable moment for all my students.

I choose to believe that this drawing was not a hate crime; it was purely an act of ignorance. Many of our Wisconsin students *are* ignorant to the significance behind symbols or gestures or words. ADL data shows there has been a 48% increase in Anti-Semitic incidents reported in the US since 2016. Some of those, including 57 in our own state, are part of the 344 incidents reported in K-12 schools in 2018 alone.

As an educator, my objective is to combat this ignorance. Lessons in Holocaust Education permeate into lessons in *civil* rights, *human* rights, and social emotional learning. My students incorporate artwork and poetry analysis into their understandings of individual testimonies. They use USC Shoah Foundation's Pyramid of Hate to discuss severity and impact of incidents both during the Holocaust and in recent times.

As a teacher, I appreciate local control when it comes to curriculum guidelines. However, in regard to Holocaust Education, the current standard is simply insufficient to cover the breadth and magnitude of this atrocity.

Mandating Holocaust Education is the only way to ensure Wisconsin teachers will have access to resources and professional development adequate to appropriately address this topic. I've had the privilege of attending several programs to improve my own knowledge and pedagogy regarding this complex topic. Teachers must have the support of DPI and the state in order to effectively educate our students.

Holocaust Education emphasizes the impact individual choices can have. You have the choice today to make a difference in creating a more understanding, compassionate, and informed population of young adults. This is a crucial step to combatting further acts of hate and prejudice in our schools, communities, and the world.

Thank you.

Good Afternoon. I am the child of a Holocaust survivor from Budapest, Hungary, and a second-generation speaker teaching my father's story of survival in the middle schools. My name is Nancy Kennedy Barnett, and I reside at 7936 N Fairchild Road in Fox Point, Wisconsin. I am an active community volunteer and leader, a past president of my synagogue, and an officer of both the Harry & Rose Samson Family JCC and the Milwaukee Jewish Federation. I was an auxiliary policewoman of the Fox Point Police for 12 years and currently sit on the board of the Holocaust Education Resource Center in Milwaukee. I want to thank my Senator, Alberta Darling, and this Senate committee, for allowing me to present my testimony.

My father, now deceased, was in a concentration camp in Europe during World War II. When alive, he taught about the Holocaust, speaking to hundreds of people in our State. We have lost witnesses to this horrific time in history, but the lessons and messages cannot be forgotten. When I teach, I not only speak about the atrocities of the past, I use it as a lens to illustrate what can happen when hatred and bullying are left unchecked. The dehumanization at the center of the Holocaust still exists today! We need to plan for the time when survivors cannot speak for themselves.

I am here to ask you to pass SB-744 and I want to tell you about an interaction with a student that transpired on May 19, 2019, just 9 months ago, when I spoke to 130 8th grade students at North Shore Middle School in Hartland, Wisconsin.

These students had traveled to the Illinois Holocaust Museum in Skokie, Illinois the day before. After I had spent an hour with them telling my father's story, during the question and answer time, an 8th grade girl raised her hand and, clearly troubled, said, "so...I was talking to my mom last night, and my mom says that she has a friend who says the Holocaust never happened but should have!"

Clearly, this student, now equipped with the facts from the museum and my presentation, was questioning the information received from her mother the night before. She had not been taught the truth before this week. And she wanted to know! We must teach the truth! As the decision makers of tomorrow, students must understand the consequences of indifference and hate. They must not be bystanders, they can be Upstanders instead by being people who get involved; they can be proactive and have the courage to speak up and care.

Holocaust education not only teaches the history of one of the most violent periods in all mankind, it teaches an understanding of the ramifications of prejudice, racism, and stereotyping, and an examination of what it means to be a responsible and respectful person today. We must teach tolerance of diversity in a pluralistic society and how to nurture and protect democratic values and institutions. We need to teach the Holocaust to a new generation of young people to make sure that the truth survives – and that the Holocaust doesn't slip through the cracks of collective memory.

This bill, once passed, will ensure that we **do** teach a painful part of humanity's past while preparing citizens to live respectfully today.

Thank you very much.

Testimony on SB744 Presented by Beverly Greenberg
to the Senate Education Committee
Wednesday, March 11, 2020

Thank you Chairman Olsen and Vice Chairman Darling and committee members of the Education Committee of the Wisconsin Senate. I am Bev Greenberg, Chair of the Taskforce on Holocaust Education in Wisconsin, and I am here today in support of SB744, Holocaust and Other Genocide Education in Middle and High Schools. I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the author of SB744, Senator Alberta Darling, and thank you to Senator Dale Kooyenga for his leadership and strong support. Thanks also goes to the authors of AB816 in the Assembly, Rep. John Plumer and Rep. Lisa Subeck. I would like to thank Speaker Robin Vos for his leadership in this effort.

I am a proud lifetime resident of Wisconsin. By way of introduction, I was a middle and high school teacher, an Associate Executive Director of the Zoological Society, and a 20 year executive at Time Warner Cable, serving 130 franchises throughout our state. In addition, I was Chair of the Board of Aurora Health Care, and President of the Aurora Health Care Foundation. I hold an honorary doctorate from Cardinal Stritch University. Today, I am executive producer of the TV show on ABC called Project Pitch It, a local shark tank like show, dedicated to making Wisconsin an entrepreneurial destination. But, nothing, nothing, I have ever done comes close to being more significant and critical for our present and future generations than helping to pass SB744.

Many of us grew up in a home where we learned the values of tolerance and diversity, dignity and respect for all human beings. SB744 will ensure that all Wisconsin middle and high schoolers will learn about the Holocaust and events leading up to and encompassing the most hideous genocide in modern history. It is the only time when one government set out to annihilate an entire population of people throughout the world—and nearly succeeded.

We all know that we must remember history or be doomed to repeat it. Yet, astonishingly, we also know that we have forgotten! Recent research shows alarming trends that memory of the Holocaust is fading. 22% of Millennials surveyed said they hadn't heard of the Holocaust! The recent audit of anti-Semitic incidents in Wisconsin showed a 329% increase in anti-Semitic incidents since 2015. Middle school activity of hate, harassment and threats is up 250%. Almost 25% of recorded hate incidents take place among middle schoolers or on college campuses. There is power in education. When students are given the opportunity to learn about the Holocaust they develop a greater acceptance of diversity, a richer understanding of WWII, and an enhanced intolerance to bullying.

There is no risk to adopting SB744, only benefit to our state's most valuable resource, our children. The Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education and Resource Center (HERC) in Milwaukee is prepared to provide the help and resources needed through teaching materials, curriculum guides, and speakers to assist teachers state-wide. Our task force, many of whom are here today, including HERC's Chair, Arleen Peltz, and Task Force Co-Chair, Jodi Majerus, have worked tirelessly to research what other states have already done regarding Holocaust education.

Please act NOW, and join the 12 other states, including Illinois, Michigan and Indiana, who have already passed mandated Holocaust education. We need to lead the way and have other states follow Wisconsin. 17 other states have pending legislation.

Today, you will hear from students, teachers, school administrators, and community leaders. You will also hear from a second generation speaker who fervently shares her dad's story so that students will have the truth about the darkest days in modern history. A Holocaust survivor will provide you with her firsthand account of history. Each speaker has his or her own story to tell providing compelling testimony to the power and necessity of Holocaust education NOW! They have all observed the transformation of others after studying the Holocaust.

I would like to share the words written in 1945 by then General Dwight D. Eisenhower after he toured a German concentration camp during WWII:

"The things I saw defied description. The visual evidence and the verbal testimony of starvation, cruelty and bestiality were so overpowering as to leave me sick...I made the visit deliberately, in order to be in position to give first hand evidence of these things if ever, in the future, there develops a tendency to charge these allegation merely to 'propaganda.'"

With SB744 we can stay true to President Eisenhower's belief in the power of truth and education. "For evil to flourish, it only requires good men to do nothing..." – Simon Wiesenthal, Holocaust Survivor

Thank you for listening, and thank you for serving our great state. Please support of SB744.

Now, it is my privilege to introduce Eva Zaret. Eva is a brave, brilliant, and virtuous Holocaust survivor and an invaluable resource to our state. She travels Wisconsin teaching the Holocaust to students and adults. Eva answered Baraboo High School's call for help and spoke to their students, giving of her precious time. We are grateful to have Eva Zaret here with us today.

Respectfully submitted,
Beverly Greenberg
9429 N. Broadmoor Rd.
Bayside, WI 53217

Testimony on Bill SB-744

Wednesday, March 11, 2020

I wish to thank the authors of Senate Bill SB-744, Senator Alberta Darling and Senator Dale Kooyenga, and Bill AB-816 in the Assembly, John Plumer.

I am Jodi Majerus.

My parents Ray and Alyce Majerus raised three children, Rick, Tracy and me.

My parents valued education. They impressed upon us the importance of the learning of history to understand the social injustice issues of the present. History provides more than dates and events; history shows me why and how things happen.

I remember many discussions about the fair and just relations between the individual and society. We discussed the meaning and lessons of the Holocaust many times. The government failed to protect the life and liberty of the people; instead it intimidated, humiliated, taught racism, contempt, hatred, and ultimately killed millions of innocent people. This was not a one and done conversation, but rather an ongoing discussion throughout our lives teaching us that we must know history and speak up. We need to know the facts in order to honor the victims and prevent the repeat of these atrocities.

We were raised to respect all individuals and live by the Golden Rule. We were fortunate to have parents like Ray and Alyce that lived these values and instilled them in their children.

Not everyone is as fortunate to have parents like Ray and Alyce - parents that taught moral values and concepts in the home.

I stand before you today, asking for your support of Bill SB-744, as all children in Wisconsin need to learn the lessons of the Holocaust and other atrocities, so they will never be repeated again.

I was recently asked to serve on the Nathan & Esther Pelz Holocaust Education Resource Center's Board of Directors and the Education Task Force to develop a plan to include Holocaust and genocide education in the middle and high schools throughout Wisconsin. I always emphasize the importance of incorporating the Holocaust and other genocide education into the state model social studies curriculum. I then expand on the reasons why it is necessary. I talk about the topic so frequently one of my friends asked:

"So, Jodi, are you converting to Judaism?"

The answer is no, I am not. But this is not a Jewish, Hmong, Serbian, Catholic, Muslim, Hispanic or green hair issue.

This bill is for all children and people in Wisconsin to learn about the atrocities of the Holocaust and other genocides so our world will be a better place.

Thank you for consideration of this important legislation.

Jodi Majerus
6421 Betsy Ross Place
Wauwatosa, WI 53213

Regan Weeks

Sophomore Milwaukee School of Languages

I am speaking in favor of Senate Bill 744

History gets lost. History gets forgotten, overlooked, skewed. History is a lesson. It teaches us the beauties, and the pains of the past. In schools we are often told of things, told that they existed, but we never get to truly learn about them. When it comes to things as major as the Holocaust, there is nothing more important than being informed. If our generations remain ignorant, it will only pave the way towards indifference regarding the lives lost, and disregard towards the tragedy of the holocaust.

When you search "was the holocaust..." Some of the first things that pop up are, was the holocaust real, a hoax, fake, propaganda. These things already show us the importance of extensive holocaust teachings in schools. I have been fortunate. Many students in our school have been fortunate. We've gotten opportunities to meet with holocaust survivors, to hear their stories and gain a new perspective of the mass genocide. We were given the opportunity to go to a synagogue to learn, to discover, to comprehend, and for that, I am so unbelievably grateful.

Yet, not all schools, not all students are as lucky as I have been. Many schools are only briefly told of the holocaust without understanding the severity of the mass slaughter. They say history is doomed to repeat itself, yet that needn't be the case if we only combat this ignorance. If students know, if they understand, then we can hopefully prevent other incidents of hatred like the holocaust. But how will they know, how will they understand if we don't implement further holocaust education into our schools?

We shouldn't let the countless lost lives be forgotten. Tell their stories, keep them alive. It is imperative that we educate our youth and provide them with the holocaust education that could so greatly benefit our society.

Please vote Yes on Senate Bill 744, Thank you.

Wear a paperclip on my lapel. Have them to hand out to others.

Good afternoon,

I wanted to thank you for allowing me to share my thoughts today regarding Holocaust education in the state of Wisconsin. I am a middle school teacher at Salem School in Kenosha County-Senator Wirch's home district. I have been involved with teaching the Holocaust to middle school students for the past twenty-five years, and it has truly changed my life.

A paperclip-how many of you use this simple item throughout your day? (Hand them out to senators).

As a middle school teacher, I admit to having them in every color and size. But for me, the meaning behind this simple piece of metal is much more than an item used to hold things together.

This paperclip symbolizes the past as well as the future. Did you know that a Norwegian by the name of Johan Vaaler is credited for the design of this simple metal loop? During WWII, many Norwegians wore a single paperclip on their lapels as a form of silent protest against the Nazi occupation.

I share this story with my middle school students because I know that history speaks to us, and all of my students can relate to the importance of learning about our past to help shape our future. I grew up in Mosinee, a small town in Central Wisconsin, I had never met a Holocaust survivor, and I never learned a great deal about the Holocaust in high school, let alone in grade school. I was familiar with WWII because my grandfather was a veteran of that war, but that is where my knowledge of this era ended.

1996 was the year that I met a Holocaust survivor, Walter Peltz. It was a moving experience that has forever changed how I see that time in history. Walter's story always talked about empathy and survival. As an educator, I believe that history improves our decision making, and it helps us understand change and the development of our society. Teaching historical events provides us a way to better understand ourselves and others. Learning about our past allows us to make sense of it by seeing into the future. We learn the skills needed to make sense of complicated events, and hopefully learn from our past mistakes. One of my former students told me that our unit on the Holocaust was the first time that he learned the depravity that humans are capable of.

Education is the key to making sure the past does not repeat itself. If we want to make changes in our society, then we need the electorate to be educated, and this bill will help ensure WI students are educated on the Holocaust and other genocides. Our job as educators is to teach critical thinking skills and engage our learners. One of my former students told me that she sees the world differently after studying the Holocaust. She stated that it is important for us to learn about our history so that when an election comes, we search carefully into our candidates so that we never have to go through something like that again. We need to be aware of our history!

If we do not provide our students with the tools needed to stop hatred, the past will repeat itself. Holocaust education provides our students with the needed armor to stop the spread of hatred. It engages our students in meaningful discussions to understand the complexities of the Holocaust. That is a powerful tool in equipping our students for their future. I personally have

educated over 3,000 students, and the knowledge of how this unit of study impacted their lives is powerful. One of my former students said it best:

“Learning about the Holocaust affected me greatly. I believe my love for history stemmed from learning about the Holocaust and it opened up my eyes. At first it was almost hard to believe something so horrific actually happened and was allowed by the world to take place. I view the world differently, but surprisingly not in a negative light. The hero’s we learned about like Anne Frank and Elie Wiesel showed how much love and faith will always be stronger than hatred and fear, even when it seems incredibly strong. The way Anne Frank still believed that people were truly good is amazing and I believe it’s the way we should all see the world. I think learning about the Holocaust also makes our society more aware of the signs that people like Hitler show and we’re more educated in how not to go down that path.”

As educators we never want these stories of our past to be forgotten, and that is why I support Holocaust education. Elie Wiesel wrote, “When you meet a witness, you become a witness.” This simple statement connects the stories from the past with my middle school students.

A paperclip—such a small symbol with the power to do good things. Please support this legislation so that the students in our state will understand that the Holocaust really happened and was not an accident. It occurred because choices were made by individuals, organizations and governments that allowed prejudice, hatred and mass murder to occur. Silence and the infringement of civil rights in a society is not something that I want for my students.

Thank you

*Adahlia Gonzalez
3007 south 52nd street
Milwaukee Wisconsin
53219
Milwaukee School of Languages
03/5/20*

My name is Adahlia Gonzolez. I am a student at Milwaukee School of Languages, a ndl am speaking in favor of Senate Bill 744.

From 1933 to May eight, 1945, the holocaust occured. The terrible genocide, led by Adolf Hitler and his Nazi party, murdered 11 million people. About 6 million Jews and around 5 million non-Jews were murdered by Nazis; the others included Roma (more commonly known as gypsies), Jehova's Witnesses, homosexuals, communists, etc. So many men, women, and children were murdered throughout the holocaust, and it's important that we know and learn about it, as well as learn from it. Lessons should be taught about the holocaust, the segregation, genocide, and unfair treatment are too great to ignore, and chilren should all learn about the terrible tragedies that occure, the holocaust being one of the most important.

Holocaust education should be brought to every student, the information brought to students could both help and change so much. The education would teach students about human possibilities in extreme and desperate situations, bringing attention to how and why the holocaust began, how Hitler came into power, created the Nazi party, built support and how he got away with his actions for so long. It's important for students to learn this, as to prevent anything like the holocaust from happening again, and to teach them not to stand by and let it happen in case it does. Many of the issues that occured throughout the holocaust are surfacing now, and it's significant that students learn and talk about them, as to not at all normalize the issues.

There are many people in the world who deny the holocaust and it's impact, but we cannot allow our generation of students to deny history, but to instead learn from it; learning about our history is important to both learn from and acknowledge, and we should use the recourses we have to allow that. I'm speaking in favor of senate bill 744 because I think it's extremely important for all students to learn about the holocaust, like I've been able to. HERC

gifted us at MSL knowledge, experience, and opportunity, and it's extremely important that we allow everyone that same privilege.

Students have a voice, and it is key that we use our resources to teach them how to use it.

Thank you for listening, and I urge you to please vote yes on the senate bill 744.

Holocaust Essay

Good Morning everyone, my name is Hazel Stevens. I'm a student at Milwaukee School of Languages and I am speaking for Senate Bill 744.

"As the generation of Holocaust survivors and liberators dwindles, the torch of remembrance, of bearing witnesses, and of education must continue forward" -Dan Gillerman. The Holocaust is such an important part of history but kids and even adults don't have an idea of what it is and honestly if I did not have Mrs. Audi as a history teacher I wouldn't know what I know now about the Holocaust. I think that Holocaust education is extremely important for Wisconsin students because most students are not understanding our history. Yes, we can look up things on the internet but if teachers are teaching and being hands on with their students about the Holocaust it's better because more questions are being answered and more comes to understanding.

The HERC was a really good source to help students learn about the Holocaust. I learned about a lady named Rywka Lipszyc. She was a teenage girl who was Jewish, she wrote a personal diary while in the Łódź Ghetto during the Holocaust. Rywka's diary was unearthed in the ruins of the crematoria at Auschwitz-Birkenau in June 1945 by a doctor, Zinaida Berezovskaya, who took it with her back to the Soviet Union. She died in 1983. The diary was kept by her son. He died in 1992. Zinaida's granddaughter, on a family visit to Russia, spotted the diary and took it with her. Over a decade later in 2008 she contacted the local Holocaust Center. It really surprised me because I thought that Anne Frank was the only person with a diary from the Holocaust.

They say history repeats so learning about the Holocaust is important so we know what to do to prevent anything like that from happening again. I am applying what I learned about the Holocaust into my own life by telling other youth and even adults who are uninformed about the tragedy that happened, and why it is so important. I am also not excluding anyone no

matter of race , gender, religion etc; because I would not like to repeat what has been done, and also help others who are being excluded and people who are being bullied. I also learned of one of the quotes in german that said "treat people the way you would want to be treated," and I have been applying that to my everyday life.

Dear Senator Olsen,

As a voting citizen of Wisconsin and a Child Holocaust Survivor, I am writing you to show my support for the Holocaust Education Bill. SB-744 adds Holocaust and genocide education to the model academic standards for social studies.

It has been said that if we do not learn from the past, we will be condemned to repeat it. The Holocaust Education Bill helps to guarantee that our children continue to learn about this tragic history; therefore, it represents our state's opposition to the kind of intolerance, hatred and bigotry that was pervasive during the Holocaust.

The time for such legislation is now. It will provide an important step in combating the lack of awareness about the Holocaust among youth. As was reported in the Washington Post in 2018:

- Two-thirds of American Millennials could not identify what Auschwitz is
- 22% said they hadn't heard of the Holocaust

This lack of historical awareness seems tied to the alarming rise of antisemitism and other forms of intolerance. The Jewish Community Relations Council's Audit of Antisemitic Incidents in Wisconsin showed:

- A 329% increase in antisemitic incidents since 2015
- Almost 25% of all recorded antisemitic incidents take place among students or on campus

It is time to stand opposed to such ignorance and intolerance.

I am asking you to help by voting yes to SB-744.

Sincerely,

Eva Zaret
8951 N. Feilding Road
Milwaukee, WI 53217

Dear Senator Olsen,

Re: The Holocaust Education Bill (SB-744)

As a resident of Wisconsin, I am writing you to show my support for the Holocaust Education Bill. SB-744 adds Holocaust and genocide education to the model academic standards for social studies.

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Harry & Marilyn Pelz
318 W. Seacroft Court
Mequon, WI 53092

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27 January 2020

Dear Senator Olsen,

My name is Frank Busalacchi. I served as a long-time Teamster labor leader and eight years as Wisconsin Secretary of Transportation under Governor Jim Doyle. I am encouraging support for The Holocaust Education Act (SB-744)

Since leaving state government, my wife Robin and I have traveled extensively around the world. We have seen beautiful places, met incredible people and had wonderful experiences.

We have also left our share of museums, cities and whole regions with sad, heavy hearts after witnessing the chaos and destruction caused by hatred and racism. It becomes even more disturbing when you see that our world isn't evolving. Every time you open the computer, there are stories involving violent personal or mass attacks.

Many involve hate crimes against our Jewish brothers and sisters. I have many Jewish friends. I sense their sadness and share their bewilderment. What does it take for people to realize we are one human family? What can we do to encourage respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures? How can we make sure history doesn't repeat itself?

Education is the key. Our children need to know where intolerance can lead. It's important that our young people explore the horrors of the past. We can't change history but hopefully we can learn from it. The Holocaust Education Act is an important step. A number of states have passed this legislation and many are in the process of doing so. It is important for Wisconsin to join them.

