

Draft letter to Principals and/or Superintendents from Parents

Re: Anniversary of October 7th

Dear INSERT PRINCIPAL OR SUPERINTENDENT NAME,

I'm writing to you as a concerned parent of [one/two students] in [INSERT SCHOOL NAME] and as a partner in my child's/children's education. Few things matter more in our education system than ensuring the safety and wellbeing of every student. Over the past year, our schools have experienced an unprecedented wave of hate and division, with Jewish students disproportionately targeted by hate-motivated incidents.

As you know, October 7th, 2023 marked the greatest act of genocide against the Jewish people since the Holocaust. Over the past year, many schools [including ours] experienced hate-motivated incidents targeting Jewish students and educators including:

- Swastikas and other imagery associated with hate against Jews;
- Students and sometimes even teachers spreading libel about Israel and the Jewish people;
- On school grounds, parents engaging in bullying and harassing behaviour towards Jewish staff, students and other parents, and;
- Walkouts with chants for the destruction of Israel.

To be clear, walkouts create an atmosphere of fear for Jewish students and others unwilling to participate (allies). While students may have the freedom to leave class, school leadership must set a tone that prioritizes education and clearly communicate to parents that learning belongs in the classroom.

[FOR ONTARIO]

Last week, Education Minister Jill Dunlop issued a warning against 'inflammatory' content in schools ahead of the anniversary of October 7th. "Our government firmly believes in the safety and well-being of all children in Ontario schools. As we approach one year since the October 7th attack, we ask all school boards across the province to uphold this principle and be vigilant in ensuring classrooms remain safe, inclusive, and welcoming for all students and staff. As education leaders, your role in upholding this principle has never been more important. This means our schools and school-related activities should never be used as vehicles for political protests that enable inflammatory, discriminatory, and hateful content.

While everyone is entitled to their own political opinions, they are not entitled to disseminate political biases into our classrooms," Dunlop wrote to school boards.

[FOR ALL]

As parents we expect that you will follow through on this direction to its fullest by ensuring that:

- Students are discouraged from participating in walkouts through letters home to the community letting parents know these events are unsanctioned and that students who leave will NOT be supervised or welcomed back into the building
- Teachers do NOT accompany students on these walkouts and facilitate their re-entry into the building
- Teachers under your leadership know that the use of highly political materials, for example content from Al Jazeera, is not used in the classroom.

Your leadership is essential to ensuring that all students feel safe in our schools.

Sincerely,
INSERT YOUR NAME
PHONE NUMBER