

## PETITION

We, the undersigned, pursuant to Section 10-2 of the Newton City Charter, present this “Group Petition” to the Newton School Committee requesting that they take the measures enunciated below in order to redress and repair damage to the public caused by the teaching of anti-Israel, anti-Semitic, and Islam-biased material, and by the failure and refusal of Newton Public Schools to teach students in an objective, non-propagandizing way.

- Given the almost 6-year controversy, widely publicized, extensively debated, and documented in research by Americans for Peace and Tolerance and in the CAMERA monograph *Indoctrinating Our Youth: How a U.S. Public School Curriculum Skews the Arab-Israeli Conflict and Islam* (2017) concerning the Newton Public Schools’ (NPS) teaching biased, anti-Israel anti-Semitic, and Islamic proselytizing material, some of which was funded by the governments of Saudi Arabia and Qatar, and some organized and created by virulently anti-Israel propaganda organizations;
- Given that the above research found numerous geographical errors, inaccurate accounts of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and non-objective, falsified accounts of Islamic history that verge on proselytism while attacking Christianity and Judaism and ignoring the complexities of religious misogyny, jihad, forced conversion, as well as the hatred of Jews and Israelis that permeates Palestinian culture;
- Given the promises made by Newton Superintendent of Schools David Fleishman to officials of mainstream Boston Jewish organizations – The ADL and the JCRC -- that all materials and courses covering the history of the modern Middle East would be removed from high school Tenth Grade World History classes until such time as scholarly, vetted materials could be found;
- Given that NPS’s response to document requests under Massachusetts public records law shows that this promise has not been fulfilled;
- Given that NPS is stonewalling current document requests and withholding requested documents;
- Given that Newton Mayor Fuller, a member of the Newton School Committee, promised during her mayoral campaign to install a policy of transparency whereby what is taught about these controversial subjects would be made publicly available to citizens of Newton;

- Given that on May 2 of this year, there was an all-day program at Newton North High School that defamed Israel – using films and materials created by known anti-Israel activist groups;
- Given that the School Committee has not responded to repeated requests to correct the curriculum and teach objectively;
- Given that Newton teacher Isongesit Ibokette has written that he protests calls for objectivity in teaching and that he “is concerned that the call for ‘objectivity’ may just inadvertently become the most effective destructive weapon against social justice;”
- Given that Newton teacher David Bedar has sent an email to fellow Newton North history faculty, accusing President Trump and his supporters of “nativism, xenophobia, homophobia, etc.,” and objecting to the following “don’ts” that the Newton North principal had asked teachers to avoid:
  - “Assume that all students agree with us. . . .”
  - “Assume that all students feel comfortable disagreeing with us. . . .”
  - “Present facts or logic that support only one side of a current controversial issue. . . .”
  - “Present our own personal opinion on a current controversial issue as more right than another viewpoint. . . .”

We the undersigned, petition the Newton School Committee to take the following actions:

1. Adopt, as the Mayor has suggested was proper, a policy of total transparency regarding curriculum concerning history, social studies, geography, and any and all topics related to conflicts in the Middle East and to world religions. Allow the Public immediate and continual access to all teaching materials used and discussed in these areas, including, but not limited to text books, hand-outs, assignments, films, power-point presentations, speakers, internet resources, and workshops;
2. Vet all teaching materials and approaches concerning the above topics using a panel of scholars, historians, and educators;
3. Immediately cease all teaching on these topics until such time as properly vetted, unbiased materials can be identified;
4. Contact students by official mail to explain how some of the materials they were taught qualify as biased and propaganda and were not explained as such to the students, and apologize for these errors;
5. Convene an all-school seminar on “the New anti-Semitism,” which makes of the Jewish state, “the Jew among the nations,” with special workshops for

teachers and students. The New anti-Semitism has been widely studied and consists at base of the treatment of Israel in ways no other nation state is treated;

6. Terminate Superintendent David Fleishman and teachers David Bedar and Isongesit Ibokette.

Print Name

Sign Name

Address