Frank J. Busalacchi
1028 E Juneau Ave
Milwaukee, WI 53202

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Frank J. Busalacchi
1028 E Juneau Ave
Milwaukee, WI 53202

To: Senator Olsen,

From: Peter McNeely
3704 S Howell Ave
Milwaukee, WI 53207

Date: February 10, 2020

Re: The Holocaust Education Bill (SB-816)

I am writing you to show my support for the Holocaust Education Bill. AB-744 adds Holocaust and genocide education to the model academic standards for social studies.

It has been said that if we do not learn from the past, we will be condemned to repeat it. The Holocaust Education Bill helps to guarantee that our children continue to learn about this tragic history; therefore, it represents our state's opposition to the kind of intolerance, hatred and bigotry that was pervasive during the Holocaust.

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It is time to stand opposed to such ignorance and intolerance.

I am asking you to help by voting yes to SB-744.

Sincerely,

Peter McNeely
3704 S. Howell Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53207

Dear Senator Olsen,

As a voting citizen of Wisconsin and Child Holocaust Survivor, I am writing you to show my support for the Holocaust Education Bill. SB-744 adds Holocaust and genocide education to the model academic standards for social studies.

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Sincerely,

Edie Pump
124 W. Bradley
Milwaukee, WI 53217



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124 W. Bradley
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1950-1951

On the 21st of July 1951 the following was received from the Director of the Bureau of Census, Washington, D.C.:

The Bureau of Census is interested in the results of the 1950 Census of the United States, particularly in the field of the distribution of the population in the various States and Territories. It is desired to know the results of the 1950 Census in the field of the distribution of the population in the various States and Territories.

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Dear Senator Olsen,

As a child, my father survived and escaped from the Nazi controlled Warsaw Ghetto. What the Nazis did to him was recorded in an award-winning book, but is not an end point. "Survivor" is a living word, beyond the individual. Before my Dad passed away in 2018, he often told me that I must help him to educate people about what the Nazi's did to our family and other Jews or it will be forgotten. He was right. I miss my Dad and his good counsel.

So, as a child of a Holocaust Survivor, I have spoken to thousands of Wisconsin students, parents, educators and community members about my family's experiences in the Ghetto. While I have been touched by the heart-felt appreciation of sharing their true story of reliance, I have also heard the dark shadow of Holocaust misunderstanding and denial.

The twisted efforts to re-write the well-established history of the Holocaust must be met through education that is based upon facts, including: video and written testimony of the survivors, U.S. military documentation and even the recorded admissions of the perpetrators. The weight of the truth is especially valuable when shared in an informed manner or it is future dust to be forgotten.

As a voting citizen of Wisconsin and a child of a Holocaust Survivor, I am writing you to show my support for the Holocaust Education Bill. SB-744 adds Holocaust and genocide education to the model academic standards for social studies. It is the right thing to do

It has been said that if we do not learn from the past, we will be condemned to repeat it. The Holocaust Education Bill helps to guarantee that our children continue to learn about this tragic history; therefore, **it represents our state's opposition** to the kind of intolerance, hatred and bigotry that was pervasive during the Holocaust. Please stand with history.

The time for such legislation is now. It will provide an important step in combating the lack of awareness about the Holocaust among youth. As was reported in the Washington Post in 2018:

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It is time to stand opposed to such ignorance and intolerance.

I am asking you to help by voting yes to SB-744.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey N. Gingold
2745 N. Summit Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53211

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6575 N. Green Bay Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53209

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211 W. Manor Circle
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3704 S. Howell Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53207

Department of Psychology
University of California, San Diego
La Jolla, California 92037
Tel: (619) 594-1212
Fax: (619) 594-9212

Dr. [Name] is currently on leave from [Institution] and will return to [Institution] on [Date].

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L'Shalom,

Ariel Kohll
Associate Regional Director
BBYO – Wisconsin Region
Home address:
2529 N. Murray Ave
Lower
Milwaukee, WI 53211

Dear Esteemed Senator Olsen,

As a voting citizen of Wisconsin, I am writing you to show my support for the Holocaust Education Bill. SB-744 adds Holocaust and genocide education to the model academic standards for social studies.

It has been said that if we do not learn from the past, we will be condemned to repeat it. The Holocaust Education Bill helps to guarantee that our children continue to learn about this tragic history; therefore, it represents our state's opposition to the kind of intolerance, hatred and bigotry that was pervasive during the Holocaust.

The time for such legislation is now. It will provide an important step in combating the lack of awareness about the Holocaust among youth. As was reported in the Washington Post in 2018:

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- A 329% increase in antisemitic incidents since 2015
- Almost 25% of all recorded antisemitic incidents take place among students or on campus

It is time to stand opposed to such ignorance and intolerance.

I am asking you to help by voting yes to SB-744.

L'Shalom,

Ariel Kohll
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Dear Senator Olsen,

As a child, my father survived and escaped from the Nazi controlled Warsaw Ghetto. What the Nazis did to him was recorded in an award-winning book, but is not an end point. "Survivor" is a living word, beyond the individual. Before my Dad passed away in 2018, he often told me that I must help him to educate people about what the Nazi's did to our family and other Jews or it will be forgotten. He was right. I miss my Dad and his good counsel.

So, as a child of a Holocaust Survivor, I have spoken to thousands of Wisconsin students, parents, educators and community members about my family's experiences in the Ghetto. While I have been touched by the heart-felt appreciation of sharing their true story of reliance, I have also heard the dark shadow of Holocaust misunderstanding and denial.

The twisted efforts to re-write the well-established history of the Holocaust must be met through education that is based upon facts, including: video and written testimony of the survivors, U.S. military documentation and even the recorded admissions of the perpetrators. The weight of the truth is especially valuable when shared in an informed manner or it is future dust to be forgotten.

As a voting citizen of Wisconsin and a child of a Holocaust Survivor, I am writing you to show my support for the Holocaust Education Bill. SB-744 adds Holocaust and genocide education to the model academic standards for social studies. It is the right thing to do

It has been said that if we do not learn from the past, we will be condemned to repeat it. The Holocaust Education Bill helps to guarantee that our children continue to learn about this tragic history; therefore, **it represents our state's opposition** to the kind of intolerance, hatred and bigotry that was pervasive during the Holocaust. Please stand with history.

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Sincerely,

Jeffrey N. Gingold
2745 N. Summit Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53211

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Karen Meador
1082 Niagara Lane,
Port Washington, Wisc.

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3627 S. Kinnickinnic Ave
#303
St. Francis, WI 53235

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To: Senator Olsen
From: Mark Gesner
Date: February 9, 2020
RE: The Holocaust Education Bill **SB-744**

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While my wife and I have done our best to inform our daughter about her family history and the sick injustices of the Holocaust and other genocides, we are not experts in the field and have primarily provided her with only our own personal perspectives. Fortunately, her Middle School English teacher taught a whole unit on the topic, and helped to not only clarify the magnitude of the issues (this was not only about Uncle Eli), but perhaps even more importantly, provided objective facts from which our daughter's whole class could learn, consider and hopefully act upon.

Ensuring that education about the Holocaust and other genocides are offered in an objective manner is vitally important, both so that the truth of history are not dependent on the personal memories of a few, and so that a lack of understanding doesn't lead to a disastrous repeat of history. The growing lack of young people's awareness about these issues in Wisconsin seems to be spreading, and worse, the rise of antisemitism and other forms of intolerance in our State are growing at alarming rates.

The Holocaust Education Bill helps to guarantee that children like my daughter continue to learn about this tragic history and have the opportunity to behave in ways that reverse the current trend of increasing intolerance. I am asking you to help by voting yes to **SB-744**. It will provide an important and urgently need step in addressing the lack of awareness about the Holocaust among youth, and it will honor those who endured it horrors – people like my Great-Uncle Eli.

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Mark Gesner
506 William Street
Racine, WI 53402

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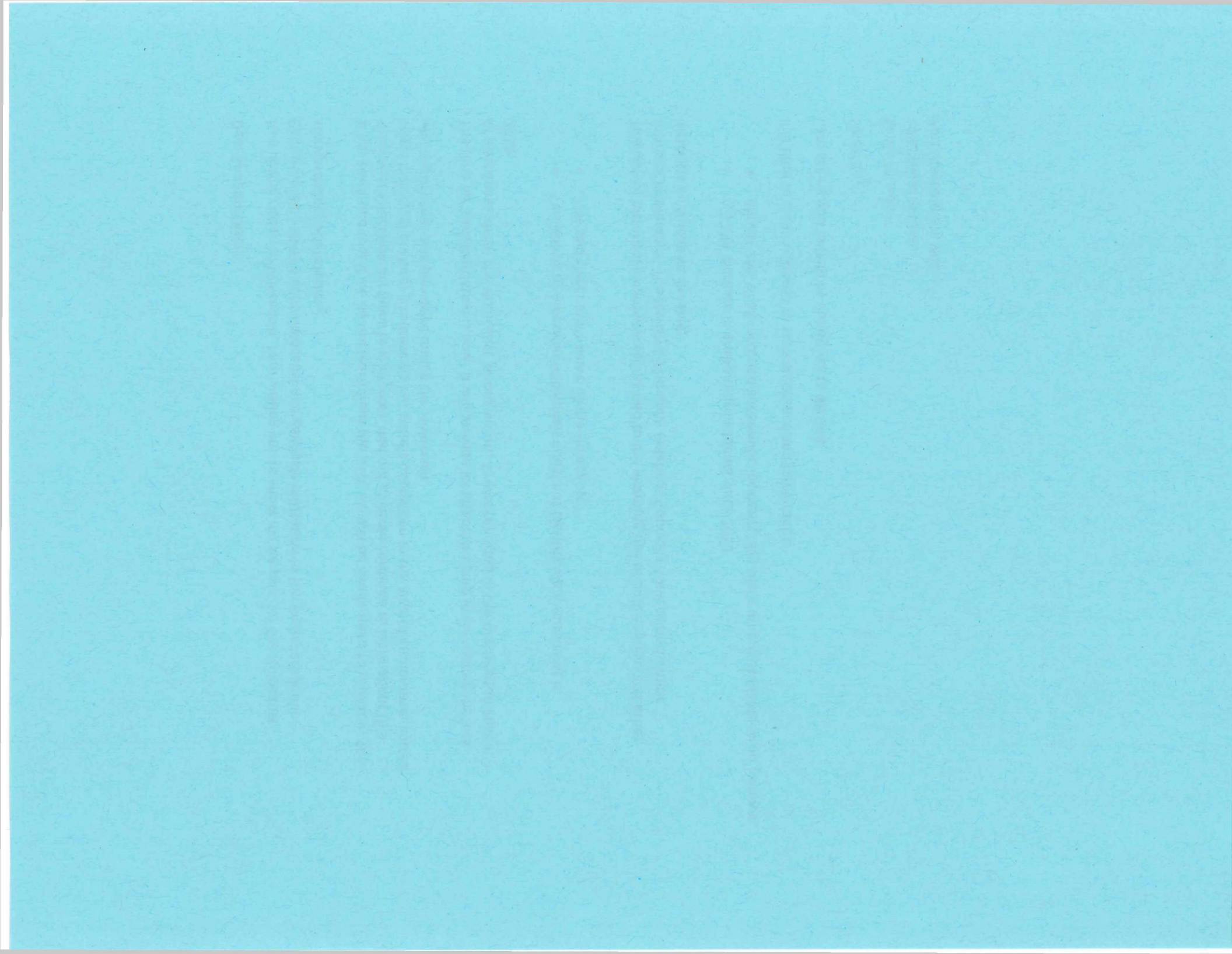
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Dear Senator Olsen,

I am strongly in favor of SB-744, supporting Holocaust Education in the State of Wisconsin; I hope you'll call for a hearing for SB-744 in the very near future.

As a voting citizen of Wisconsin, I am writing you to show my support for the Holocaust Education Bill. SB-744 adds Holocaust and genocide education to the model academic standards for social studies.

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Thank you for your support of Holocaust education in the state of Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Golopol
4422 N. Stowell Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53211

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Joette Majerus
6421 Betsy Ross Place
Wauwatosa, WI 53213

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Jennifer Cobb

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Jennifer Cobb
MS English Teacher
The Prairie School
Home Address:
3310 169th Avenue
Kenosha, WI 53144

1984-1985

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MAUREEN AND ROBERT FREEDLAND M.D.,
2641 SCHUBERT PLACE
LA CROSSE, WI 54601 (608) 796-1076

February 10, 2020

Dear Honorable Olsen,

We are writing in support of SB-744 mandating Holocaust and Genocide Education in the State of Wisconsin.

Since World War II, many in America have said "never again" about the horrors of the Holocaust ever occurring again – to Jews and anyone else.

While the Shoah is now history, respect for individual differences or beliefs, and character development emphasizing helping others, are still challenges that our students will need to confront as they provide leadership in our society in the years to come.

We know that students must understand the lessons of the Holocaust, and our own greatest impact on the education of students is best accomplished through education in our schools.

For this reason, in 2007, we established the Freedland Shoah (Holocaust) Fund, as part of the La Crosse Public Education Foundation and have supported projects in La Crosse public middle and high schools and the La Crosse County Jail.

These teaching lessons have been warmly received and valued. Students report that they better engage them in the study of difficult history and current affairs. They say they are better prepared to understand the influence of propaganda, and how public policy is important to any nation. They better understand distinctions and responsibilities of bystanders, resisters, perpetrators or collaborators.

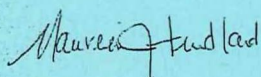
Among these projects are:

- Teacher training, book, films, curricula units and other resource materials
- Logan Middle School teachers, who developed a new curriculum that meets state and district goals as well as the 8th grade Global Village goal of addressing human rights.
- The La Crosse School District under the stewardship of Sandy Brauer, Supervisor of K-12 Social Studies, is now wrapping up a comprehensive two-year progress to develop standard for the middle and high school schools in social studies and it will launch soon.

The La Crosse School District has had teachers leading Holocaust education for some 20 years.

George Santayana in 1905 famously stated: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." It is up to us in the generation that bridges those who lived and died through World War II and the Holocaust, and the youth of today, to pass on the lessons of the Holocaust so that future human tragedies shall have less opportunities to succeed.

Respectfully,



Maureen and Robert Freedland M.D.

Dear Senator Olsen:

As a voting citizen of Wisconsin, I am writing to ask your support for the Holocaust and Genocide Education Bill, **SB-744**, and that it be part of the model academic standards for social studies.

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Nancy Kennedy Barnett
7936 N Fairchild Road
Fox Point, WI 53217

To: Senator Luther Olsen (R-14)
Room 122 South, State Capital
PO Box 7882
Madison WI 53707

From: Danielle Merrill Yakich
8220 S. 60th St.
Franklin, WI 53132-9255

Date: February 11, 2020

Re: The Holocaust Education Bill SB-744

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Danielle Merrill Yakich, M.A.

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For this reason, in 2007, we established the Freedland Shoah (Holocaust) Fund, as part of the La Crosse Public Education Foundation and have supported projects in La Crosse public middle and high schools and the La Crosse County Jail.

These teaching lessons have been warmly received and valued. Students report that they better engage them in the study of difficult history and current affairs. They say they are better prepared to understand the influence of propaganda, and how public policy is important to any nation. They better understand distinctions and responsibilities of bystanders, resisters, perpetrators or collaborators.

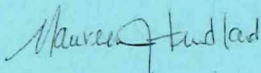
Among these projects are:

- Teacher training, book, films, curricula units and other resource materials
- Logan Middle School teachers, who developed a new curriculum that meets state and district goals as well as the 8th grade Global Village goal of addressing human rights.
- The La Crosse School District under the stewardship of Sandy Brauer, Supervisor of K-12 Social Studies, is now wrapping up a comprehensive two-year progress to develop standard for the middle and high school schools in social studies and it will launch soon.

The La Crosse School District has had teachers leading Holocaust education for some 20 years.

George Santayana in 1905 famously stated: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." It is up to us in the generation that bridges those who lived and died through World War II and the Holocaust, and the youth of today, to pass on the lessons of the Holocaust so that future human tragedies shall have less opportunities to succeed.

Respectfully,



Maureen and Robert Freedland M.D.

To: Senator Luther Olsen (R-14)
Room 122 South, State Capital
PO Box 7882
Madison WI 53707

From: Danielle Merrill Yakich
8220 S. 60th St.
Franklin, WI 53132-9255

Date: February 11, 2020

Re: The Holocaust Education Bill SB-744

As a voting citizen of Wisconsin, I am writing you to show my support for the Holocaust Education Bill. SB-744 adds Holocaust and genocide education to the model academic standards for social studies.

It has been said that if we do not learn from the past, we will be condemned to repeat it. The Holocaust Education Bill helps to guarantee that our children continue to learn about this tragic history; therefore, it represents our state's opposition to the kind of intolerance, hatred and bigotry that was pervasive during the Holocaust.

The time for such legislation is now. It will provide an important step in combating the lack of awareness about the Holocaust among youth. As was reported in the Washington Post in 2018:

Two-thirds of American millennials could not identify what Auschwitz is
22% said they hadn't heard of the Holocaust

This lack of historical awareness seems tied to the alarming rise of antisemitism and other forms of intolerance. The Jewish Community Relations Council's Audit of Antisemitic Incidents in Wisconsin showed:

A 329% increase in antisemitic incidents since 2015
Almost 25% of all recorded antisemitic incidents take place among students or on campus

It is time to stand opposed to such ignorance and intolerance.

I am asking you to help by voting yes to SB-744.

Sincerely,

Danielle Merrill Yakich, M.A.

To: Senator Olsen
From: Beverly Bradford

Date: February 16, 2020
RE: The Holocaust Education Bill SB-744

Dear Senator Olsen,

As a voting citizen of Wisconsin and a Holocaust Survivor, I am writing you to show my support for the Holocaust Education Bill. SB-744 adds Holocaust and genocide education to the model academic standards for social studies. I was amazed and disappointed to learn that this was not already a standard to Social Studies education. This is one small step that we MUST take to stem the antisemitism and other forms of intolerance that have become too prevalent in Wisconsin and the country.

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Sincerely,

Beverly Bradford
112 W. Wabash Avenue
Waukesha, WI 53186

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From: Beverly Bradford

Date: February 16, 2020
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I am asking you to help by voting yes to SB-744.

Sincerely,

Beverly Bradford
112 W. Wabash Avenue
Waukesha, WI 53186

March 2, 2020

Dear Senator Olsen,

I would appreciate your support of SB-744, for Holocaust education in the entire state of Wisconsin. It is important for all the students to learn about genocide, in the past and our current history of hate, intolerance and xenophobia. "Those who forget the past, are condemned to repeat it."

The lesson to learn about this terrible time in history is that many students haven't even heard about the Holocaust and don't have the true story of this tragic event.

Sincerely yours,

Jim Barnett
7936 N. Fairchild Road
Fox Point, WI 53217

March 2, 2020

Dear Senator Olsen,

I am writing to ask you to support **SB-744**, Mandatory Holocaust Education in our great state. As a child of a survivor, and a speaker that travels Wisconsin teaching about this evil, I have seen first-hand that the students of today do not know what happened just sixty years ago. There are great ramifications for today's society in that lack of information

I will be testifying on Wednesday, March 11 in front of the Senate and I look forward to telling you my story.

Thank you very much,

Nancy Barnett
7936 N. Fairchild Road
Fox Point, WI 53217

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1988-1989

1989-1990

1990-1991

1991-1992

1992-1993

1993-1994

1994-1995

1995-1996

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1950-1951

1952-1953

1954-1955

1956-1957

1958-1959

1960-1961

1962-1963

1964-1965

1966-1967

1968-1969

1970-1971

1972-1973

1974-1975

1976-1977

1978-1979

1980-1981

1982-1983

1984-1985

1986-1987

1988-1989

1990-1991

1992-1993

1994-1995

Holocaust Education for Wisconsin Schools



**Wisconsin Needs Holocaust Education
NOW!**

New Survey by Claims Conference Finds Significant Lack of Holocaust Knowledge in the United States



There were over **40,000 camps and ghettos** during the Holocaust.

49% of Millennials cannot name a single one.

- 93% of all Americans believe all students should learn about the Holocaust in schools
- 80% believe that it is important to keep teaching the Holocaust so it doesn't happen again
- 58% believe that something like the Holocaust could occur again
- 70% of Americans say fewer people care about the Holocaust today

Source:



2018

**"Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it."
- George Santayana**

WE HAVE FORGOTTEN

Why Holocaust Education in Wisconsin Now?

