

## **Statement on Holocaust Remembrance Day**

On April 24, 2025, Cherry Hill Public Schools commemorates Holocaust Remembrance Day to honor the memory of the six million Jews, including 1.5 million children, who were murdered during the Holocaust. This observance highlights the importance of reflecting on the atrocities of the past while reaffirming the commitment to combatting hate and prejudice in all forms.

Jews continue to be victims of hate and bigotry today. Antisemitism has reached alarming levels in New Jersey as reflected by data from the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) revealing a 103% increase in antisemitic incidents in 2023, totaling 830 reported incidents. This was the highest number ever recorded by the ADL in the state and the third-highest number recorded in any state across the country in 2023.

Effectively addressing antisemitism begins with an understanding of what it entails. For example, one working definition of antisemitism includes:

- Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.
- Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.
- Manifestations of antisemitism might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic.
- Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:
  - Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
  - Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.

- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination.
- Applying double standards by requiring of Israel a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

Cherry Hill Public Schools unequivocally condemns antisemitism and all other forms of hate, including racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and any other expressions of prejudice or bigotry. The district is steadfast in its commitment to fostering an inclusive and respectful environment where all students, staff, and community members feel safe and valued. Discrimination, harassment, or any conduct rooted in hate or intolerance has no place in our schools. Students or staff who engage in such conduct will be held accountable, consistent with district rules and policies.

Cherry Hill Public Schools is dedicated to creating a culture of acceptance and understanding, ensuring that every individual, regardless of their race, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, or abilities, can succeed. Through education and awareness, the district seeks to ensure that the lessons of the Holocaust endure as a reminder to reject hatred and actively promote understanding, compassion, and dignity for all.