

Testimony: Nov. 13, 2025 Fairfax County Board of Education Meeting

Good evening. I'm Vicki Fishman, with the JCRC. Since 1939 the JCRC has been advocating for human rights and social justice as part of our work supporting the Jewish community. Since October 7, 2023 – a day when 1,200 people were slaughtered in - and 251 people were kidnapped from the only Jewish country in the world – antisemitic incidents have become so prevalent that we have had little time for anything other than fighting antisemitism.

Jewish students and teachers have found themselves increasingly marginalized and afraid to share their Jewish identity. They report feeling demonized, ostracized, and erased. FCPS has not been immune, and we appreciate the partnership we have found in you, the School Board, and in Dr. Reid and her team, including many principals, teachers and administrators.

With all of this in mind, I cannot overstate the pain felt by FCPS's Jewish community in the wake of 2 recent incidents. First, several groups announced a Keffiyeh day to coincide with the anniversary of

October 7. The lack of empathy for Jewish students in that decision is shocking, but not as shocking and painful as the videos that at least two student groups posted shortly thereafter, which depicted violent kidnappings, keffiyehs, clothing showing the State of Israel completely erased by a Palestinian flag, and the enactments of the deaths of the persons kidnapped.

Many of our Jewish families consider Israel a second home and had friends and family kidnapped, murdered or otherwise traumatized on October 7. These videos were painful reminders and also threatening to a community which in recent months has suffered murders and firebombings here in this region and around this country. Our schools should not tolerate such blatant insensitivity.

I am here to thank you for recognizing the severity of these events, for properly investigating and for appropriate disciplinary measures. I further ask that you take action to prevent something like this from happening again – implement expedited teacher training on

antisemitism, partner with the JCRC to bring our student-to-student program to provide mandatory experiential and peer to peer anti-bias training to the schools impacted by these events. And finally, review social media policies, strengthen them as needed and ensure consistent, vigorous enforcement.