- Antisemitic incidents surged nearly 60% in 2017
- Incidents took place in every state across the USA
- Incidents in schools nearly doubled in 2017
- 8 in 10 Americans believe that government should play a role in combating antisemitism



Source: **ADL**
FIGHTING HATE FOR GOOD

2017

Rising Antisemitism Affects Wisconsin

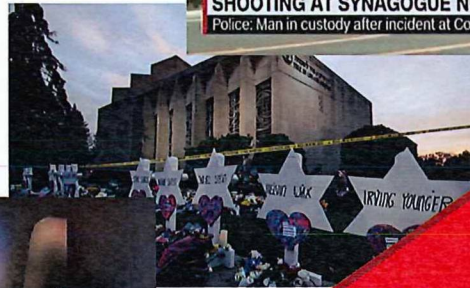
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh
April 2019



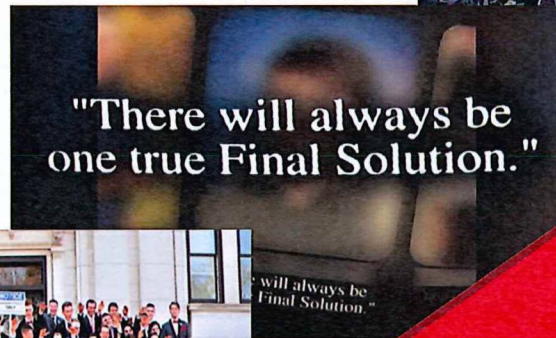
Poway Synagogue Shooting
April 27, 2019



Pittsburgh Synagogue Shooting
October 27, 2018



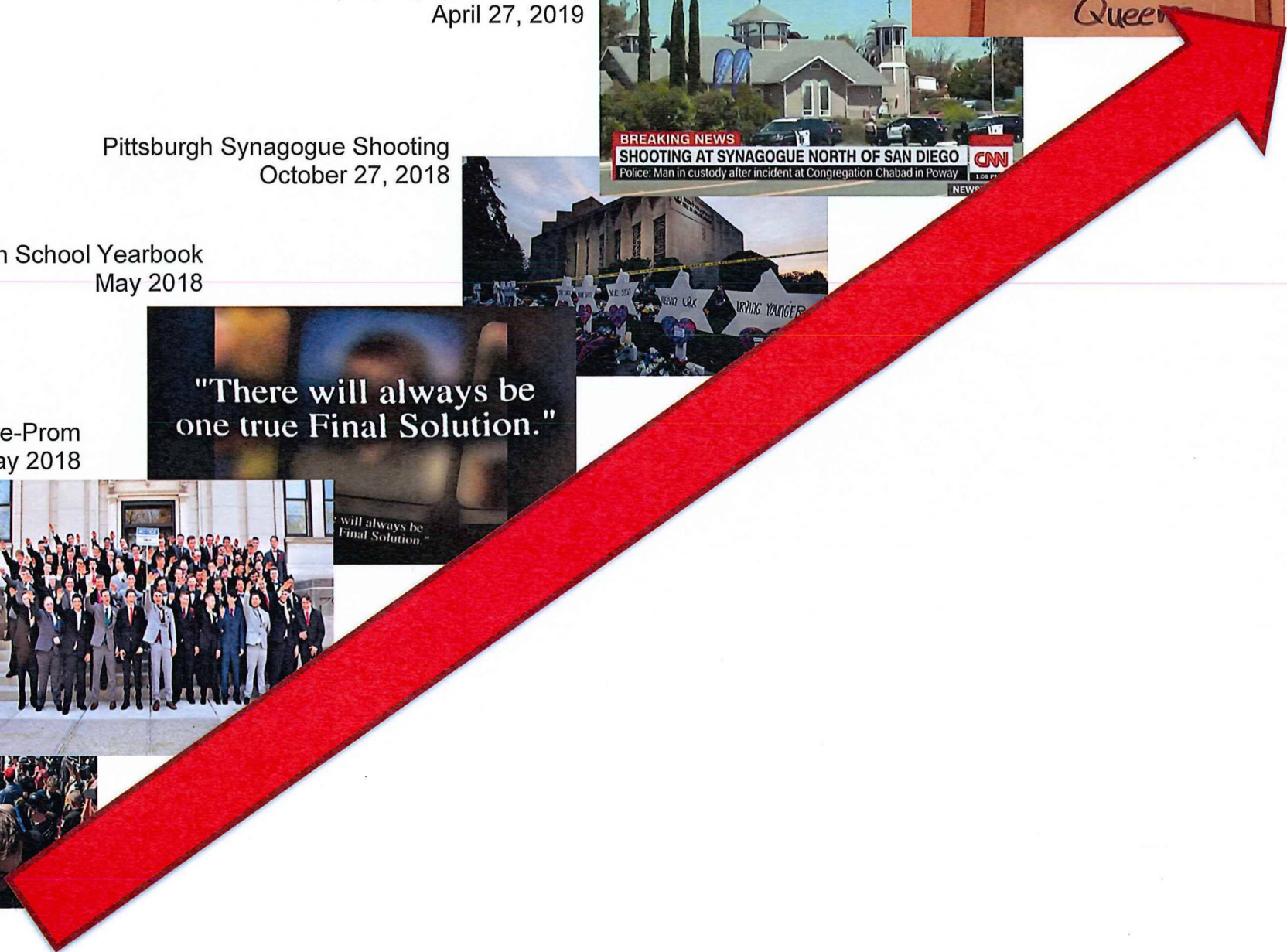
New Berlin West High School Yearbook
May 2018



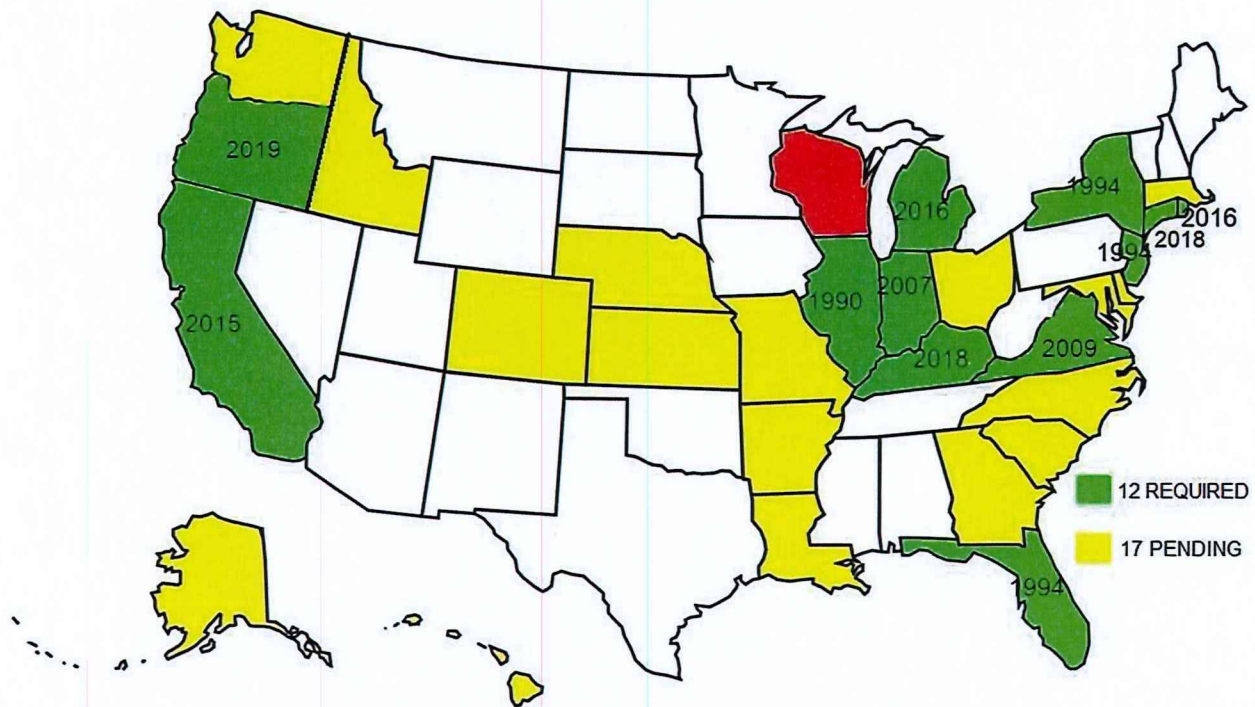
Baraboo High School Pre-Prom
May 2018



Charlottesville Unite
the Right Rally
August 11, 2017



HOLOCAUST EDUCATION IS REQUIRED IN 12 STATES BUT NOT IN WISCONSIN!



Source: Jewish Telegraphic Agency, 2017

7

CURRENT STATE of HOLOCAUST EDUCATION IN WISCONSIN *A LOT BUT NOT ENOUGH!*

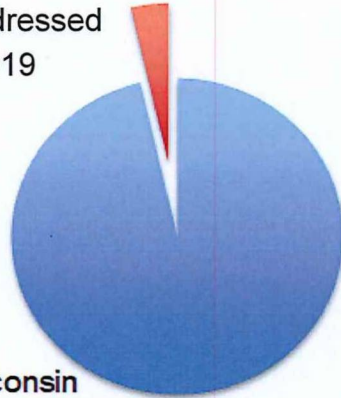
The Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education Resource Center (HERC) is the only organization dedicated to Holocaust Education in Wisconsin

During the 2018-2019 School year HERC:

- Engaged more than 19,573 students
- Addressed a total of 28,067 people in the community
- Created a strong partnership with the Milwaukee Public School District

The Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education Resource Center Currently Reaches Less Than 4%

19,573 Students Addressed by HERC in 2018-2019



446,780 Total Wisconsin Middle & High School Students

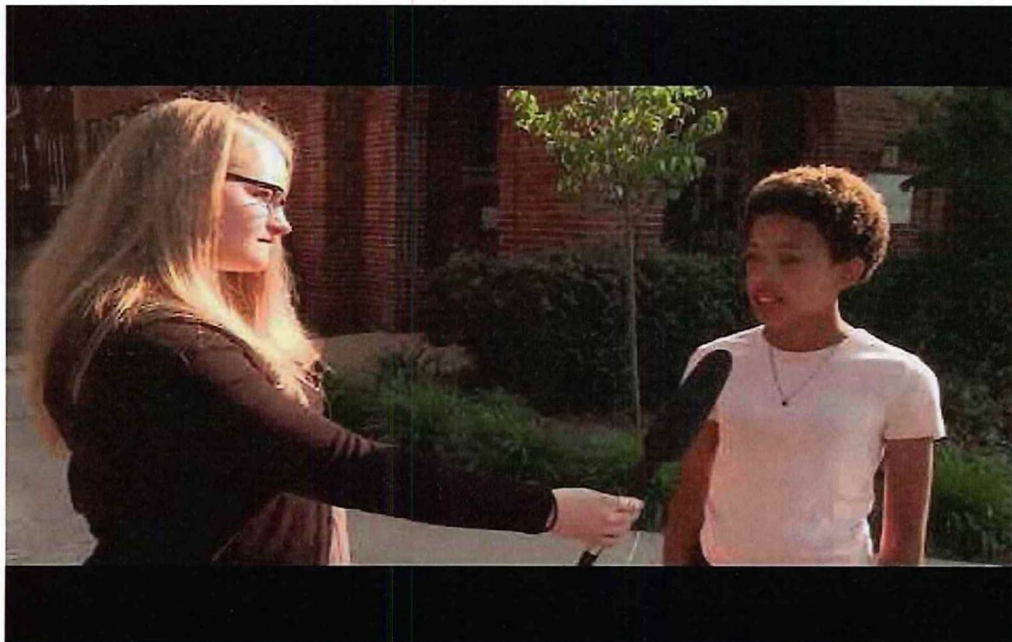
- There is increasing demand for Holocaust Education
- Students and Teachers value this learning experience but too many don't receive it

Wisconsin Needs a State-Wide Strategy!!!

Source:  WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

9

Holocaust Education Makes a Difference!



St. Robert's School - Shorewood, WI

10

“After learning about the Holocaust, I feel the need to stand up to the injustices I see in my own life.”

Student at Victory School, Milwaukee (April 2018)

“Learning the Holocaust can help us recognize the signs and red flags of discrimination.”

Student at Humboldt Park School, Milwaukee (May 2018)

“As 9th & 10th graders, my students are on the verge of making many decisions about their values and identity. Within the context of the Holocaust... my students learn values that I hope they will come to live out in their daily lives.”

Teacher at Brown Deer Middle/High School, Brown Deer (March 2018)

“Thank you so much for strengthening our knowledge of the Holocaust through your inspiring story. Not only did you inform us deeply, you taught us many life lessons about hatred and love.”

Student at Erin School, Hartford (April 2018)

11

“My generation are future leaders of our country and in order to prevent further genocides, people must learn. When people learn of these horrors, they can hopefully prevent and stop them from ever occurring again.”

Student at Menasha High School, Menasha (March 2018)

“Not only did my students learn about the Holocaust, but many were also able to draw parallels with their everyday lives.”

Teacher at Humboldt Park School, Milwaukee (May 2017)

“Thank you for coming to our school and taking the time to talk to us about something that may be hard for you to talk about sometimes. I didn't really think about how if the Nazis did win there wouldn't be any more Jewish people in the world, that you wouldn't be here, or your kids. Thank you for making me have a better understanding and new perspective.”

Student at Whitehorse Middle School, Madison (April 2017)

12

WISCONSIN NEEDS HOLOCAUST EDUCATION



DO THE RIGHT THING NOW!

Student & Teacher Statements

Student Statements

I believe it is important to learn about the Holocaust because it is an important part of our history. We learn about our history in order to learn from our past and not make the same mistakes again. We're so caught up in innovating technology, military, and all these other issues that we forget about people. Our citizens are being oppressed and so much hate is developed in our society. Learning about people and what we can do to one another is very scary, but can help us to come to a realization to stop. Stop spreading hate. Not just towards Jewish people, but everyone.

- *Student, Humboldt Park School, May 2018*

If we don't learn about our past we cannot better our future. For example, without learning about the Holocaust genocide, it will repeat itself.

- *Student, Humboldt Park School, May 2018*

Learning the Holocaust can help us recognize the signs and red flags of discrimination. It's also important to learn about the Holocaust because the victims never did receive justice, and I feel as if learning about them is a way to remember them.

- *Student, Humboldt Park School, May 2018*

Your father's story really made me appreciate the freedom we truly have.

- *Ben, Whitehorse Middle School, May 2018*

Thank you so much for strengthening our knowledge of the Holocaust through your inspiring story. Not only did you inform us deeply, you taught us many life lessons about hatred and love.

- *Amber, Erin School, April 2018*

Thank you for taking time to come speak to us. We learned that even with hatred, we still need to respond with kindness and love. Also, we shouldn't take family or education for granted.

- *Cali, St. Thomas More High School, April 2018*

When students learn about the Holocaust, or any other event that has to do with genocide, they realize how important it is to stay nice to each other. One of the biggest things I took away from this unit is to never dehumanize someone. Everyone deserves a fair life.

- *Student, Victory School, April 2018*

It's important that we learn about the Holocaust so that everyone can understand the potential dangers of discrimination and oppression. It can help us keep from repeating our mistakes, as well as allowing us to recognize irrational and tyrannical rule. Learning about the Holocaust also allows us to remember the 11 million that lost their lives during that time period.

- *Student, Victory School, April 2018*

My generation are the future leaders of our country and in order to prevent further genocides, people must learn. When people learn of these horrors, they can hopefully prevent and stop them from ever occurring again.

- *Student, Menasha High School, March 2018*

My experience at the synagogue was so profound. It was not only a cultural learning experience, but a human learning experience. Meeting Lee, the holocaust survivor, brought me together with a living piece of world history.

- *Luke, Catholic Memorial High School, May 2017*

Thank you for coming to our school and taking the time to talk to us about something that may be hard for you to talk about sometimes. I didn't really think about how if the Nazis did win there wouldn't be any more Jewish people in the world, that you wouldn't be here, or your kids. Thank you for making me have a better understanding and new perspective.

- *Cora, Whitehorse Middle School, April 2017*

This story could make us act and maybe fix some of the things that are happening like this.

- *Kayla, Whitehorse Middle School, April 2017*

You motivated me to never give up. If you, someone who's been through so much in the Holocaust never gave up, then I shouldn't either.

- *Andrea, Vieau School, March 2017*

Thank you so much for sharing your story with me. It enlightened me and really opened my eyes to the truth of the Holocaust and the injustices of discrimination.

- *Matthew, Holy Family Parish School, May 2016*

I felt really sad when you told your story, but I also felt really inspired. With your story I felt my education really growing. I could not imagine myself in your position as a teen. I wish I could have helped during this time.

- *Emma, St. Robert School, March 2015*

You inspire me with how instead of hating the people who did those horrible things to you when you were so small, you decided to be the bigger man. I wish that there were more people like you in the world.

- *Jillian, Badger Middle School, October 2014*

I realize that you may be the only Holocaust survivor I will ever meet and that this was a once in a life time opportunity. I hope you will keep speaking to people of all age groups and informing them of what really happened to millions of innocent people. I will tell my family and friends about what happened in the Holocaust and I will also tell my children about this tragic event so we never forget what happened.

- *Jaden, New Glarus Middle School, May 2014*

Now that I have learned about the Holocaust I am going to try to use this to help me, help make the world better. Not just saying it but by doing it. I could easily talk to young students about violence and how it corrupts our world today because I see it happen every day, especially in my own neighborhood. They may not think that it is that big of a deal, but it really is and it actually hurts a lot of people.

- *De'Jon, HOPE Christian High School, January 2014*

Teacher Statements

Our kids' formation is enriched to the core from their previous experiences through HERC.

- *David, Notre Dame School of Milwaukee, July 2018*

Your willingness to share your knowledge and experience at our Professional Development training offered greater insight to understanding the history, discrimination, and persecution suffered.

- *Joan, Moraine Park Technical College, January 2018*

I just wanted to reach out again to say thank you for coordinating Howard Melton's visit to South Milwaukee High School. It was really such a positive experience for my students.

- *Jill, South Milwaukee High School, January 2018*

Not only did my students learn about the Holocaust, but many were also able to draw parallels with their everyday lives. Repeatedly my students have said that they want to make sure that everyone understands that we are all human beings. I hope to have you every year, so students can hear your message of love and understanding.

- *Betsy, Humboldt Park School, May 2017*

We – students, teachers, staff, and parents – have been talking about you since you left. Such a powerful message and the devotion you have to keep telling it, is remarkable. Our community was so blessed to have met you and to have heard your message.

- *Barry, Oostburg Middle School, May 2017*

Thank you again for providing this experiential resource for teaching and learning. Combining these different elements of the Jewish culture and experience - the history of the religion, the contemporary practices, the history of anti-semitism and a testimony of the holocaust - creates a much more contextual approach that enriches the students' understanding of each of the separate elements.

- *Mary, Catholic Memorial High School, May 2017*

You are an inspiration for knowledge, understanding, and tolerance.

- *Michelle, Rufus King International School*

As 9th & 10th graders, my students are on the verge of making many decisions about their values and identity. Within the context of the Holocaust, HERC teaches values that I hope my students will come to live out in their daily lives.

- *Sarah, Brown Deer Middle/High School*



SWALLOW SCHOOL DISTRICT
INSPIRING EXCELLENCE SINCE 1844

Greetings Dan,

Wonderful to hear from you. I look forward to coordinating having HERC come back to Swallow this winter to meet with my eighth graders again. The presentations were extraordinarily valuable both in our understanding of the Holocaust, but also in how that relates to our world and character today.

The chief value of the education provided by HERC was helping my students to see how our historical past can affect how we view and interact with our world today. I think initially students hear about the Holocaust and other cases of genocide and believe there is a simple divide between good & evil and feel that this couldn't happen in a contemporary world. Students think that neither they nor anyone they know would allow atrocities like this to happen. Your program helped students realize how mass murder didn't occur instantaneously and that it took years of perpetuated stereotypes and intolerance to make people allow this to happen. Additionally, your program helped them see the power of one. They learned how kindness and acceptance starting with one can be spread wide and change the world. Students left with a stronger understanding of our history, how it affects our world, and how they can be changemakers.

After the programs, through observation, we noticed the students simply being kinder to one another. The idea that we don't know everyone's histories, or what people might be going through encourage kindness. My students were definitely more empathetic to the plights of others after Mrs. Peltz came and shared her husband's story.

Overall, I believe that my students learned a lot about our world's history that they really had very little understanding of before. Through this they learned how intolerance and stereotypes can be perpetuated. They also learned how even individuals can break this cycle. I think through the stories and histories of others, they learned empathy, tolerance, and that they can be a positive force in their universe-home-school-playing field-etc.

Swallow School will definitely be arranging more presentations this year. Each program was highly beneficial to the students.

With gratitude,
Gretchen Nelson



**MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Milwaukee School of Languages
8400 W. Burleigh Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53222
Phone: 414-393-5700

Dan Haumschild, Ph.D.

Director of Education
Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education Resource Center
1360 N Prospect Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Dan,

For my students, the chief value of HERC in my classroom it to learn about the Holocaust from someone other than their teacher. In the three days Chris Cowles, our HERC educator, is in my classroom, my students make a connection with her. They are learning about very difficult topics that impact not only history but their lives.

I have seen changes in students with their relationships toward others. Many students have become very **sensitive to topics like being more tolerant of others' differences and standing up for students they see are** being bullied. We have a large population of special education and LGBTQ students. My students who have been part of the HERC programs have been much more tolerant and kinder to these populations.

For the most part, my students have been much more respectful to each other because of participating in HERC programs. Some of my freshmen and sophomores have joined groups like YES (youth involved in the struggle, a civil rights group) and GSA (Gender Sexuality Alliance, to become advocates for LGBTQ youth). They have told me that joining these groups fighting for tolerance and individuality was directly related to their participation in HERC activities.

Listening to a Holocaust **survivor's** story either directly form a survivor or their children has made a great impact on my students. To have a primary source sitting right inform of them and talking to them **impact's** their lives. Being able to visit a synagogue and learn about another religion, culture, and way of living has been hugely impactful as well. My students recall those two parts of the HERC programs vividly.

Sincerely,

Yvonne Audi
Teacher, Milwaukee School of Languages



HOLY FAMILY

DREAM | BELIEVE | ACHIEVE | LEAD

Dear Dan,

I met Walter Peltz when I was an eighth grader. The entire middle school gathered, Mr Peltz sat on a wooden chair in the front of the crowded room. He was dressed in a blue work shirt, sleeves rolled up. With a thick accent and urgency in his voice, he told us about his experiences during WWII and in Auschwitz. He showed us the number tattooed on his forearm and talked about being made into a number. I felt moved by his intensity. This might have been the first time an adult spoke with brutal honesty to me.

In college, working towards a degree in German, I spent a summer traveling in Europe. My visit to Dachau was life-changing. As I walked the grounds, imagining, reading, praying, I understood Walter Peltz's urgency.

Later, as an English teacher, I felt determined to include Holocaust education as part of the curriculum despite sometime objections from parents or administrators who felt this was too intense for middle school. The intensity of the topic was exactly why students need to study and discuss the Holocaust. I could not imagine a more powerful opportunity for adolescents to learn about courage, compassion, and integrity. I remember driving to Sheboygan to pick up Lucy Baras to speak to my Port Catholic students about her escape from Skalat labor camp in Poland and her hiding in the forest. She was as comfortable to talk with as my own Grandma Marge. At St Mary's Visitation School, Gerard Friedenfeld described his narrow escape from being put on a train to a concentration camp and expressed reverent appreciation for his British "mother" who took him in off the Kindertransport.

Howard Melton is a survivor speaker for The Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education Resource Center's program "From Fear and Ignorance to Knowledge and Understanding: Jews, Judaism and the Holocaust". He shared his testimony of Lithuanian ghettos, work camps in Riga, Latvia, and Dachau concentration camp. His words, and afterwards, warm embraces created a life-changing awareness in my St Robert students.

HERC provides excellent, accessible nonfiction resources that help students gain essential background knowledge to understand the unfathomable Holocaust. Materials in the borrowed "trunk" trace the origins of antisemitism and Hitler's elected rise to power. The message of leaders and followers and powerful rhetoric becomes personal in the stories of people on all sides. Students learn about heroes, rescuers, resisters, survivors. They gain concrete role models in the Righteous Among the Nations individuals they study through Yad Vashem.

As an educator, I have myriad means to teach summary, citation, persuasion, and analysis skills; however, no other unit strikes me as more essential to students' development of moral character and compassion. So grateful am I for the efforts of HERC in Milwaukee.

Jill Haberman
Holy Family Parish School

SALEM SCHOOL DISTRICT
8828 ANTIOCH ROAD P.O. BOX 160
SALEM, WI 53168
262-845-2336
www.salem.k12.wi.us



"Celebrating 100 years!"

My name is Jody Fuller and I teach 6th grade students at Salem School in Salem, WI. I have been an educator for the past 25 years, and I have had the privilege of hearing Holocaust survivors tell their courageous stories.

My first experience with the Holocaust Education Resource Center came in 1996. Walter Pelz was the first Holocaust survivor that I had the privilege to hear speak. It was a moving experience that has forever changed how I see that time in history. This man came into a room filled with middle school students and captivated us all with his charisma and charm. He told his story with such emotion that he made you feel as if you were there. Walter made the students understand the trauma that he went through as well as his need for survival. He shared his pain and sorrow with the children, and they were captivated by his story. Walter showed the students what it felt like to be persecuted, and how he didn't let that ruin his life because he was a survivor. Walter was an inspiration to all of the students and teachers that he touched, including myself.

The speakers who come into the lives of these middle school students share personal and insightful accounts of their lives in order for them to understand the complexities of the Holocaust. These memoirs are valuable beyond anything that I or other educators could teach out of a textbook. These individuals who tell their stories and those of their loved ones, are gifted and passionate teachers who actively engage my students. Their devotion to educating our youth leaves me in awe every time I hear their story, whether it is Edie Shafer telling about her experiences as a child in the Shanghai Ghetto, Nate Taffel talking to my students about his survival in the camps or Arlene Peltz telling Walter's story just as well as if he were there himself.

As educators we never want these stories to be forgotten, and that is why we are such supporters of the Speakers Bureau. Elie Wiesel wrote, "When you meet a witness, you become a witness." This simple statement connects these speakers to my students and colleagues. I want everyone to become a witness and learn from the mistakes of our past. We need to keep the memory of the Holocaust in our minds so history doesn't repeat itself. By hearing these speakers, students learn what it means to stand up to hatred. We teach all of our students to become Upstanders instead of Bystanders. Some students have expressed to me a change in view after hearing a speaker. We constantly remind students to be an Upstander in their lives, making those survivors proud.

I have seen many students who have become more tolerant after hearing from a survivor. I have students come back to visit years later and tell me that the highlight of middle school was meeting a Holocaust survivor, and they also shared the great impact they had in their lives. In my daily teaching, I have also used these speakers to remind students of how they should treat others.

The work of HERC has impacted the lives of my students, as well as myself. I feel it has been an honor and a privilege to have been a part of many Holocaust survivor's stories. I believe that all of my students who were able to hear their stories have a better understanding of what is right and wrong.

Fondly,

Jody Fuller

Jody Fuller
6th grade teacher/Activities Director

March 10, 2019

Dr. Shay Pilnik, Executive Director
Holocaust Education Resource Center
160 N. Prospect Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Dr. Pilnik,

In light of the ongoing increase in anti-Semitism, and the corresponding Anti-Semitic acts occurring throughout the world, I feel compelled to write to you today to share with you some personal experiences and call your attention to what I believe is vitally important to all of us as a Jewish community at large. Although you are certainly free to share this letter, I do ask that you keep my identity anonymous for the sake of my children.

As you of course well know, every day it seems we read or hear about another heinous act committed either against individual Jewish people or the entire Jewish community, whether it be acts of vandalism, desecration of Jewish sites or brutal personal attacks. Despite the documented rise in not only the number of these attacks, but also of their severity, it still seems at times that there are some who would perhaps be too quick to diminish the intensity of these acts, rationalize them away, or even dismiss them altogether. This especially seems to be the case with incidents that take place so very far away from the perceived safety net of home. The all too dangerous and often heard remark of "it could never happen here" is so casually floated about in the cities and suburbs of America, it is a mainstay of American Jewish thought. I myself grew up hearing this mantra spoken all the time. Of course, now, as Pittsburgh all too horrifically made clear, along with several other anti-Semitic acts and propaganda spreading throughout the country, that statement is null and void. We can clearly see, if we choose to truly look, that we Jews are not protected by some impenetrable American cocoon. "IT" can happen here, and, most frighteningly, "IT" is, with increasing frequency. What I wonder is just how aware our own local Wisconsin Jewish community is of the reality of these threats and actions occurring right here in our own state. I question if we, as a Jewish community, recognize just how often these assaults actually strike so very close to home, virtually in our own backyard.

I am a Jewish mother and teacher who does not live in a mainstream Jewish community. In fact, I do not know any other Jewish people who live near me. Although I grew up in Fox Point, I now live in a rural community, about an hour or so north of Milwaukee. I can plainly tell you that my children and I have personally endured several instances of anti-Semitism. And in accordance with what seems to be trending throughout the world, these instances seem to be occurring with more frequency. Seeing as Wisconsin is no exception to the global trend, I can't help but assume the same can be said for all of the other non-Jewish communities throughout America. This is without question, a real problem, and the reason I write to you.

I certainly understand that it may be somewhat difficult for those who do not live in non-Jewish communities to truly grasp what the "mainstream mentality" of these gentile communities is. Without experiencing it, how could they completely know? Clearly, for Jews living in a Jewish community, the majority of people they interact with on a daily basis have a very different, and in all likelihood, more accurate concept of who the Jewish people are and what comprises Jewish culture than those who quite literally have never met a Jewish person before in their entire life. This latter group only knows what they hear on the news, watch in movies, see on TV sitcoms, or perhaps glean from church sermons or readings. They have no firsthand experience. I live in a community such as this, and I see this perspective quite clearly. For the vast majority of people that I come into contact with here, I am the only Jew they have ever met or known! While many people are open and kind and accepting, (though still virtually completely ignorant of Judaism and Jewish culture) there are also many for whom I, sadly, could not say the same. Bearing this in mind, I would like to share some real-life examples of what I have encountered.

Of course, I have experienced the classic Christ-killer mentality. I have personally been accused of killing Christ on more than one occasion. I have also been accused of not believing in God because I don't believe in Jesus, which, truth be told, I actually find somewhat humorous. I quickly enlighten my accusers with the shocking information that Jesus was a Jew and believed in the same God that I do. It genuinely baffles me to find people who call themselves Christian who do not know this. What is not so funny, however, is when the husband of my very own best friend lets slip that he believes the Holocaust was God's punishment on the Jews for rejecting his son. This came as a true stunner to me, and was completely unexpected. I was literally left speechless. Although for years I had enjoyed many deep and philosophical discussions on religion with this man, I had no idea that under the surface, this was his actual belief. He had never been so bold as to say it before, but once it slipped out, there was no taking it back. I was truly blindsided. He actually believed God chose to brutally murder over 6,000,000 of his children through the acts of an evil monster to avenge the death of Christ. Ironically, in the same breath, this man would easily claim that the God he believed in was all loving, merciful, and compassionate.

I have also been told on more than one occasion that I was going to Hell for not being "saved" by believing in Jesus. This, however, I'm relatively sure and sad to say, is not a unique experience to any American Jew. It seems most of us have been told this at one time or another. Additionally, I was once told, while struggling through a health issue, that I would be prayed for, but that it probably wouldn't do any good, because I'm a Jew.

In negotiations to purchase a dining room table from a private party I was told not to try to "Jew them down." I replied by saying, "no worries" and walked away. On another occasion I received an anonymous phone call from someone asking if I knew how to make copper wire. Taken off guard and confused, I did not immediately respond. The person on the other end quickly supplied an answer by saying, "try to take a penny away from a Jew." He then hung up.

While attending a county fair, my husband (who is not Jewish) and I ran into an acquaintance from town who my husband had casually known since high school. We struck up a conversation and this acquaintance started telling us about how he was in the middle of getting divorced. He went on to say that his soon-to-be ex-wife's attorney was "raking him over the coals" trying to bleed him for every cent he could get out of him. He then continued by saying, "But what else would you expect from a dirty Jew lawyer?" He obviously didn't know I was Jewish. I don't know for sure if he got the message when I took my husband by the arm, and without saying another word, quickly turned around and walked away. We don't acknowledge this "acquaintance" anymore when we see him about town.

My children have not been exempt from these types of nasty slurs, either. My daughter was called "ghetto girl" throughout middle school and also came home from school one day informing me that in class, while discussing World War II, some jokes were made about Jews and money. Fortunately, at least in this instance, the teacher quickly admonished the class and did her best to set them straight. Nonetheless, the jokes had been made. Not only were they laughed at by the class, but the nasty propaganda had been further spread. And of course, one has to think about the fact that the student who made the jokes had learned them somewhere. It's not too difficult to guess where.

More disturbing was the time jokes were made in school about Jews, ashtrays, and pizzas burning in ovens.

But without question, the worst episode happened to my son while in high school. Unknown to me at the time, he was being bullied continually by a very nasty, anti-Semitic classmate. Eventually, the bully, who was considerably bigger than my son, slammed him viciously up against a locker, trapped him with his arms and spat the words "dirty Jew" at him. He then threatened that next time he would take a branding iron with a swastika on it and blaze it into his forehead.

While certainly this last incident is by far the most heinous, the truth is all of these events are disturbing. At best, they are the product of simple ignorance, and perhaps uttered with no intent of malice. (Such was the case in calling my daughter ghetto girl; the kids in her class didn't really know what they were saying, and certainly didn't wish her any harm.) At worst, while still born out of ignorance, they are the product of pure, malicious hatred, with clear intent to harm. Truthfully, it makes no difference. Either way, they cannot be dismissed and are indicative of a warped and dangerous mentality. This mentality is not going away. On the contrary, it is growing with an alarming and frightening intensity.

Thus, I write to you today asking, what can we do? What can be done to help change this mentality? Are we to simply accept that prejudice has always existed, recognize this is nothing new, and shrug it off? I emphatically believe that we cannot! I believe we must combat this warped mentality, and whereas I am not naïve, and know it will never be completely eradicated, I believe we do have within us the power and ability to fight it and assuage it. And the means through which we can accomplish this is education.

I know that HERC has done an outstanding job in Holocaust education awareness, especially throughout Milwaukee and southeastern Wisconsin. I also know that HERC is available to reach beyond this vicinity when called upon, or in specific instances when merited, and has gone out to many schools in outlying counties. This is certainly an excellent start. What I am wondering, however, is if it would be possible to have a more proactive approach in bringing these educational programs beyond Southeastern Wisconsin. The outlying counties, where there is almost no Jewish population, are where I believe there is actually the *greatest* need. It is in these areas where ignorance of the Jewish people is most prevalent. Those living there have literally no firsthand experience in meeting and getting to know and interact with Jewish people. This ignorance is nothing less than a wide open door, completely ready and waiting for anything at all to walk through it. It is a door where mistrust, lies, and hate can all too easily enter; or it can be a door where knowledge, truth and understanding can enter. But without the proper education and guidance, especially now as we witness this despicable rise in anti-Semitism, this open door is extremely inviting to all the old nasty stereotypes, tropes and propaganda that has plagued the Jewish people for ages.

There is a saying that goes, "if you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything." I see people who haven't been taught what to stand up for, how to stand up to prejudice, racism and anti-Semitism. And they are all too quick to fall for whatever vicious untruths and propaganda reaches their ears. Bringing the truth to their ears through education is the only answer. Rather than evil and malicious lies entering through these doors, we need to bring strong, responsible education. This is why I am writing to you today, to ask if there is a way we can bring more proactive, rather than reactive, educational programming to such counties as Fond du Lac, Washington, Winnebago, Dodge and/or Sheboygan counties, to name just a few. While the work that HERC has done in places such as Baraboo, in response to what happened with the student Nazi salute is totally commendable and exactly what was needed, wouldn't it be wonderful if the whole incident had never happened in the first place? If we could reach out to all of these outlying schools, where the students, teachers, and parents themselves have no experience understanding who the Jewish people are, what our culture is, our belief in Tikkun Olam, if we could educate them firsthand, maybe such outrages like a group of high schoolers all raising their arms in a Nazi salute would never happen at all. Maybe we could foster a much better understanding and instill a mutual respect so no other child would ever have to be slammed up against a locker with the threat of being branded with a swastika on his or her forehead.


Again, please know, I am not naïve. I recognize that we will never obliterate hatred altogether, but it is my deepest hope that we can significantly diminish it. By actively bringing educational programs to communities with little understanding of who the Jewish people are, we have the potential to truly fight this frightening trend of growing anti-Semitism that is spreading all over our country and the world. I would certainly be interested in hearing your thoughts on this, and further discussing how to make this type of programming a reality. I sincerely thank you for your time, and look very forward to your response.



NATHAN AND ESTHER PELZ

HERC

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION
RESOURCE CENTER

A PROGRAM OF THE MILWAUKEE JEWISH FEDERATION 

Through teaching the Holocaust, reading the book "Night" by Elie Wiesel, and participating in a HERC field trip which included a conversation with a Holocaust survivor, I have seen how a substantial number of students in my class developed empathy through exposure to an unfamiliar culture. These experiences made them become a lot more open minded. In particular I noticed a group of boys who would suddenly pause and stay silent before they would say something derogatory to each other. I could see a change in the choice of words of this whole group after they received Holocaust education.

HERC played a significant role in their education, making the Holocaust much more tangible and human, providing an interaction with the subject matter which a book could never do. The students became more aware and thoughtful when they interacted with coming upon a person who is different. This was especially important regarding the Brown Deer School District which has incredible diversity."

Sincerely,

Sarah Griffie,
former teacher at Brown Deer Middle/High School

Arleen Peltz, *Chair*

HERC Staff

Dr. Shay Pilnik,
Executive Director

Brittany Hager McNeely,
Director of Education

Milwaukee Jewish Federation

Moshe Katz, *Board Chair*
Miryam Rosenzweig, *CEO/President*

Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education Resource Center

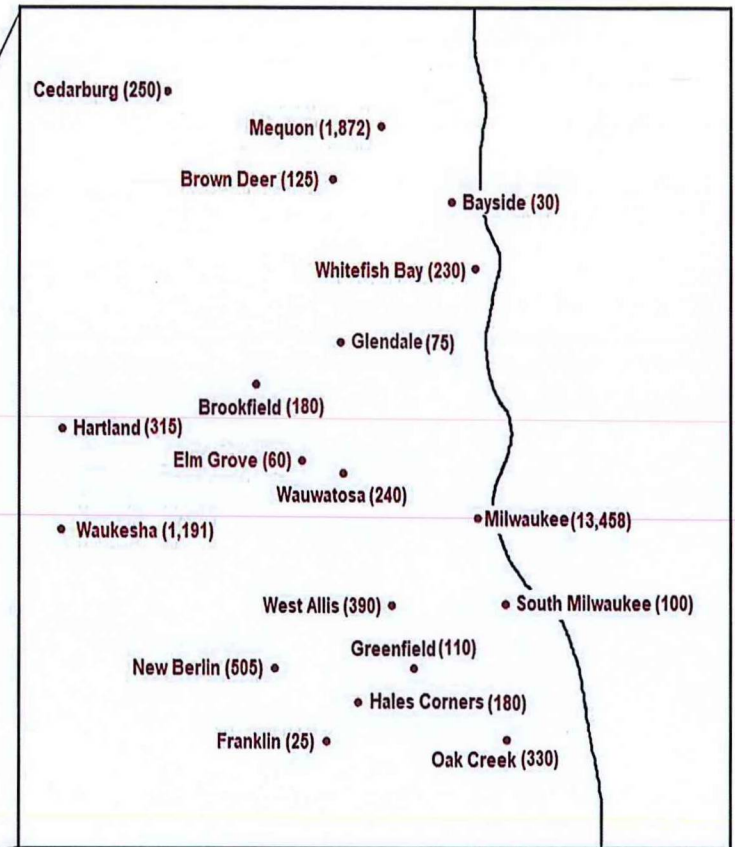
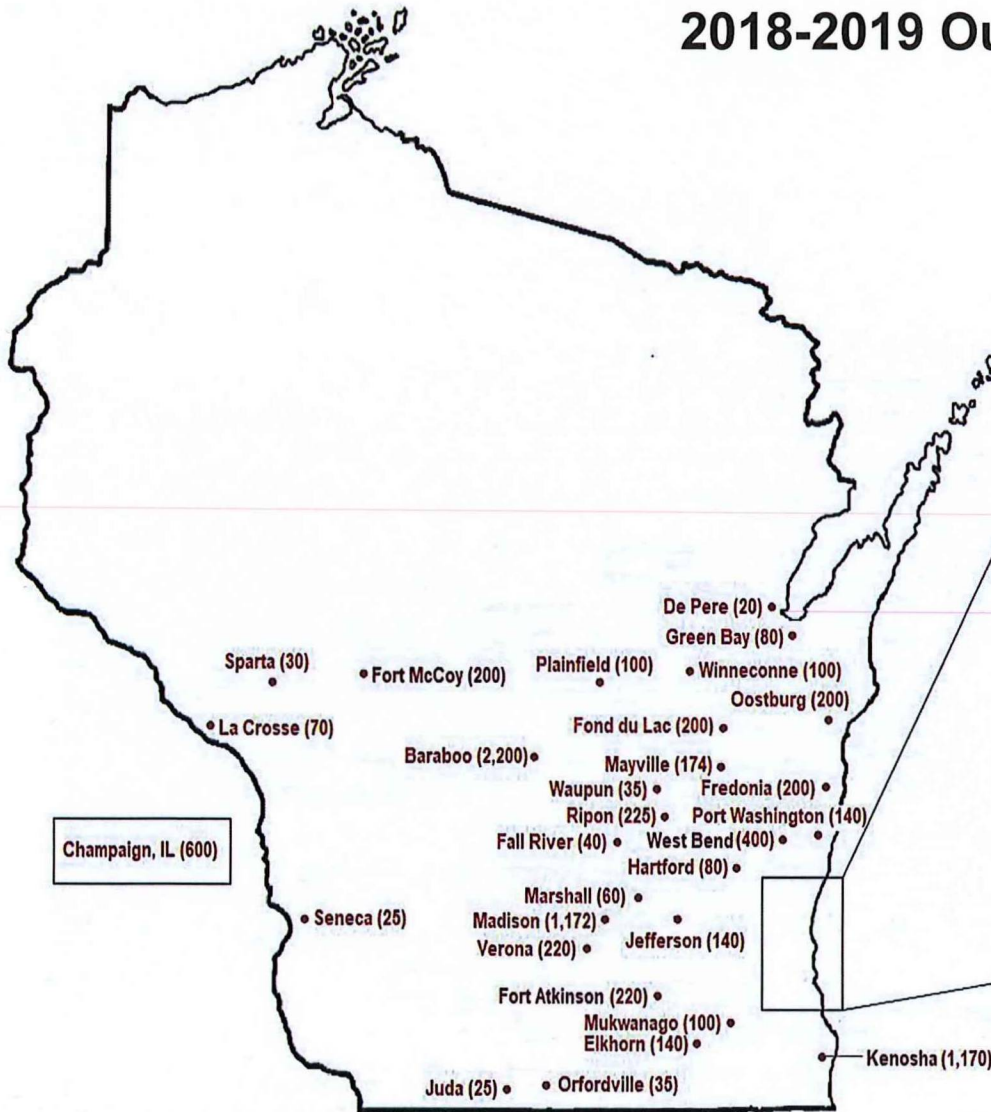
1360 N. Prospect Ave.
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HolocaustCenterMilwaukee.org

Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education Resource Center

2018-2019 Outreach Map



Total Number of Students & Community Members Reached in 2017-2018:

28,067

Wisconsin School Districts (SD) Reached by HERC

District	Address	City	Zip	Phone
Appleton Area SD	122 E College Ave #1A	Appleton	54911	920-832-6161
Arrowhead Union High SD	700 N Ave	Hartland	53029	262-369-3611
East Troy SD	2040 Beulah Ave	East Troy	53120	262-642-6710
Edgerton SD	200 Elm High Dr	Edgerton	53534	608-561-6100
Elkhorn Area SD	3 N Jackson St	Elkhorn	53121	262-723-3160
Erin SD	6901 Highway O	Hartford	53027	262-673-3720
Fall River SD	150 Bradley St	Fall River	53932	920-484-3333
Fond Du Lac SD	72 W 9 th St	Fond Du Lac	54935	920-929-2900
Fort Atkinson SD	201 Park St	Fort Atkinson	53538	920-563-7800
Germantown SD	N104 W13840 Donges Bay Rd	Germantown	53022	262-253-3900
Glendale-River Hills SD	2600 W Mill Rd	Glendale	53209	414-351-7170
Hamilton SD	W220 N6151 Town Line Rd	Sussex	53089	262-246-1973
Juda SD	N2385 Spring St	Juda	53550	608-934-5251
Madison Metropolitan SD	545 W Dayton St	Madison	53703	608-663-1879
Mayville SD	N8210 Hwy 28	Mayville	53050	920-387-7963
McFarland SD	5101 Farwell St	McFarland	53558	608-838-4500
Milwaukee Public Schools	5225 W Vliet St	Milwaukee	53208	414-475-8393
Nicolet High SD	6701 N Jean Nicolet Rd	Glendale	53217	414-351-1700
Northern Ozaukee SD	401 Highland Dr	Fredonia	53021	262-692-2401
Oak Creek-Franklin SD	7630 S 10 th St	Oak Creek	53154	414-768-5880
Oconomowoc SD	W360 N7077 Brown St	Oconomowoc	53066	262-560-1115
Oostburg SD	410 New York Ave	Oostburg	53070	920-654-2346
Oshkosh Area SD	215 S Eagle St	Oshkosh	54902	920-424-0395
Pecatonica Area SD	704 Cross St	Blanchardville	53516	608-523-4248
SD of Jefferson	206 S Taft Ave	Jefferson	53549	920-675-1000
SD of New Berlin	4333 S Sunnyslope Rd	New Berlin	53151	262-789-6200
SD of Shiocton	N5650 Broad St	Shiocton	54170	920-986-3351
SD of Waukesha	222 Maple Ave	Waukesha	53186	262-970-1003
SD of West Salem	405 E Hamlin St	West Salem	54669	608-786-0700
Sun Prairie Area SD	501 S Bird St	Sun Prairie	53590	608-834-6500
Tri-County Area SD	409 S West St	Plainfield	54966	715-335-6366
Waterford Union High SD	100 Field Dr	Waterford	53185	262-534-3189
West Bend SD	735 S Main St	West Bend	53095	262-306-4800
Whitefish Bay SD	1200 E Fairmount Ave	Whitefish Bay	53217	414-963-3901

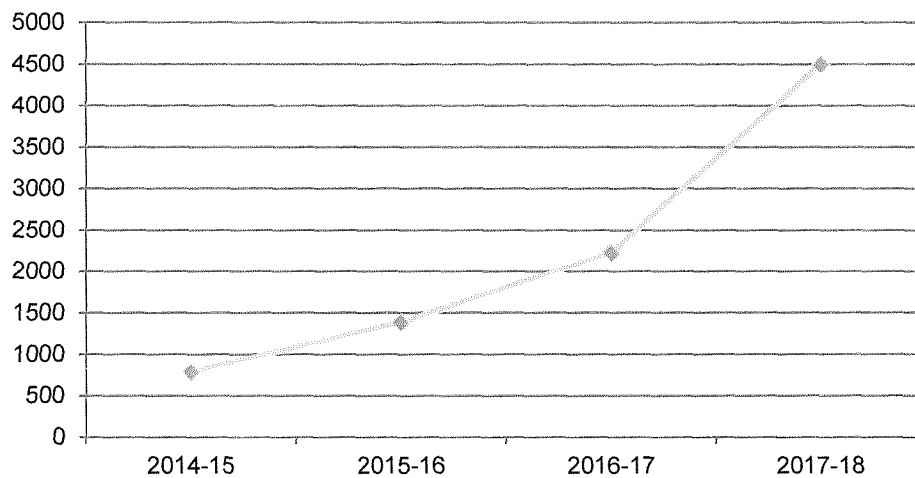
Holocaust Education Resources Sought in Legislative District 7, 2014-2019

	City	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Total # of Students Reached, 2014-19
Milwaukee Public School District							
95th Street School	Milwaukee				1 SB, 1 EP	1 SB, 1 EP	240
Academia de Lenguaje y Bellas Artes	Milwaukee			1 SB			35
Albert Story School	Milwaukee		1 SB				35
Alliance High School	Milwaukee			2 SB, 4 EP			130
Assata Alternative High School	Milwaukee	1 SB					35
Audubon High School	Milwaukee	1 SB			1 SB, 1 T, 4 EP	1 SB	305
Audubon Middle School	Milwaukee				1 SB, 1 EP		140
Bethune Academy	Milwaukee				3 EP	4 EP	399
Bradley Tech High School	Milwaukee	1 SB	1 EP	2 EP			210
Burbank Elementary	Milwaukee				1 SB, 1 EP	1 SB	240
Clarke Street School	Milwaukee				2 EP		60
Craig Montessori School	Milwaukee			1 SB, 1 EP			44
Eighty-First Street School	Milwaukee		1 SB				30
Escuela Vieau School	Milwaukee			1 SB, 1 EP	1 SB, 1 EP	1 SB, 1 EP	316
Fernwood Montessori	Milwaukee				1 SB, 1 FT, 2 EP	2 SB, 2 EP	390
Gaenslen School	Milwaukee				1 SB, 2 EP		120
Garland School	Milwaukee				2 SB, 1 T, 4 EP	2 SB, 1 T, 4 EP	400
Ma Meir School	Milwaukee		1 SB, 1 EP		1 SB, 2 EP		480
Goodrich Elementary	Milwaukee	1 SB					35
Humboldt Park School	Milwaukee			1 SB, 6 EP	1 SB, 1 FT, 3 EP	1 SB, 6 EP, 1 FT	1,770
James Fenimore Cooper Elementary	Milwaukee				1 SB, 1 EP		80
Lloyd Barbee Montessori School	Milwaukee				1 FT, 1 EP		50
Longfellow Elementary	Milwaukee			1 SB, 1 EP		1 SB, 1 EP, FT	360
Maryland Avenue Montessori	Milwaukee			1 SB, 1 T, 1 EP	1 EP	1 SB	609
Milwaukee Chinese Immersion	Milwaukee			1 SB, 1 EP			50
Milwaukee Community High School	Milwaukee		1 EP				25
Milwaukee High School of the Arts	Milwaukee				2 SB, 1 T, 6 EP		80
Milwaukee Parkside School for the Arts	Milwaukee		1 SB, 1 EP		1 SB, 1 EP		370
Milwaukee School of Languages	Milwaukee	1 SB			1 SB, 1 FT, 4 EP	1 SB, 1 FT, 4 EP	1,135
NOVA Academy	Milwaukee				1 SB, 1 EP		80
Nova Tech High School	Milwaukee			1 SB, 1 EP			100
Project STAY High School	Milwaukee	1 SB		1 SB			80
Pulaski High School	Milwaukee				2 SB, 3 EP		150
Reagan HS	Milwaukee	1 SB					12
Riverside High School	Milwaukee		1 EP	2 SB, 1 EP	1 SB		660
Ronald Reagan IB School	Milwaukee		1 T				15
Thomas King High School	Milwaukee		1 SB	1 SB, 3 EP		1 SB, 1 EP	1,295
Kurus King Middle School	Milwaukee	1 SB, 1 EP	1 SB	1 SB, 1 EP	3 EP		453
Southeastern Education Center	Milwaukee	1 SB					35
Story School	Milwaukee				1 SB, 8 EP		320
Thurston Woods Campus	Milwaukee				1 SB, 1 EP		70

US Grant School	Milwaukee	1 SB	1 T	1 SB, 1 FT, 8 EP	1 SB, 1 FT 1 T, 8 EP		1179
Victory School	Milwaukee			1 SB, 2 EP	1 SB, 1 T, 8 EP	1 SB, 1 T, 8 EP	910
Vincent High School	Milwaukee			1 SB, 1 EP			70
Washington High School	Milwaukee	1 SB					35
Westside Academy II	Milwaukee		1 T				85
School District of Cudahy							
Cudahy High School	Cudahy				1 FT		90
School District of South Milwaukee							
South Milwaukee High School	South Milwaukee				1 SB	1 SB	450

SB=Personal Holocaust Testimony | EP=Educator Program Classroom Visit | FT=Field Trip | T=Holocaust Materials Trunk Rental

Total Number of Students Reached by Holocaust Resources in Milwaukee Public School District, 2014-2018



"You motivated me to never give up. If you, someone who's been through so much in the Holocaust never gave up, then I shouldn't either."

Andrea, student at Escuela Vieau School, March 2017

"Not only did my students learn about the Holocaust, but many were also able to draw parallels with their everyday lives. Repeatedly my students have said that they want to make sure that everyone understands that we are all human beings. I hope to have you every year, so students can hear your message of love and understanding."

Betsy, teacher at Humboldt Park School, May 2017

"You are an inspiration for knowledge, understanding, and tolerance."

Michelle, teacher at Rufus King High School

"It's important that we learn about the Holocaust so that everyone can understand the potential dangers of discrimination and oppression. It can help us keep from repeating our mistakes, as well as allowing us to recognize irrational and tyrannical rule. Learning about the Holocaust also allows us to remember the 11 million that lost their lives during that time period."

Student at Victory School, April 2018

"I just wanted to thank you for coordinating a Holocaust survivor speaker's visit to South Milwaukee High School. It was really such a positive experience for my students."

Jill, teacher at South Milwaukee High School, January 2018

Holocaust Education Resources Sought in Legislative District 8, 2014-2019

	City	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Total # of Students Reached, 2014-19
Erin School District							
Erin School	Hartford		1 EP	1 SB, 1 EP	1 SB, 1 EP	1 SB	460
Fox Point Bayside School District							
Bayside Middle School	Bayside				1 SB		200
Friess Lake School District							
Friess Lake School	Hubertus				1 SB		25
Germantown School District							
Amy Belle Elementary School	Colgate	1 EP		1 SB			115
Germantown High School	Germantown			1 SB		1 SB	600
Kennedy Middle School	Germantown				1 SB		300
Glendale-River Hills School District							
Glen Hills Middle School	Glendale	1 SB	1 SB			1 SB	435
Maple Dale-Indian Hill School District							
Maple Dale School	Fox Point		1 SB	1 SB		1 SB	310
Mequon-Thiensville School District							
Lake Shore Middle School	Mequon					1 SB	150
Nicolet Unified School District							
Nicolet High School	Glendale			1 FT			45
Wolf District of Brown Deer							
Brown Deer High School	Milwaukee		1 FT				125
Whitefish Bay School District							
Whitefish Bay Middle School	Milwaukee			1 T			120

SB= Personal Holocaust Testimony | EP=Educator Program Classroom Visit | FT=Field Trip | T=Holocaust Materials Trunk Rental

“Thank you so much for strengthening our knowledge of the Holocaust through your inspiring story. Not only did you inform us deeply, you taught us many life lessons about hatred and love.”

Amber, student at Erin School, April 2018

“As 9th and 10th graders, my students are on the verge of making many decisions about their values and identity. Within the context of the Holocaust, HERC teaches values that I hope my students will come to live out in their daily lives.”

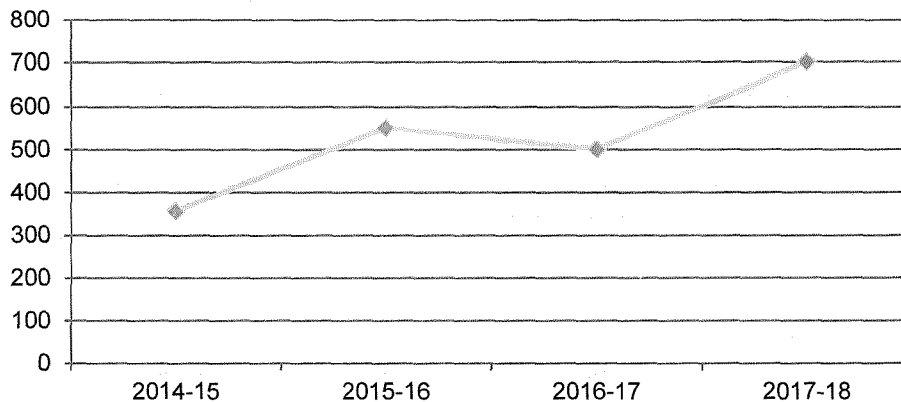
Sarah, teacher at Brown Deer High School

Holocaust Education Resources Sought in Legislative District 20, 2014-2019

	City	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Total # of Students Reached, 2014-18
Cedarburg School District							
Webster Middle School	Cedarburg				1 SB		225
Fredonia Central School District							
Fredonia Middle School	Fredonia				1 SB	1 SB	200
Friess Lake School District							
Friess Lake School	Hubertus				1 SB		25
Hartford Union High School District							
Hartford Union High School	Hartford		1 SB			1 SB	320
Northern Ozaukee School District							
Ozaukee High School	Fredonia		1 SB				250
Ozaukee Middle School	Fredonia		1 EP	1 SB	1 SB		210
West Bend School District							
Badger Middle School	West Bend	1 SB					75
West Bend East High School	West Bend	1 SB	1 SB	1 SB	1 SB	1 SB	3031

SB= Personal Holocaust Testimony | EP=Educator Program Classroom Visit | FT=Field Trip | T=Holocaust Materials Trunk Rental

**Total Number of Students Reached by Holocaust Resources in
West Bend School District, 2014-2018**



“You inspire me with how instead of hating the people who did those horrible things to you when you were so small, you decided to be the bigger man. I wish that there were more people like you in the world.”

Jillian, student at Badger Middle School, October 2014

Holocaust Education Legislation in the US

According to the *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance*, an intergovernmental body whose purpose is to place political and social leaders' support behind the need for Holocaust education, remembrance, and research both nationally and internationally, the United States does not have a mandated national curriculum. Therefore state and local governments bear primary responsibility for education. **As of June 2019, there are twelve states in the US** which include in their legislation requirements for Holocaust and genocide education.

California – Effective January 1, 2015

California Education Code § 51220

The adopted course of study for grades 7 to 12, inclusive, shall offer courses in the following areas of study:

- (B)(1) Social sciences, drawing upon the disciplines of anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, psychology, and sociology, designed to fit the maturity of the pupils. Instruction shall provide a foundation for understanding the history, resources, development, and government of California and the United States of America; instruction in our American legal system, the operation of the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems, and the rights and duties of citizens under the criminal and civil law and the State and Federal Constitutions; the development of the American economic system, including the role of the entrepreneur and labor; the relations of persons to their human and natural environment; eastern and western cultures and civilizations; human rights issues, with particular attention to the study of the inhumanity of genocide, slavery, and the Holocaust, and contemporary issues.
- (2) For purposes of this subdivision, genocide may include the Armenian Genocide. The "Armenian Genocide" means the torture, starvation, and murder of 1,500,000 Armenians, which included death marches into the Syrian Desert, by the rulers of the Ottoman Turkish Empire and the exile of more than 500,000 innocent people during the period from 1915 to 1923, inclusive.

Connecticut – Effective July 1, 2018

Senate Bill No. 452

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. Subsection (a) of section 10-16b of the 2018 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2018*):

(a) In the public schools the program of instruction offered shall include at least the following subject matter, as taught by legally qualified teachers, the arts; career education; consumer education; health and safety, including, but not limited to, human growth and development, nutrition, first aid, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation training in accordance with the provisions of section 10-16qq, disease prevention and cancer awareness, including, but not limited to, age and developmentally appropriate instruction in performing self-examinations for the purposes of screening for breast cancer and testicular cancer, community and consumer health, physical, mental and emotional health, including youth suicide prevention, substance abuse prevention, safety, which shall include the safe use of social media, as defined in section 9-601, and may include the dangers of gang membership, and accident prevention; language arts, including reading, writing, grammar, speaking and spelling; mathematics; physical education; science; social studies, including, but not limited to, citizenship, economics, geography, government, [and] history and Holocaust and genocide education and awareness in accordance with the provisions of section 2 of this act; computer programming instruction; and in addition, on at least the secondary level, one or more world languages and vocational education. For purposes of this subsection, world languages shall include American Sign Language, provided such subject matter is taught by a qualified instructor under the supervision of a teacher who holds a certificate issued by the State Board of Education. For purposes of this subsection, the "arts" means any form of visual or performing arts, which may include, but not be limited to, dance, music, art and theatre.

Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2018*) (a) For the school year commencing July 1, 2018, and each school year thereafter, each local and regional board of education shall include Holocaust and genocide education and awareness as part of the social studies curriculum for the school district, pursuant to section 10-16b of the

general statutes, as amended by this act. In developing and implementing the Holocaust and genocide education and awareness portion of the social studies curriculum, the board may utilize existing and appropriate public or private materials, personnel and other resources.

(b) A local or regional board of education may accept gifts, grants and donations, including in-kind donations, designated for the development and implementation of Holocaust and genocide education and awareness under this section.

Florida Required Holocaust Education Mandate Public School Instruction – 1994

F.S. 1003.42

(2) Members of the instructional staff of the public schools, subject to the rules of the State Board of Education and the district school board, shall teach efficiently and faithfully, using the books and materials required that meet the highest standards for professionalism and historical accuracy, following the prescribed courses of study, and employing approved methods of instruction, the following:

(g) The history of the Holocaust (1933-1945), the systematic, planned annihilation of European Jews and other groups by Nazi Germany, a watershed event in the history of humanity, to be taught in a manner that leads to an investigation of human behavior, an understanding of the ramifications of prejudice, racism, and stereotyping, and an examination of what it means to be a responsible and respectful person, for the purposes of encouraging tolerance of diversity in a pluralistic society and for nurturing and protecting democratic values and institutions.

Illinois Holocaust & Genocide Education Mandate – Effective January 1, 1990

Public Act 094-0478 § 27-30.3

Holocaust & Genocide Study: Every public elementary school and high school shall include in its curriculum a unit of instruction studying the events of the Nazi atrocities of 1933-1945. This period in world history is known as the Holocaust, during which 6,000,000 Jews and millions of non-Jews were exterminated. One of the universal lessons of the Holocaust is that national, ethnic, racial, or religious hatred can overtake any nation or society, leading to calamitous consequences. To reinforce that lesson, such curriculum shall include an additional unit of instruction studying other acts of genocide across the globe. This unit shall include, but not be limited to, the Armenian Genocide, the Famine-Genocide in Ukraine, and more recent atrocities in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda, and Sudan. The studying of this material is a reaffirmation of the commitment of free peoples from all nations to never again permit the occurrence of another Holocaust and a recognition that crimes of genocide continue to be perpetrated across the globe as they have been in the past and to deter indifference to crimes against humanity and human suffering wherever they may occur.

The State Superintendent of Education may prepare and make available to all school boards instructional materials which may be used as guidelines for development of a unit of instruction under this Section; provided, however, that each school board shall itself determine the minimum amount of instruction time which shall qualify as a unit of instruction satisfying the requirements of this Section.

Indiana – Effective July 1, 2007

Indiana Code 20-30-5 § 7

(a) Each school corporation shall include in the school corporation's curriculum the following studies:

(3) Social studies and citizenship, including the:

(A) constitutions;

(B) governmental systems; and

(C) histories;

of Indiana and the United States, including a study of the Holocaust in each high school United States history course.

Kentucky – Effective April 2, 2018

9128 (BR 351)

Amend KRS 156.160 to require every public middle and high school to provide instruction on the Holocaust and other acts of genocide; shall be known as the Ann Klein and Fred Gross Holocaust Education Act.

Michigan – Effective June 14, 2016

Michigan Compiled Law 380 § 1168

- (1) Beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, the board of a school district or board of directors of a public school academy shall ensure that the school district's or public school academy's social studies curriculum for grades 8 to 12 includes age- and grade-appropriate instruction about genocide, including, but not limited to, the Holocaust and the Armenian Genocide. The legislature recommends a combined total of 6 hours of this instruction during grades 8 to 12.
- (2) Subsection (1) does not preclude a school district or public school academy from including instruction described in subsection (1) in other subject areas.
- (3) The governor's council on genocide and Holocaust education is created as a temporary commission described in section 4 of article V of the state constitution of 1963.
- (4) The governor's council on genocide and Holocaust education shall consist of 15 members appointed by the governor. Members shall be individuals who have a particular interest or expertise in genocide education or Holocaust education, or both.
- (5) If the governor determines that sufficient private funding is available for the operations of the governor's council on genocide and Holocaust education, the governor shall appoint the members of the governor's council on genocide and Holocaust education within 60 days after the effective date of this section.
- (6) If a vacancy occurs on the governor's council on genocide and Holocaust education, the governor shall make an appointment for the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointment.
- (7) The governor may remove a member of the governor's council on genocide and Holocaust education for incompetence, dereliction of duty, malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance in office, or any other good cause.
- (8) The first meeting of the governor's council on genocide and Holocaust education shall be called by the governor. At the first meeting, the governor's council on genocide and Holocaust education shall elect from among its members a chairperson and other officers as it considers necessary or appropriate. After the first meeting, the governor's council on genocide and Holocaust education shall meet at least quarterly, or more frequently at the call of the chairperson or if requested by 8 or more members.
- (9) A majority of the members of the governor's council on genocide and Holocaust education appointed and serving constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at a meeting of the council. A majority of the members present and serving are required for official action of the council. A member may not vote by proxy.
- (10) The business that the governor's council on genocide and Holocaust education may perform shall be conducted at a public meeting of the council held in compliance with the open meetings act, 1976 PA 267, MCL 15.261 to 15.275.
- (11) A writing prepared, owned, used, in the possession of, or retained by the governor's council on genocide and Holocaust education in the performance of an official function is subject to the freedom of information act, 1976 PA 442, MCL 15.231 to 15.246.
- (12) Members of the governor's council on genocide and Holocaust education shall serve without compensation. However, if funding is available for this purpose from private sources, members of the council may be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties as members of the council.
- (13) State funds shall not be used for the operations of the governor's council on genocide and Holocaust education.
- (14) The governor's council on genocide and Holocaust education shall do all of the following:
 - (a) Identify, to the extent possible, all sources of strategies and content for providing and enhancing genocide education to students.

- (b) Advise the superintendent of public instruction, school districts, public school academies, and nonpublic schools in this state on strategies and content for providing and enhancing genocide education to students.
 - (c) Identify, to the extent possible, all programs and resources to train teachers in providing genocide education to students and share these programs and resources with the superintendent of public instruction, school districts, public school academies, and nonpublic schools in this state.
 - (d) Promote, within the schools and general population of this state, implementation of genocide education. This duty includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:
 - (i) In accordance with 2004 PA 10, engendering and coordinating events, activities, and education that will appropriately memorialize the victims of the Holocaust, such as observance of Holocaust Remembrance Day and the Days of Remembrance.
 - (ii) In accordance with 2002 PA 558, engendering and coordinating events, activities, and education that will appropriately memorialize the victims of the Armenian Genocide, such as observance of the Michigan Days of Remembrance of the Armenian Genocide.
 - (iii) Engendering and coordinating events, activities, and education that will appropriately memorialize the victims of other genocides.
 - (e) Secure private funding for the governor's council on genocide and Holocaust education. The governor's council on genocide and Holocaust education may also apply for and accept grants and receive gifts, donations, and other financial support from private sources, in accordance with state law, for the purpose of carrying out its duties under this section.
 - (f) Carry out any other tasks that it considers to be advisable to support the ability of this state to meet its goals in providing genocide education.
 - (g) Submit an annual report to the legislature on the progress and status of the council.
- (15) With respect to its duties, the governor's council on genocide and Holocaust education is an advisory body only. There is no right or obligation on the part of this state or its subdivisions, officials, or employees to implement the findings or recommendations of the governor's council on genocide and Holocaust education unless further legislation is enacted that specifically authorizes implementation of those findings or recommendations.
- (16) As used in this section:
- (a) "Armenian Genocide" means the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of approximately 1,500,000 Armenians by the Ottoman Turkish Empire and its collaborators.
 - (b) "Genocide" means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group, as such: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; or forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.
 - (c) "Holocaust" means the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of approximately 6,000,000 Jews and 5,000,000 other individuals by the Nazi regime and its collaborators.

New Jersey Holocaust/Genocide Education Mandate – Adopted March 10, 1994

N.J.S.A. 18A:35-28

Be it enacted by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. The Legislature finds and declares that:
 - A. New Jersey has recently become the focal point of national attention for the most venomous and vile of ethnic hate speeches.
 - B. There is an inescapable link between violence and vandalism and ethnic and racial intolerance. The New Jersey Department of Education itself has formally recognized the existence of the magnitude of this problem in New Jersey schools by the formation of a Commissioner's Task Force on Violence and Vandalism.
 - C. New Jersey is proud of its enormous cultural diversity. The teaching of tolerance must be made a priority if that cultural diversity is to remain one of the State's strengths.

- D. National studies indicate that fewer than 25% of students have an understanding of organized attempts throughout history to eliminate various ethnic groups through a systematic program of mass killing or genocide.
 - E. The New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education, created pursuant to P.L.1991.c.193 (C.18A:4A-1 et seq.), several years ago expanded its mission to study and recommend curricular material on a wide range of genocides. The Holocaust Commission is an ideal agency to recommend curricular materials to local districts.
2. A. Every board of education shall include instruction on the Holocaust and genocides in an appropriate place in the curriculum of all elementary and secondary school pupils.
B. The instruction shall enable pupils to identify and analyze applicable theories concerning human nature and behavior: to understand that genocide is a consequence of prejudice and discrimination: and to understand that issues of moral dilemma and conscience have a profound impact on life. The instruction shall further emphasize the personal responsibility that each citizen bears to fight racism and hatred whenever and wherever it happens.
 3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first apply to curriculum offerings in the 1994-95 school year.

New York – 1994

NY Education Law Title 1 Article 17 § 801

Courses of instruction in patriotism and citizenship and in certain historic documents:

1. In order to promote a spirit of patriotic and civic service and obligation and to foster in the children of the state moral and intellectual qualities which are essential in preparing to meet the obligations of citizenship in peace or in war, the regents of The University of the State of New York shall prescribe courses of instruction in patriotism, citizenship, and human rights issues, with particular attention to the study of the inhumanity of genocide, slavery (including the freedom trail and underground railroad), the Holocaust, and the mass starvation in Ireland from 1845 to 1850, to be maintained and followed in all the schools of the state. The boards of education and trustees of the several cities and school districts of the state shall require instruction to be given in such courses, by the teachers employed in the schools therein. All pupils attending such schools, over the age of eight years, shall attend upon such instruction. Similar courses of instruction shall be prescribed and maintained in private schools in the state, and all pupils in such schools over eight years of age shall attend upon such courses. If such courses are not so established and maintained in a private school, attendance upon instruction in such school shall not be deemed substantially equivalent to instruction given to pupils of like age in the public schools of the city or district in which such pupils reside.

Oregon – 2019

Oregon Legislative Assembly Senate Bill 664

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. Section 2 of this 2019 Act is added to and made a part of ORS chapter 329.

SECTION 2.

- (1) School districts must provide instruction about the Holocaust and genocide.
- (2) Instruction required under this section must be designed to:
 - (a) Prepare students to confront the immorality of the Holocaust, genocide and other acts of mass violence and to reflect on the causes of related historical events;
 - (b) Develop students' respect for cultural diversity and help students gain insight into the importance of the protection of international human rights for all people;
 - (c) Promote students' understanding of how the Holocaust contributed to the need for the term "genocide" and led to international legislation that recognized genocide as a crime;
 - (d) Stimulate students' reflection on the roles and responsibilities of citizens in democratic societies to combat misinformation, indifference and discrimination through tools of resistance such as protest, reform and celebration;

- (e) Provide students with opportunities to contextualize and analyze patterns of human behavior by individuals and groups who belong in one or more categories, including perpetrator, collaborator, bystander, victim and rescuer;
- (f) Enable students to understand the ramifications of prejudice, racism and stereotyping;
- (g) Preserve the memories of survivors of genocide and provide opportunities for students to discuss and honor survivors' cultural legacies;
- (h) Provide students with a foundation for examining the history of discrimination in this state; and
- (i) Explore the various mechanisms of transitional and restorative justice that help humanity move forward in the aftermath of genocide.

(3) The Department of Education shall provide technical assistance to school districts for the purpose of providing instruction required by this section. Enrolled Senate Bill 664 (SB 664-A) Page 1

SECTION 3.

(1) Section 2 of this 2019 Act becomes operative on July 1, 2020.

(2) Section 2 of this 2019 Act first applies to the 2020-2021 school year.

SECTION 4. Section 2 of this 2019 Act is amended to read: Sec. 2.

(1) The State Board of Education, in consultation with a local organization that has the primary purpose of providing education about the Holocaust, shall develop academic content standards for Holocaust and genocide studies that comply with the requirements of this section. School districts must provide instruction [about] on the Holocaust and genocide based on standards adopted by the board under this section.

(2) Instruction required under this section must be designed to:

- (a) Prepare students to confront the immorality of the Holocaust, genocide and other acts of mass violence and to reflect on the causes of related historical events;
- (b) Develop students' respect for cultural diversity and help students gain insight into the importance of the protection of international human rights for all people;
- (c) Promote students' understanding of how the Holocaust contributed to the need for the term "genocide" and led to international legislation that recognized genocide as a crime;
- (d) Stimulate students' reflection on the roles and responsibilities of citizens in democratic societies to combat misinformation, indifference and discrimination through tools of resistance such as protest, reform and celebration;
- (e) Provide students with opportunities to contextualize and analyze patterns of human behavior by individuals and groups who belong in one or more categories, including perpetrator, collaborator, bystander, victim and rescuer;
- (f) Enable students to understand the ramifications of prejudice, racism and stereotyping;
- (g) Preserve the memories of survivors of genocide and provide opportunities for students to discuss and honor survivors' cultural legacies;
- (h) Provide students with a foundation for examining the history of discrimination in this state; and
- (i) Explore the various mechanisms of transitional and restorative justice that help humanity move forward in the aftermath of genocide.

(3) The Department of Education shall provide technical assistance to school districts for the purpose of providing instruction required by this section.

Rhode Island Holocaust & Genocide Education in Secondary Schools – Enacted June 17, 2016

Rhode Island General Law Chapter 16 § 93

§ 16-93-1 Legislative Findings:

The general assembly hereby finds and declares that:

- (1) On November 4, 1988, the United States government ratified the International Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide ("Genocide Convention") which was approved by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. Upon ratification, the United States government recognized that throughout all periods of history, genocide has inflicted great losses on humanity, and was convinced that, *in order to liberate mankind from such an odious scourge, international co-operation was required.*
- (2) The United States government recognizes that genocide still continues, today, in the twenty-first (21st) century. The United States Congress passed House Con. Resolution 467, "Declaring genocide in Darfur, Sudan" on July 22, 2004. On September 9, 2004, the United States Secretary of State, Colin L. Powell, told

the United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee that "genocide has occurred and may still be occurring in Darfur." Additionally, President George W. Bush affirmed the Secretary of State's finding on September 21, 2004, when he addressed the United Nations General Assembly by saying: "At this hour, the world is witnessing terrible suffering and horrible crimes in the Darfur region of Sudan, crimes my government has concluded are genocide."

- (3) The United States Department of Education says "education is primarily a state and local responsibility in the United States. It is states and communities, as well as public and private organizations of all kinds, that establish schools and colleges and develop curricula"
- (4) The state of Rhode Island also has previously demonstrated its concerns and interests regarding raising awareness on the subjects of holocaust and genocide.
 - (i) In 2000, the Rhode Island general assembly passed house bill no. 7397, "Genocide and Human Rights Education", requiring the Rhode Island department of education to "develop curricular material on genocide and human rights issues and guidelines for the teaching of that material."
 - (ii) In 2007, the Rhode Island general assembly passed house bill No. 5142, requiring the state investment commission to divest its assets from targeted companies in Sudan.
 - (iii) In 2011, the state of Rhode Island enacted an act entitled "Genocide Education in Secondary Schools" (Chapters 45 and 70 of the Public Laws of 2011) which emphasized a need to adhere to making genocide curriculum materials available including, but not limited to, the Holocaust, Armenia, Cambodia, and Darfur.
 - (iv) The general assembly has passed a number of resolutions condemning the Holocaust.
 - (v) The general assembly, on the 100th commemoration of the Armenian mass killings, declared it a genocide. (Resolution No. 198 passed by the house of representatives at its January session A.D. 2015 and approved April 8, 2015, entitled "House Resolution Proclaiming April 24, 2015, as 'Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day' to Commemorate the Armenian Genocide of 1915 to 1923 and in Honor of Armenian-Americans" and Resolution No. 217 passed by the senate at its January session A.D. 2015 and approved April 15, 2015, entitled "Senate Resolution Proclaiming April 24, 2015, as 'Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day' to Commemorate the Armenian Genocide of 1915 to 1923 and in Honor of Armenian-Americans".)
 - (vi) The governor, legislators, and community leaders attended and participated at the Holocaust memorial dedication in 2015 whereby a need was recognized for education on the topic of holocaust and genocide in Rhode Island schools.
- (5) The establishment of free public education in the United States is intended to prepare citizens for participation in American social, economic, and political activities.
- (6) The state of Rhode Island has also previously demonstrated its concerns for civic education, of which genocide education should be a component. In 2005, the general assembly directed the board of regents for elementary and secondary education to develop and adopt a set of grade level standards in civic education by August 31, 2007.
- (7) Given the importance of the issue of genocide to the political affairs of the United States, as well as the responsibility of the state to educate its citizens, it is a fundamental responsibility of the state of Rhode Island to ensure that the critical subject of genocide is included as part of the curriculum in all public schools.
- (8) It is the judgment of the Rhode Island general assembly that the board of education in the state shall include instruction on the subjects of holocaust and genocide studies, where appropriate in the curriculum, for all middle and high school students.

§ 16-93-2 Definitions:

For the purpose of this chapter, the following words shall have the following meanings:

- (1) "Genocide," as defined by the Genocide Convention: means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group, such as: (i) Killing members of the group; (ii) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (iii) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (iv) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; and/or (v) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.
- (2) "Holocaust" means the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of approximately six million (6,000,000) Jews and five million (5,000,000) other individuals by the Nazi regime and its collaborators.

§ 16-93-3 Powers & Duties:

The state shall adhere to the following procedures:

- (1) The department of education shall collect and disseminate to every school district, private school, mayoral academy, and charter school, and make available on its website, curriculum materials and such other materials as may assist local and regional school committees, and governing bodies of any private school, mayoral academy, or charter school, in developing instructional materials on holocaust and genocide awareness and education. The curriculum materials may include information on relevant genocides, including the Holocaust, Armenia, Cambodia, Iraq, Rwanda, and Darfur.
- (2) Every school district shall include in its curriculum a unit of instruction on holocaust and genocide, utilizing, but not being limited to, the materials collected and disseminated by the department of education, commencing with the 2017-2018 school year. Nothing herein shall require school districts to require holocaust and genocide instruction in every year of middle school and high school, but that holocaust and genocide education and instruction shall be utilized during appropriate times in the middle school and/or high school curricula, as determined by the local authority. All students should have received instruction on genocide and holocaust awareness materials by the time they have graduated from high school.

Virginia – Approved March 2009

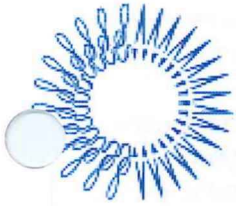
Chapter 474

An Act to require the Superintendent of Public Instruction to distribute a teacher's manual on Holocaust education.

[H 2409]

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. § 1. *That the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall select and distribute to all local school divisions a teacher's manual, with instructions for its use in the classroom, that emphasizes the causes and ramifications of the Holocaust and genocide. Each local school division shall provide grade-appropriate portions of the manual to history and literature teachers of these classes.*



PEW

As Hate Incidents Rise, States Require Teaching the Holocaust

By Elaine S. Povich | July 15, 2019

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Claire Sarnowski of Lake Oswego, Oregon, met Holocaust survivor Alter Wiener at a school event five years ago when she was 9 years old.

Because her aunt had arranged the talk by the Holocaust survivor, and served as his escort to the school and back, Sarnowski got to ride along when Wiener was driven home. The two started talking and formed an immediate bond. They kept in touch, with Sarnowski often persuading someone to drive her to see Wiener at his home in Hillsboro, Oregon, about an hour away from where he spoke. They shared meals and stories. Sarnowski became increasingly interested in Wiener's tales of living under Hitler during World War II and his life since then.

She thought other kids should learn about them too and began a campaign to get a state law requiring Holocaust education in Oregon schools. Last month, Democratic Gov. Kate Brown signed that law, with Sarnowski, now age 14, looking on. Even though Wiener died late last year at 92, Oregon students will continue to learn the lessons he shared.

Oregon is the 12th state to enact such a law, according to the Anti-Defamation League. Most of the states have acted in the past few years, and bills are pending in another dozen states.

In a telephone interview, Sarnowski said it's very hard for young people to relate to the Holocaust, particularly in that there are fewer survivors around for them to talk to. It was the personal talks with Wiener, she said, that made it real for her. Surveys show that Sarnowski's instinct is on target regarding young people.

Ignorance about the Holocaust is growing, particularly among young people. A [survey](#) last year showed that two-thirds of U.S. millennials were not familiar with Auschwitz, the largest Nazi death camp complex, located near Krakow, Poland. More than 1.1 million people were gassed, shot or starved at Auschwitz, including nearly a million Jews. Overall, the Nazis murdered 6 million Jews during the Holocaust, plus millions of Roma, homosexuals and others.

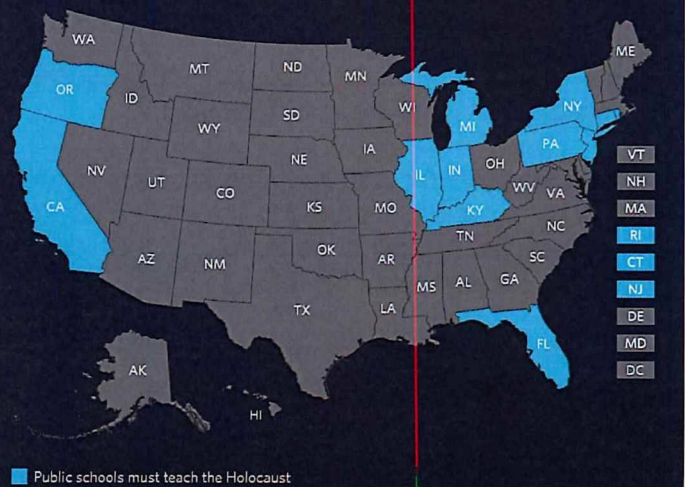
The Holocaust was the largest genocide in history, but not the last one. More recent examples include the Khmer Rouge's killing of about 2 million Cambodian dissidents between 1975 and 1979; the Hutu slaughter of about 800,000 mostly Tutsis in Rwanda in 1994; and the Sudanese government's killing of 300,000 civilians in the Darfur region, beginning in 2003.

"For me, being able to hear stories of survivors ... that connection was the most valuable piece of my education," said Sarnowski, who is not Jewish. "Just to know what happened, what led up to it ... and that this is considered our recent history. It's important to learn for the future and what we can do to make a difference in our own community. How we can stop the persecution of people in our schools for racial, religious [reasons] or just people who are different."

She forged a special bond with Wiener, who was born in 1926 in Chrzanow, Poland, near the German border. When the Germans invaded Poland in 1939, Wiener, his stepmother and his brothers fled, leaving his father, a grocer, behind to supply Nazi troops with

Teaching the Holocaust

Oregon just became the latest state to require public schools to teach the Holocaust. Advocates are pressing more states and public schools to include Holocaust lessons as survivors are dying rapidly and U.S. tensions over race and immigration grow.



Public schools must teach the Holocaust
Source: Anti-Defamation League
© 2019 The Pew Charitable Trusts

food. When the family returned three months later, their father had been killed. Wiener, then 13, was sent to several concentration camps and was eventually freed by Russian troops in 1945. The rest of his family died.

Wiener moved to what was then Palestine after the war and eventually joined cousins in the United States, according to the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education. He moved to Oregon in 2000 and began speaking to student groups, eventually making about a thousand appearances in schools, the museum said.

Sarnowski visited Wiener nearly every week in the last couple of years of his life, she said, hearing his stories over and over and becoming special friends.

When the two approached Oregon state Sen. Rob Wagner, a Democrat, about passing a law, Wagner sensed that feeling too. "That friendship was pretty magical," he said by telephone from his Lake Oswego home. He said the planned 15-minute meeting lasted 2½ hours and — along with work with Oregon Jewish groups and Holocaust educators — led to the bill that became law.

Wagner also said he was spurred to act by the rise of anti-Semitism in his neighborhood in suburban Portland. "Near a synagogue in my own neighborhood, there were anti-Semitic posters put up on light poles," he said. "There's definitely a rise in racism and anti-Semitism in the last couple of years."

The point was underscored in hearings in the Oregon legislature on the bill. In a House hearing in May, several people presented testimony that denied the Holocaust took place and said the deaths were exaggerated. Salem resident Tom Madison, in his written testimony, said there were "no gas chambers capable of killing humans" and "Soviet propaganda created the Nazi 'death camp' myth."



The testimony got so emotional that Education Committee Chairwoman Margaret Doherty, a Democrat, recessed the hearing to allow members to compose themselves. The bill passed unanimously.

Sondra Perl, director of U.S. programs for the Olga Lengyel Institute for Holocaust Studies and Human Rights in New York City, said most programs on the Holocaust, including her organization's, stick strictly to historical fact so as "not to give fuel to deniers."

That institute, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Shoah Holocaust remembrance foundation and other organizations are creating a rich catalogue of survivors'

stories — many on video recordings — to preserve their experiences even after they die. "When they are gone, the eyewitnesses will be gone," Perl said.

The Anti-Defamation League, which keeps tabs on hate crimes nationwide, and — along with the FBI — statistics on incidents, reported that anti-Semitic acts hit near record levels last year, with a doubling of anti-Semitic assaults, including the deadliest in American history: the shooting at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in which 11 died.

The overall number of anti-Semitic incidents last year, nearly 1,900, was a slight decline from the nearly 2,000 reported in 2017. But it was still nearly half again as high as the number reported in 2016 and nearly twice as high as in 2015.

Michael Lieberman, Washington counsel for the ADL, said the purpose of the mandated Holocaust education courses should be as much about looking forward as looking back.

"If you can craft them in an age-appropriate way, it's a study of democracy and the teaching of core values ... and how anti-Semitism and racism can run amok even in a democratic country," Lieberman said. "These are lessons that are not just looking back, but also looking forward."

The relevance of such lessons was driven home earlier this month, when a high school principal in Palm Beach County, Florida, was removed from his post after the release of emails in which he refused to state that the Holocaust was a historical fact. Spanish River High School Principal William Latson was sacked following reports that he told a parent that "not everyone believes the Holocaust happened" and that he couldn't say that it was a "factual, historical event," the [Palm Beach Post](#) reported.

This, despite the fact that Florida is one of the states that require public schools to teach the Holocaust. The state laws vary widely — some provide funds or suggest curricula, others do not. Some specify when or how the lessons should be incorporated into courses, while others are less prescriptive.

The Illinois law is one of the most specific, saying that every public school "shall include in its curriculum a unit of instruction studying the events of the Nazi atrocities of ... the Holocaust." The Pennsylvania statute, in addition to curriculum guidelines, calls for in-service training for Holocaust teachers.

Nick Haberman, a Pittsburgh high school teacher who attended last week's course on teaching the Holocaust here at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, said while Pennsylvania requires teaching the Holocaust, it doesn't spell out just how it is to be taught.

"We were very excited to have the mandate, but it was unfunded," Haberman said, and he called for more teacher participation in the process. He said the Tree of Life shooting spurred local residents to work on more community-based events to "teach the living history of anti-Semitism. The best weapon against anti-Semitism is education."

The weeklong course here at the museum, called the Museum Teacher Fellowship Program, is designed to train teachers to create outreach projects on the Holocaust in their schools and communities. Most of the teachers attending the program this month already teach the Holocaust to their students and were hoping to expand their understanding and efforts.

An exercise involving looking at pictures taken during World War II was particularly instructive to the teachers who were attending, underscoring how, for example, an ordinary-looking family appearing to enjoy a swimming pool was actually a photo of a Nazi general, his wife and kids, taken just outside the boundary of a concentration camp where he worked to slaughter thousands.

"It just shows how our perceptions can be wrong," said Kelsey Cansler, who teaches sixth and seventh grade in Townsend, Tennessee.

Lisa Clarke, who has been teaching middle school units on the Holocaust in Maryland for 16 years, said her students can relate to exclusionary laws, like those aimed at Jews in Germany in the 1930s, because "middle schoolers are all about who's in the club and who's not in the club."

"I'd never say that 'the Holocaust is just like middle school' but I want them to get the sense that it is human," Clarke said. "Part of the things that happened in the Holocaust are human nature. We want to be part of a group ... even if that goes against our values and morals."

Many of the units on the Holocaust talk about the difference between "bystanders and upstanders," and how students may respond either way to bullying, for example.

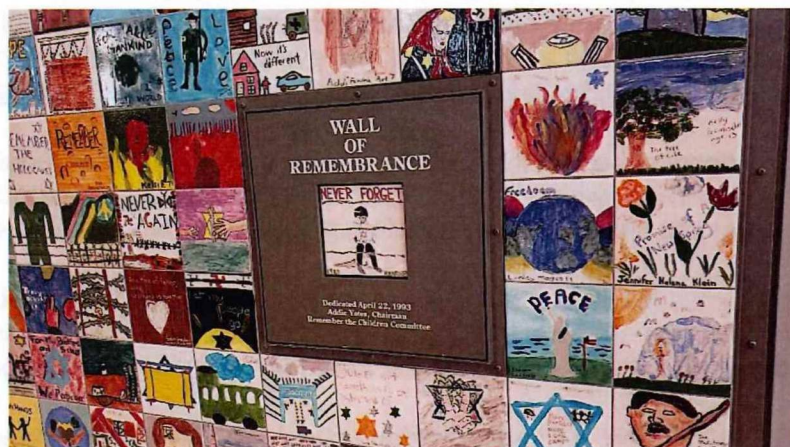
Massachusetts state Rep. Jeffrey Roy, a Democrat who represents the near-western suburbs of Boston, is sponsoring a bill in his state that would require Holocaust education, despite the fact that the topic already is included in the state's education "framework" that forms the basis for instruction in many of the state's schools.

"The frameworks are voluntary, local school committees have the option to adopt the frameworks as much or as little as they want," he said. "The legislation would require them to incorporate it into the curriculum."

Roy said he did not know how many of the 351 local school districts in the state teach the Holocaust, but he suspects it's a pretty large number.

"No child should graduate from a high school in Massachusetts without being exposed to this type of curriculum," he said, noting that the ADL reported a more than 90% increase in hate crimes in Massachusetts from 2016 to 2017.

James Waller, a professor of Holocaust and genocide studies at Keene State College in New Hampshire who taught a session at last week's seminar for teachers here at the Holocaust museum, said there is merit to teaching in "ways that connect the Holocaust and genocide with everyday people ... in dehumanizing, 'other-izing,' discrimination and so on."



"I think when teachers are intentional about those connections, I think it can do some good," he said. "It is when the course is just taught as history that it makes it easy for students to say, 'It happened then, it happened there, it has no relevance here.'"

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

The New Anti-Semitism

By Yaroslav Trofimov | July 12, 2019

When France's Yellow Vests began to protest weekly last November, it was about President Emmanuel Macron's decision to raise fuel taxes. Within a few months, it also started to be about the Jews.

Signs that labeled Mr. Macron as a "whore of the Jews" and a slave of the Rothschilds, a reference to the president's past employment with the investment bank, became a fixture of the demonstrations. In February, several Yellow Vest protesters—since disavowed by the movement—assaulted the Jewish philosopher Alain Finkelkraut on the doorstep of his Paris home, yelling, "You will die," "Zionist turd" and "France is for us."

"When there is a world-wide economic and social malaise, people look for scapegoats—and the Jews have always served as scapegoats," said Francis Kalifat, the president of CRIF, the council uniting France's Jewish institutions. "Anti-Semitism creates bridges between the far right and the far left: They have such a hatred in common that they come together."

France and other Western societies, the proliferation of new political forces that challenge the established moral order—from both the right and the left—has revived old patterns of vilifying the Jews as the embodiment of the corrupt elites supposedly responsible for society's ills.

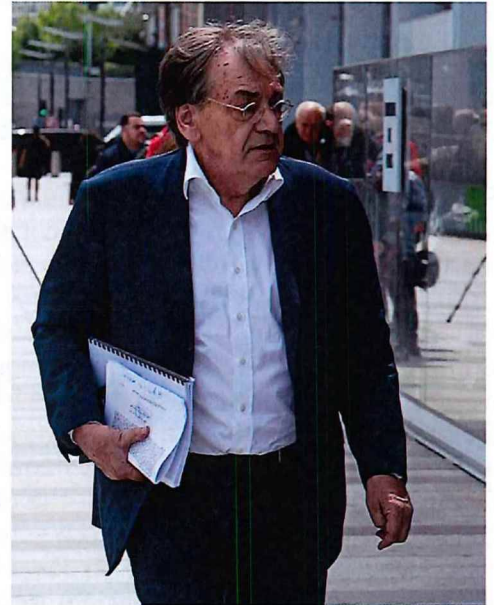
Meanwhile, unfiltered social media has pushed these anti-Semitic tropes, long confined to the fringes, into the mainstream of public debate. On any given issue—from economic inequality to the financial crisis to immigration and terrorism—old and new conspiracy theories blaming the Jews have gained new traction, abetted by the political polarization and general crisis of confidence permeating Western democracies. "Latent anti-Semitism is being activated," said David Feldman, director of the Pears Institute for the Study of Anti-Semitism at Birkbeck, University of London. "Populist politics is not inherently anti-Semitic, conspiracy theories are not inherently anti-Semitic, but both very easily lend themselves to an anti-Semitic turn and easily become anti-Semitic."

This change comes after an unusual, postwar golden age that Jewish communities enjoyed across Western Europe and the U.S. over the past several decades. After the horrors of the Holocaust, a commitment to minority rights, religious freedom, an inclusive vision of nationhood and a human-rights-based liberalism seemed to be the bedrock of political life in Western democracies. While anti-Semitic prejudice persisted in some areas, overt anti-Semitism seemed taboo.



"Liberal democracies have been good for the Jewish people. Civil rights have been critical to our success in societies which, in the absence of these rights, over centuries and millennia systematically discriminated against and marginalized Jewish people," said Jonathan Greenblatt, the director of the Anti-Defamation League in New York. "The trend away from liberal democracies is bad for the Jewish people, period."

As anti-Semitic discourse again becomes normalized in the West, the number of incidents targeting Jews has surged in the U.S. and Europe.



Until the past few years, the biggest threat came from Islamists and disaffected Muslim youths, particularly in the troubled banlieues at the edges of French cities. France, home to Europe's biggest Jewish community, has suffered a string of killings of Jews, including the deadly 2015 assault on a Paris kosher supermarket claimed by Islamic State. Anti-Jewish harassment remains commonplace in distressed neighborhoods where working-class Muslims and Jews live side by side.

"The Jews who lived in the banlieue have been leaving. Daily life has become impossible there," said French Sen. Esther Benbassa, who represents many suburbs of Paris.

The West's new wave of anti-Semitism, however, is increasingly coming from new quarters: from the nativist far right, with its fear of "the other" and dreams of racial purity, and from the extreme left, which often identifies Jews with the capitalist elites it seeks to destroy and glorifies Palestinian militants.

Sen. Benbassa, who supported the Yellow Vests' economic demands, said that skinhead far-right activists twice assailed her with anti-Semitic insults during the recent demonstrations; other Yellow Vests—who, like many in the movement, can't abide anti-Semitic prejudice—came to her rescue.

When another far-right extremist shouting anti-Semitic slurs and seething over immigration gunned down 11 worshipers at a synagogue in Pittsburgh last October, he claimed more lives in one swoop than an entire decade of Islamist violence against Jews in France. Including that shooting—the deadliest anti-Semitic attack in American history—the total number of reported physical assaults on Jews in the U.S. more than doubled last year to 39, according to the Anti-Defamation League. In April, another far-right extremist opened fire in a synagogue in Poway, Calif., killing a 60-year-old woman.



In the U.K., the number of anti-Semitic incidents has been rising for each of the past four years, reaching 1,652 in 2018, compared with 960 in 2015, according to the Community Security Trust, which monitors threats to British Jews. (Most of the identified perpetrators were white and non-Muslim.) And in France, the number of reported anti-Jewish incidents rose 74% to 541 last year, according to the country's interior ministry. That may be just the tip of an iceberg: Last year, a European Union survey of European Jews found that 79% of those who experienced anti-Semitic harassment didn't report it to authorities.

A critical difference between today's anti-Semitism and its pre-World War II iterations is the existence of Israel—a prosperous democracy and an undeclared nuclear power that is nearing the historic threshold of being home to the majority of the world's Jews. On one level, Israel represents a guarantee of security should things get dramatically worse—a "life insurance policy" for diaspora Jews, as Mr. Kalifat of CRIF puts it. Already, tens of thousands of French Jews have invested in property in Israel or acquired Israeli passports.

But on another level, Jews in Europe, the U.S. and elsewhere are regularly blamed for Israel's treatment of the Palestinians—a minority within one country being held accountable for the policy decisions of the government of another. Sometimes this dynamic can take on softer forms, such as when Jewish students on American college campuses—where the movement to boycott Israel is strong—face pressure to repudiate any connection to the Jewish state. Sometimes, it can become violent. During the 2014 Gaza war, some pro-Palestinian protesters in France—unable to attack Israeli interests—burned down several Jewish-owned businesses instead. "When you diabolize the state of Israel, you end up diabolizing the Jews," Mr. Kalifat said.

The diabolization of Israel certainly lies at the heart of the crisis in Britain's Labour Party—a movement that used to attract the bulk of the U.K. Jewish vote and that 85.6% of British Jews now see as harboring significant anti-Semitism, according to an August-September 2018 poll for the Jewish Chronicle, a London-based Jewish newspaper.

In nearly four years of being led by Jeremy Corbyn, a fierce critic of Israel and Zionism, Labour has experienced so many anti-Semitic incidents within its ranks that in May, the party found itself under formal investigation by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, an antiracism watchdog created by a previous Labour government. Mr. Corbyn has described leaders of Hamas and Hezbollah as “friends” and was recorded saying that “Zionists” don’t “understand English irony” despite spending their entire lives in the country. He vigorously denies that he or his party are anti-Semitic.



“Jews in this country are held responsible for the actions of the Israeli government in the way we wouldn’t demand for, say, British Pakistanis. It’s the way that is not applied to any other minority,” said Luciana Berger, a member of Parliament who had to be protected by police at last year’s Labour conference and quit the party in February.

Several people—from both the far right and the left—have been arrested and sentenced for making anti-Semitic threats against Ms. Berger, a former parliamentary chair of the Jewish Labour Movement. Ms. Berger said that she is often asked whether Jewish life in Britain could continue under a Corbyn

government. “It comes up all the time: Do we have to leave the country?” she said. “It’s terrifying.”

In the U.S. Democratic Party—which attracted 72% of the American Jewish vote in last year’s midterms—rising criticism of Israel’s policies has also sometimes spilled into anti-Semitic language. In February, Rep. Ilhan Omar tweeted, “It’s all about the Benjamins baby,” suggesting that money from a pro-Israel group helps dictate U.S. foreign policy; she apologized after condemnation by her fellow Democrats in Congress.

Though President Donald Trump has expressed hope that such incidents would prompt a “Jexodus” toward him and his party, so far, there is little evidence of it happening: Some 71% of American Jews hold an unfavorable opinion of Mr. Trump, according to a survey carried out in April-May for the American Jewish Committee, or AJC—a figure unchanged from the year before.

Several American Jewish organizations have repeatedly criticized Mr. Trump’s own remarks, such as saying in 2017 that the anti-Jewish protesters in Charlottesville included “very fine people” and, in October 2016, that Hillary Clinton “meets in secret with international banks” to enrich “global financial powers.”

Mr. Trump strongly denies any anti-Semitism and points to his staunch support of Israel. Indeed, unlike among traditionally liberal American Jews, Mr. Trump has become widely popular in Israel, where 79% of Jews approve of his handling of the relationship with their country, according to a poll conducted for the AJC in April. Building strong bonds with Israel’s right-wing prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, Mr. Trump has pulled out of the Iran nuclear deal negotiated by President Barack Obama, moved the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem and recognized Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights, where a planned new town has been named Ramat Trump in his honor.



In addition to cultivating Mr. Trump and the Republican Party, Mr. Netanyahu has wooed nationalist and populist governments in Hungary, Austria, Brazil and elsewhere that have defended Israel in international forums. As with Mr. Trump, that has made Israel even more of an issue in many countries' domestic politics—and created unusual strains in the ties between the Jewish state and those countries' overwhelmingly liberal Jews.

"It's something new for us: We have never been in a situation of big tension between the governments of very friendly countries and their Jewish communities," said the veteran Israeli politician Natan Sharansky, who until last year headed the Jewish Agency, a body responsible for Jewish immigration and ties with the diaspora.

Some of the West's new nationalist and populist forces have embraced Mr. Netanyahu's Israel because of political calculations, including the need to mask anti-Semitism in their own ranks. Many others, however, admire the Jewish state's successes and values, from growing its economy and building up its military to elevating tradition, culture and faith.

Hungary's authoritarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who has made protecting Europe from a "Muslim invasion" the cornerstone of his policies, is a case in point. "In the world today, there are basically two types of leaders: There are the globalists and the patriots," Mr. Orban, a frequent visitor to Jerusalem, said in 2017. "And it is beyond question that the current prime minister of the state of Israel is a member of the club of patriots."

Yet Mr. Orban has also sought to rewrite Hungary's history, portraying his country as an innocent victim of Nazi Germany and playing down its participation in the Holocaust. That has opened up a rift between the leaders of Hungary's Jewish community and Mr. Orban's government. "They want a proud Hungarian nation without black spots," said Andras Heisler, president of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Hungary, whose mother was deported to Auschwitz by Hungarian police.

Mr. Heisler, who has frequently criticized Mr. Orban's rhetoric targeting Muslims and his attacks on the Jewish billionaire George Soros, acknowledged a paradox: Despite their apprehension about Hungary's political course, Jews walking through Budapest in religious garb are much safer today than those in the liberal democracies of Germany or France. "In Hungary, there is anti-Semitism, but there are no physical attacks," Mr. Heisler said. "We can go with a kippah in the street."

Contrast that with Germany, where the government's commissioner on anti-Semitism warned Jews in May not to wear kippahs for their own safety—advice that sparked an uproar and was withdrawn.

In Sarcelles, a town north of Paris with a large Jewish community and a much larger population of Arab and African Muslim origin, Rene Banon's pharmacy in the Flanades shopping center was burned down during anti-Jewish riots sparked by the Gaza war in 2014. These days, he frets about local Jewish youths wearing prayer shawls and yarmulkes as they walk to the local synagogue on Sabbath. "This could be seen as a provocation," Mr. Banon said in his rebuilt pharmacy on a recent afternoon. "They shouldn't be doing it in such a difficult period."

Such fears—and experiences—of daily harassment, often perpetrated by Muslim youths, have pushed a fraction of French, German or Austrian Jews to support far-right, anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim parties, disregarding these movements' anti-Semitic overtones. That is a dangerous mistake, warned Mr. Kalifat, the head of France's CRIF.

"The best bulwark against Islamists is not the far right. It is democracy," Mr. Kalifat said, pointing to the torrent of anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial that has poured from far-right activists within the Yellow Vest movement in recent months. "If the extreme right wants to fight Islamists, that doesn't make it our friend—because I know that it will be Islamism and Muslims at first, but then it will be the Jews."

THE *Hollywood* **REPORTER**

'Schindler's List' Reunion: Steven Spielberg Calls for Holocaust Stories to be Required Curriculum

By Hilary Lewis | April 28, 2018

The director, reunited with the stars of his seven-time Oscar winner after a 25th anniversary screening at the Tribeca Film Festival, also talked about the "traumatic" experience of filming.

The Tribeca Film Festival's 25th anniversary reunion of Steven Spielberg with his *Schindler's List* stars Liam Neeson, Ben Kingsley, Embeth Davidtz and Caroline Goodall was surprisingly devoid of discussion about the Holocaust film's current political relevance, particularly amid the [increased prominence](#) of neo-Nazis and other white supremacists and events like last summer's deadly "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville, Virginia.

But the acclaimed filmmaker did say that he felt more should be done to educate young people about the Holocaust. In response to a question about [a recent survey](#) that found a lack of knowledge about the Holocaust among millennials, Spielberg said, "It's not a pre-requisite to graduate high school, as it should be. It should be part of the social science, social studies curriculum in every public high school in this country."

He clarified that he wasn't saying his movie should be taught in schools necessarily, but that "these stories that Holocaust survivors have the courage to tell" should be on the curriculum.

Reflecting on the experience, 25 years ago, of making the film about "the banality of the deepest evil," Spielberg said, "It feels like five years ago."

Spielberg and the stars watched the movie, along with a packed audience at New York's Beacon Theatre, before a post-screening discussion moderated by *The New York Times*' Janet Maslin. For the director, it was the first time he'd watched *Schindler's List* with an audience since the seven-time Oscar-winning pic was released in 1993, and he and his actors said they noticed things this time they had previously missed.

Spielberg was surprised by the "long, lingering look" the real Emilie Schindler (played by Goodall) "gives her husband's grave" in the film's closing scene, which features the real Oskar Schindler's Jews placing stones on his grave. "It blindsided me," he said. The director said this scene came about from his own insecurity, three-quarters of the way through filming, that people wouldn't believe the film was based on true events.

"I'm so known for films that are nothing like this, I didn't know that if people and the way they perceive me, and my own perception of myself, was enough to be able to present this movie as truth, which it was," Spielberg said. "I got really worried and it came to me, 'What if we can get as many of the Holocaust Schindler survivors and get them to put stones on Schindler's grave?' That was an idea

that was never in the script — that was a desperate attempt from me to find validation from the survivors' community itself to be able to certify that what we had done was credible."

For Neeson, though, what he noticed was much more minor and his reaction to it gave the panel a needed moment of comic relief.

The actor pointed out that for a couple of the close-up shots of Schindler getting ready at the beginning of the movie, filmmakers used the second assistant director to show Schindler's hands, which Neeson said were shaking, something that always bothers him.

On a far more serious note, both Spielberg and Neeson recalled the traumatic experience of filming the scenes at concentration camps.

Two Israeli actors, Spielberg said, had breakdowns after they filmed a scene in which they had to strip down and shower together, with many other people, cramped in a small room, afraid that they'll be gassed.

"That aesthetic distance we always talk about between audience and experience? That was gone. And that was trauma," said Spielberg. "There was trauma everywhere. And we captured that trauma. You can't fake that. [Another scene] where everyone takes off their clothes was probably the most traumatic day of my entire career — having to see what it meant to strip down to nothing and then completely imagine this could be your last day on earth."

Neeson, meanwhile, who said he felt "unworthy" of being cast in the lead role as he was making the movie, recalled filming a scene near the gates of Auschwitz, where producer Branko Lustig, himself a Holocaust survivor, told him, "See that hut there? That was the hut I was in."

Neeson said, "It hit me, big fucking time." The actor then recalled that he was so thrown his knees were shaking as he did his scene and he couldn't get his lines right.

Spielberg also clarified some rumors about the origins of the pic and, in what may be a relief for those still disturbed by Mel Gibson's past anti-Semitic comments, when asked if Gibson "could have been cast in the lead," he said, "That's not true."

Two New Efforts Launched to Require Holocaust Education Nationwide

By Stav Ziv | May 1, 2017

Sean Spicer's recent gaffe about the Holocaust—when during a press briefing he erroneously claimed that Adolf Hitler had never used chemical weapons against his own people and used the confusing and seemingly made-up term “Holocaust centers”—mad him an accidental poster boy for Holocaust education. His comments not only sparked a maelstrom of criticism and calls for him to be fired, but also spurred the New York-based Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect to launch the “50 State Genocide Education Project.”

“Our project was oddly inspired by Sean Spicer's ignorance,” says Steven Goldstein, the organization's executive director. On second thought, “inspired” isn't exactly the right word, he says, since it has a positive connotation. “But it was certainly triggered by Sean Spicer's comments,” he adds. “We looked at the bigger picture. How could someone like Sean Spicer make his way through an education system and not know about the Holocaust? Where did the American education system go wrong in Sean Spicer's case? Because clearly it went wrong.”

The Anne Frank Center announced its new initiative last week on Yom HaShoah, or Holocaust Remembrance Day, which this year also coincided with Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day. The ultimate goal is to reach a point when all 50 states and the District of Columbia require Holocaust and genocide education. As a starting point, the organization announced commitments from 26 Democratic and Republican state legislators from 20 states to introduce legislation requiring such instruction in public schools (or to strengthen existing laws) in their states. Goldstein emphasizes that the Anne Frank Center is pushing for broad genocide education that includes the Holocaust, the Armenian genocide and other genocides.

“It was a shock to the system that 72 years after the Holocaust, only eight states require genocide education,” Goldstein says. “It's stunning. It's astounding. And we believe that if all 50 states had required Holocaust and genocide education, the egregious errors that Sean Spicer has made about the Holocaust and the insensitivity to the Holocaust that's come out of this administration, perhaps that wouldn't happen.”

The Anne Frank Center's announcement lists New York, New Jersey, Florida, Illinois, California, Rhode Island, Michigan and Indiana as the states that already have laws requiring some form of Holocaust and genocide education. Pennsylvania was not included in its list, though the state passed a law in 2014 that is essentially a mandate. (It “strongly encourages” instruction on the Holocaust, genocide and other human rights violations and calls on the state Board of Education to conduct a study on whether and how schools are teaching the subjects and submit a report by November 2017. If that study demonstrates that less than 90 percent of “school entities” are doing so already, then the Board of Education “shall adopt a regulation... to require school entities to offer instruction in the Holocaust, genocide and human rights violations.”) The Anne Frank Center has now obtained commitments from lawmakers in Alaska, Arkansas, Connecticut, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Virginia and a dozen other states.

“We believe that educating people about genocide is so vital that it requires federal legislation,” says Goldstein. He explains that although education matters are left mostly to the states, there are ways to achieve change nationwide, such as by tying education funding to instruction about genocide. “But realistically, such legislation wouldn't have a prayer of passing given the composition of the Congress and President Trump dominating the government,” he says. So “we have to deal with the realistic landscape and go state by state.” He hopes to obtain commitments from legislators in every state and Washington, D.C., though he realizes that even then, it could take years to pass laws throughout the country.

The Anne Frank Center's announcement came one day before U.S. Representative Brendan Boyle (D-Pa.) introduced a resolution in the House supporting nationwide Holocaust education. The bill expresses “the sense

of the House that more should be done to instill Holocaust education in school curricula around the country” and to instill “the promise that we will never forget the horrors of the Holocaust and must always work to prevent such atrocities from occurring in the future.” It “commends Holocaust education activists on their longstanding efforts to include Holocaust education in States’ public school curricula across the country; and encourages more States to enact legislation mandating Holocaust education in their schools and support continued efforts to move this initiative forward.”

The bill mentions those who are ignorant about and those who deny the events of the Holocaust; hate groups that try to perpetuate racist, xenophobic and anti-Semitic principles; the loss as the years go by of Holocaust survivors as ambassadors and storytellers; and calls education about the Holocaust “our best defense against unchecked intolerance and bigotry, and against history repeating itself.”

“This is the beginning of making it national. This first resolution simply says this is a national priority and encourages all of the state legislatures to adopt legislation similar to Pennsylvania,” says Boyle, who pushed for the requirement there when he was a state legislator. “Once this is passed, it makes easier for me to go back and introduce more legislation,” he adds. Like Goldstein, he believes that “while education is left largely to purview of states, at the federal level we can create pretty tangible incentives for states to adopt certain philosophies and programs. I would see my Holocaust education program as following that path.”

Boyle’s bill was originally co-sponsored by fellow U.S. Representatives Brian Fitzpatrick (R-Pa.), Ted Deutch (D-Fla.) and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Fla.). By Monday afternoon, Congress’s website showed the number of co-sponsors had risen to 30. Although the resolution is independent of the Anne Frank Center’s project, the organization has endorsed the bill, as have others including the Simon Wiesenthal Center and Southern Poverty Law Center.

Boyle’s resolution was in the works before Spicer’s comments, but he also cites Trump’s White House as having exhibited ignorance and “spoken in a way that raises real concerns,” he says. “This administration has presented unique opportunities to show why legislation like mine is needed.” The rise of hate incidents against Jews, Muslims and other groups—including vandalism at a Jewish cemetery in Boyle’s own state—is also a factor. “The best way to push back against this sort of ugly rhetoric and ugly activity,” Boyle says, “is for people of good conscience to make sure that we educate the masses as to what was the ultimate conclusion of unchecked hate that we saw in the Holocaust.”

Goldstein echoes Boyle on that note. The Anne Frank Center is very careful to differentiate between hate crimes and genocide, he says. Still, “history shows us that genocide begins with initial steps of hate,” he says. “There’s no doubt effective genocide education includes the steps that unfortunately have led to genocide in history: the identification of oppressed people; demonizing them next; rounding them up next; isolating them next and then killing them... There are different levels of stripping people of their humanity that eventually have led to genocides.

“All genocide begins with hate and prejudice. That’s how it begins and then it escalates,” Goldstein says. “Our schools need to be early sentinels of ‘Never again’ before ‘Never again’ becomes ‘Once again.’”



Legislators in 20 U.S. States to Introduce Legislation on Holocaust & Other Genocide Awareness & Prevention

By Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect | April 24, 2017

The bills begin the landmark project of the Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect to require Holocaust and other genocide education across all 50 states and the District of Columbia

Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect, the independent U.S. national organization among Anne Frank organizations worldwide, has obtained commitments from 26 state legislators across 20 states, including Republicans and Democrats, to introduce legislation that would require education in public schools on the Holocaust, the Armenian Genocide, and other genocides.

Those 20 states are among the shocking 42 U.S. states that do not already require education on genocide awareness and prevention. The 20 states are the initial states in the Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect's ambitious new program, the 50 State Genocide Education Project, to mandate genocide education in public schools across all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect is announcing the 20 states today, Monday April 24, 2017, a rare day in history on which Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, and Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day, overlap.

Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect is asking state legislators to sign onto a communique in which they pledge to introduce legislation that would require genocide education, or in some cases to strengthen a state's existing requirement through a commission or task force to keep genocide comprehensive and up-to-date. The 26 state legislators across the initial 20 states have signed on to the communique.

Currently, three states, Florida, Illinois and New Jersey, require genocide education from grades K-12, and have a state commission or task force to keep genocide education comprehensive and up-to-date.

Two states, California and Michigan, require genocide education from grades 7 or 8 through 12, and have a state commission or task force.

Three states, Indiana, New York and Rhode Island, require genocide education from grades 7 or 8 through 12, but do not have a commission or task force.

Louisiana Representative Beryl Amedee (R) and Massachusetts Representative Jeffrey Roy (D) are among the 26 legislators across the 20 states announced today.

Representative Amedee in Louisiana said: "I have had the opportunity to visit Holocaust museums in New York and Washington, DC. During one visit, I overheard a student ask one of her classmates, 'Why should I care if all these people were killed before I was even born?' Her question stunned me! At that moment, choking back tears, I made a commitment in my heart to do what I can to be sure future generations learn about our collective history."

Representative Roy in Massachusetts, who has proposed legislation on genocide education, said: "Our goal is to teach that genocide is not just somebody else's story. Genocide is not simply about killing people, but also about destroying humanity. By including genocide in the curriculum, we will give students a better understanding of the human condition, and increase efforts worldwide for preventing further genocides."

Steven Goldstein, Executive Director of the Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect, said: "America has a blot on its national conscience when only eight states require Holocaust and other genocide education with any clear requirement and specificity. Our organization begins with initiatives in 20 more states today, but let's be clear: Never Again means required genocide education in public schools across all 50 states and the District of Columbia. We won't stop until that happens."

Here are the 26 legislators across 20 states who have made commitments through the Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect's communique to introduce new legislation mandating genocide education:

Alaska Representative Justin Parish (D), Vice Chair, House Committee on Education

Arkansas Representative Michael John Gray (D), House Minority Leader

Connecticut Senator Toni Boucher (R), Co-Chair, Committee on Education

Connecticut Senator Beth Bye (D), Vice Chair, Committee on Education

Colorado Representative Brittany Pettersen (D), Majority Deputy Whip and Chair, Committee on Education

Delaware Representative Jeff Spiegelman (R), primary sponsor of Holocaust Remembrance Day

Delaware Representative Debra Heffernan (D), Vice Chair, House Committee on Health and Human Development

Georgia Representative Tom Taylor (R), House Committee on Governmental Affairs

Georgia Representative David Clark (R), House Committee on Defense and Veterans Affairs

Hawaii Senator Will Espero (D), Senate Committee on Education

Idaho Representative Hy Kloc (D), House Education Committee

Idaho Senator Cherie Buckner-Webb (D), Assistant Minority Leader and member, Senate Committee on Education

Kansas Representative Bill Sutton (R), Vice Chair, Committee on Education Budget

Kentucky Representative Mary Lou Marzian (D), Committee on Education

Louisiana Representative Beryl Amedee (R), House Committee on Education

Maryland Senator Roger Manno (D), Senator Majority Whip

Maryland Delegate Joseline Peña-Melnyk (D), Chair, House Committee on Public Health and Minority Health Disparities

Massachusetts Representative Jeffrey Roy (D), Vice Chair, Joint Committee on Health Care Financing

Missouri Representative Shamed Dogan (R), Vice Chair, House Committee on Rules-Legislative Oversight

Nebraska Senator Rick Kolowski (D), Vice Chair, Committee on Education

New York Senator Toby Ann Stavisky (D), Committee on Higher Education

Ohio Representative Teresa Fedor (D), House Committee on Education and Career Readiness

South Carolina Representative Robert Brown (D), Second Vice Chair, House Education & Public Works Committee

Virginia Delegate Mark Cole (R), Committee on Education

Virginia Delegate Eileen Filler Corn (D), first Jewish woman elected in Virginia history

Washington Representative Tana Senn (D), Vice Chair, House Committee on Early Learning and Human Services

**List updated April 25, 2017*



Lawmakers from 20 states pledge to mandate Holocaust education

April 24, 2017

Some 26 legislators representing 20 states have committed to introduce legislation that would require public schools to teach about the Holocaust, the Armenian genocide and other genocides.

The states are among the 42 in the United States that do not already require education on genocide awareness and prevention, the New York-based Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect said in announcing that it had obtained the commitments as part of its 50 State Genocide Education Project to mandate genocide education in public schools across all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

The center made the announcement on Monday, observed this year both as Yom Hashoah, or Holocaust Remembrance Day, and Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day.

It asked the state legislators to sign a pledge to introduce legislation that would require genocide education, or in some cases to strengthen a state's existing requirement through a commission or task force. The 26 legislators have signed the pledge, the center said in a statement.

The 20 states are Alaska, Arkansas, Connecticut, Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Nebraska, New York, Ohio, South Carolina, Virginia and Washington.

Three states — Florida, Illinois and New Jersey — require genocide education from grades K-12, and have a state commission or task force to keep genocide education comprehensive and up to date. California and Michigan require genocide education from grades 7 or 8 through 12, and have a state commission or task force. Indiana, New York and Rhode Island mandate genocide education from grades 7 or 8 through 12 but do not have a commission or task force.

"Our goal is to teach that genocide is not just somebody else's story," said state Rep. Jeffrey Roy, D-Mass., who has proposed legislation on genocide education. "Genocide is not simply about killing people, but also about destroying humanity. By including genocide in the curriculum, we will give students a better understanding of the human condition and increase efforts worldwide for preventing further genocides."

THE DIAMONDBACK

The U.S. must mandate nationwide Holocaust education

By Joseph Kuttler | April 25, 2017

This Monday, April 24 was Holocaust Remembrance Day. It's been 72 years since the Holocaust ended, and we must ensure its memory does not fade. The survivors will not be here forever to educate the next generation about the horrors they faced. Even today, we can see people forgetting the atrocities committed against so many millions of people. To mitigate this alarming trend, we must mandate nationwide Holocaust education to guarantee history will never repeat itself.

On Holocaust Remembrance Day this year, I spoke with a member of my synagogue and a survivor of six concentration camps, Max Jacob. Born in Hungary, Jacob was persecuted solely for being Jewish. At 17, he was sent to Auschwitz along with the rest of his family, all of whom perished shortly after arriving. Jacob was lucky enough to survive the Holocaust and eventually made his way to the United States. When we spoke, he reflected on those brutal times, those almost unimaginable memories, by saying he finds comfort in his belief that a similar genocide will never befall the Jews again, as there is now a Jewish state and army in the land of Israel.

Genocide, however, is not limited to the Holocaust. Rather, it is a human problem, seen again and again in history. Jacob said we cannot forget the memory of those who were killed in the Holocaust — such as his mother and father, brothers and sisters — and we must learn something from their senseless deaths, ensuring nothing of the sort ever happens again.

Elie Wiesel, a famous Holocaust survivor and author of the book *Night*, which recounted his experiences in the concentration camps, echoed these sentiments. He told *The New York Times*, "I decided to devote my life to telling the story because I felt that having survived I owe something to the dead. ... Anyone who does not remember betrays them again."

Unfortunately, the number of opportunities to learn from such individuals who overcame traumas like Jacob and Wiesel will be declining. Jacob is 93 now, and his fellow survivors are dying. Wiesel passed away last year at 87. The next generation will not be able to engage with such people and will have to learn this history and these lessons from other sources.

"Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers Project, 1936 to 1938" can serve as inspiration in this regard. As people who personally experienced the brutality of slavery were beginning to be lost to history, the U.S. government paid out-of-work writers to visit elderly freed slaves and transcribe their experiences. The works were later published in both transcript and microfilm in 1941. The generation that was raised reading and hearing the personal stories of the survivors of slavery eventually led the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Learning from the past effectively influences the future.

Schools should similarly employ the memories of the last remaining survivors of the Holocaust to engage with students. Holocaust survivors have extensively recounted their tales with interviewers and should continue doing so, to preserve their memories. More importantly, however, there should be a conscious movement to bring survivors into schools to convey their stories to students. These direct interactions will make a lasting imprint on the next generation.

The idea of mandating the teaching of the Holocaust is not novel. Currently, eight states in the United States require Holocaust education for public school students, typically for those who are high school age. In 2016, Michigan approved such legislation. It did so, explained Gov. Rick Snyder, "because we should remember and learn about these terrible events in our past while continuing to work toward creating a more tolerant society."

Students must learn of the utter helplessness victims of the Nazis faced. They should learn to empathize with the plight of these subjugated people and employ this understanding to be cautious about such atrocities happening again. Genocides recur because people have not learned from the mistakes of their forebears. If we mandate the studying of the Holocaust and other genocides nationwide, we can, in the words of Snyder, "hope that future generations who would learn about any atrocities would do so only in the context of a history book because they would be living in a more tolerant and cooperative society."

Invaluable Lessons: More States Making Holocaust, Genocide Education A Must

By Stav Ziv | June 20, 2016

The Armenian community waited anxiously last year to see whether President Barack Obama would utter three syllables—"genocide"—in relation to the massacre of up to 1.5 million Armenians at the hands of the Turks starting in 1915. Hope was high as the centennial approached, but Obama didn't say the "g-word." Headlines have shouted about countries that did, and about Turkey's response—pulling ambassadors from Austria, the Vatican, and most recently, Germany. Meanwhile, the media this month covered Italy's new law against Holocaust denial, and on Friday a conviction and five-year sentence for a former Auschwitz guard.

To a teenager, the Armenian genocide and the Holocaust may seem like ancient history, but they are still frequently in the news and their lessons and warnings remain highly relevant. What's disconcerting in the U.S. is that not all young Americans reading these headlines have even learned what genocide is, or about the Holocaust, let alone about other instances of genocide in the distant and not-so-distant past.

It might be surprising to hear that Michigan Governor Rick Snyder signed a bill into law Tuesday that mandates Holocaust and genocide education in the state's high schools, making it one of only a handful of states that have enacted such legislation. If Rhode Island's governor signs a similar bill, which the state's General Assembly passed Tuesday, the country's smallest state will be next. "Our next generation of leaders needs to have the wherewithal to recognize and help prevent widespread harm to their fellow men and women," Snyder wrote in his signing letter. "Teaching the students of Michigan about genocide is important because we should remember and learn about these terrible events in our past while continuing to work toward creating a more tolerant society."

'We failed them'

Up until 2014, only five states had laws in place requiring all school districts to teach their students about the Holocaust and genocide, prejudice, discrimination or other related themes. California, Illinois, New Jersey, New York and Florida each enacted legislation sometime from 1985 to 1994, but then no state followed suit for two decades—20 years that saw Rwanda, Srebrenica and Sudan.

When Rhonda Fink-Whitman heard about a Holocaust and genocide education bill lingering in Pennsylvania a few years ago, she was shocked to learn that these weren't already required subjects. The daughter of a Holocaust survivor and author of a novel based on her mother's experiences, "94 Maidens," she met then-state representative Brendan Boyle, who had proposed the bill, through the Holocaust Awareness Museum and Education Center in Philadelphia. Around the same time, her college-age daughter had some friends over. They admired a bracelet Fink-Whitman was wearing etched with the words, "History will be kind to me, for I intend to write it." But they didn't know who Winston Churchill was.

Armed with a camera, a microphone and a list of questions, she set out to visit a handful of college campuses in her home state of Pennsylvania to see what other kids knew. "What was the Holocaust?" or "Can you name a concentration camp?" she would ask on the idyllic grounds of Penn State, Drexel or Temple, or maybe "What country was Hitler the leader of?" or "What is genocide?" Much of the video's run time features students stumbling over their words, trying to come up with answers. Parts of this experiment are excruciating to watch, but it's not their fault, Fink-Whitman tells *Newsweek*. "We failed them," she says. "If they've never been exposed to this information, how could they possibly know it?"

The resulting video, which she calls "The Mandate Video," garnered nearly half a million views after it was posted to YouTube in late September 2013 along with a slew of press coverage, all of which helped direct renewed attention to the effort in Pennsylvania. The state's original bill, which would mandate Holocaust and genocide education, drew a slate of opponents, some of whom pointed to other state education requirements that were falling by the wayside because of budget cuts.

Getting laws passed

But in June 2014, then-Governor Tom Corbett signed a compromise version of the bill into law, which "strongly encourages school entities in this Commonwealth to offer instruction in the Holocaust, genocide and other human rights violations." It called on the Department of Education to establish relevant curriculum guidelines within a year of the law taking effect and to provide training programs. Though it did not immediately require every district to teach these subjects,

it calls on the State Board of Education to conduct a study on whether and how schools are including them and to submit a report by November 2017. If that study demonstrates that less than 90 percent of "school entities" are doing so already, then the Board of Education "shall adopt a regulation... to require school entities to offer instruction in the Holocaust, genocide and human rights violations." In other words, the Pennsylvania law effectively ensures that either the vast majority of school entities (more than 90 percent) will be teaching these subjects within two years, or that the strong encouragement will become a requirement.

"Our law isn't as strong as we would have liked," Fink-Whitman says. "Which is why when I mentor other states, I say, 'Here's what we got in PA, but make yours better!' And they do!" Fink-Whitman's video and the efforts in Pennsylvania caught the attention of like-minded parents, activists, professors and others around the country who thought they wanted to see a Holocaust and genocide education requirement in their own states. She has spoken with folks from more than a dozen states—from Ohio to Oregon, from Texas to Hawaii, from Rhode Island to Michigan.

When Susan H. Bitensky, a professor at Michigan State University's College of Law, saw the mandate video, "I was just horrified at the ignorance," she tells *Newsweek*. "The students who came from states where education on this subject was required seem to have command of the facts, but others are woefully ignorant." She was inspired to make researching and drafting a bill for Michigan a project of the Lori E. Talsky Center for Human Rights of Women and Children, which she directs. She and a changing cast of student volunteers looked closely at the language used in other states' laws and drafted a version that drew from the best of each. Though the bill changed dramatically between the time it left Bitensky's hands and when it reached Snyder's desk, it "one upped" Pennsylvania's law, as Fink-Whitman says.

Michigan's new law requires that social studies curricula for grades 8-12 "[include] age- and grade-appropriate instruction about genocide, including, but not limited to, the Holocaust and the Armenian genocide," recommends a combined total of six hours of this instruction and creates a Governor's Council on Genocide and Holocaust Education. Moreover, it ensures that future state assessments in social studies include questions related to the learning objectives around genocide. So if instructors are "teaching to the test," they'll have to spend time on the Holocaust and genocide.

"This seemed urgent to me because although after the Holocaust everybody said, 'Never again,' it has become almost a pathetic saying. Because we've had so many genocides since the Holocaust," Bitensky says. "The first and best line of defense against genocide is in the schoolrooms," she adds, emphasizing the need to "create a knowledge about what this is, how it comes to be [and] what its effects are; develop an abhorrence for it and alert to its warning signs."

'As important as literacy'

Amos Guiora, also a law professor at the University of Utah, agrees that teaching about the Holocaust and genocide means much more than detailing specific events. The Israeli-born son of two Holocaust survivors, he got in touch with Fink-Whitman and subsequently with Bitensky, while working on his forthcoming book *The Crime of Complicity: The Bystander in the Holocaust* (due out in March 2017). It's important not only to learn about the Holocaust, but to address the broader lessons and questions it raises, he tells *Newsweek*. It "strikes me as a viable way and a legitimate way to address the question, 'What is our responsibility to one another?'"

Guiora—who says a Utah effort to follow Pennsylvania and Michigan is in its very preliminary stages, "somewhere between the dugout and the on deck circle"—believes the pedagogical imperative extends even beyond grappling with genocide, racism and discrimination to issues such as sexual assault. "Invaluable lessons can be taught based on the Holocaust that apply to these kinds of situations," says Guiora, whose upcoming book has inspired a symposium at the university titled "The Bystander Dilemma: The Holocaust, War Crimes, And Sexual Assaults," scheduled for next March.

He recognizes that imposing top-down requirements raises important questions about education and the role of the legislature, and understands that teaching one subject invariably means another will be skipped. But "the failure of individuals to stand up and protect the vulnerable, that at the end of the day is what [my] book is about and why [this subject] needs to be mandatory in terms of education."

With Pennsylvania's highly visible campaign, Michigan's new law, Rhode Island's passed bill and nascent efforts in states like Utah, Holocaust and genocide education laws seem to be gaining momentum for the first time in two decades. "It does seem like something's afoot doesn't it?" Bitensky says. "I think we're getting an exponential growth in the credibility of these laws, and I think that has a ripple effect."

It's important to note that even among the more than 40 states that do not have a law requiring Holocaust and/or genocide education, there are no doubt teachers, schools and districts that teach these subjects. The point is that "in a state where there is no law on it or it's just made discretionary," Bitensky says, "it's hit or miss."

"I think this is as important as literacy," she adds, and "we don't make literacy hit or miss."