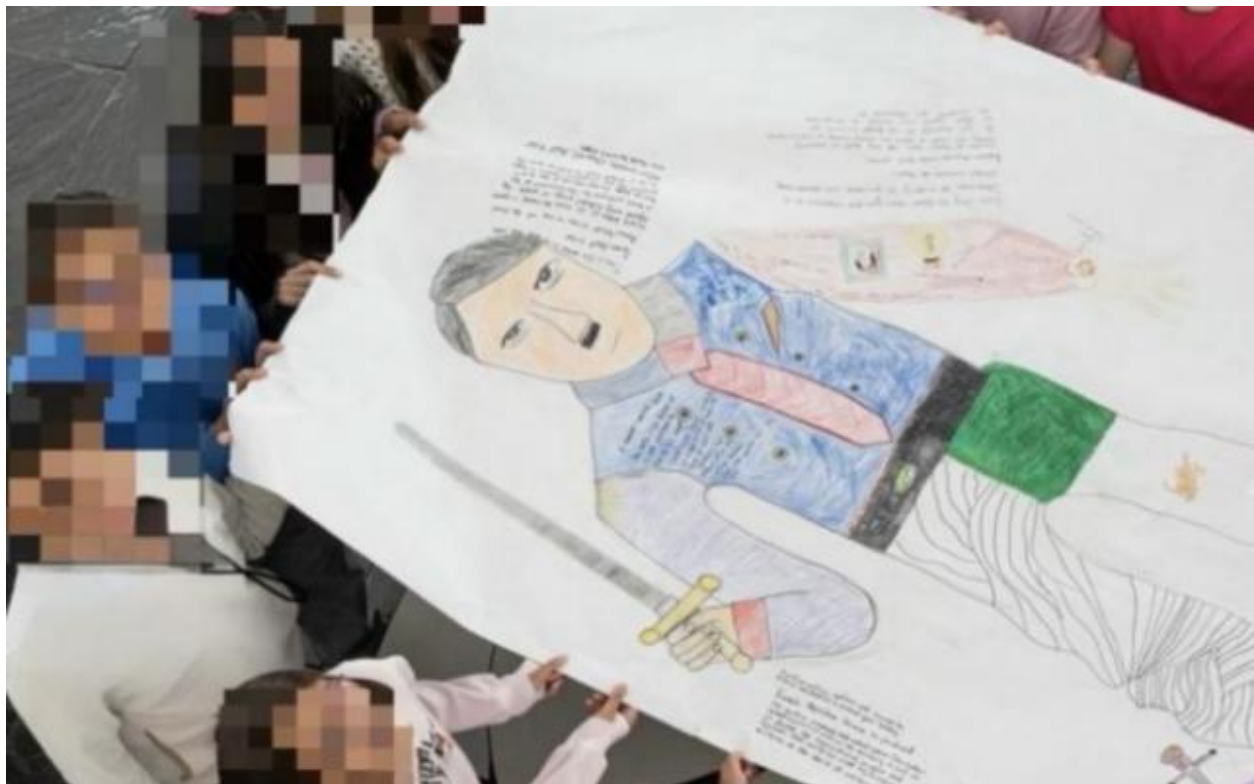


US school that expelled Jews after antisemitic bullying apologizes in settlement

Nysmith School booted 3 Jewish children after parents complained about discrimination, students celebrated Hitler; agrees to introduce antisemitism training, Holocaust education

By [Luke Tress](#) and [Zev Stub](#) November 18, 2025



School children at the Nysmith School for the Gifted in Northern Virginia present a drawing of Adolf Hitler as an image of a 'strong historical leader' in October 2024, according to a legal complaint filed in July 2025 against the school. (Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law)

A top US private school in northern Virginia has settled a lawsuit over its expulsion of three Jewish students after their parents complained about repeated antisemitic bullying, lawyers for the parents and the state attorney general said on Tuesday.

The Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law and Dillon PLLC in July filed a complaint against the Nysmith School for the Gifted, located an hour outside of Washington, DC, saying the expulsion violated the Virginia Human Rights Act.

Nysmith is considered one of the best elementary schools in the United States and charges an annual tuition of more than \$46,000 per year. It is not clear how many of its approximately 500 students are Jewish.

[According to the complaint](#), bullies taunted the 11-year-old daughter of Brian Vazquez and Ashok Roy for being “Israeli,” called Jews “baby killers,” and said they deserved to die because of what is happening in Gaza.

“The bullies told their daughter that everyone at the school is against Jews and Israel, which is why they hate you,” the Brandeis Center said in a statement. “The other children also taunted her about the death of her uncle, saying that they were glad he died in the October 7th attack, even though he had died years earlier.”

According to the complaint, the sixth-grade girl’s history class had created a large artistic image of Adolf Hitler to represent an image of a “strong historical leader” in October 2024. The parents spoke with other parents about the matter and decided not to complain at the time, assuming it was an isolated instance of poor judgment, the complaint said.

In February 2025, a classmate’s mother tipped off Vazquez about “a disturbing pattern of harassment and bullying.” When he asked his daughter about it, she immediately began sobbing, the complaint said.

“Children placed pro-Palestine stickers on school-issued laptops and lockers, and pointed at their stickers and taunted her for being ‘Israeli,’” the complaint reported her saying.

Vazquez met with the owner and headmaster of the school, Kenneth Nysmith, about the bullying and discrimination, and Nysmith allegedly said he would handle the issue.



Illustrative: An anti-Israel protest led by high school students in New York City, November 9, 2023. (Luke Tress/Times of Israel)

However, no action was taken, and in the following weeks, the school canceled its annual talk with a Holocaust survivor, which the headmaster allegedly claimed was done to avoid inflaming tensions, and hung a Palestinian flag in the gym, the complaint said. Meanwhile, the harassment of the girl got even worse.

After the parents complained to the school a second time in March 2025, the headmaster allegedly told the parents to tell their daughter to “toughen up.” Two days later, the headmaster sent the parents an email saying that all three of their children – a son in the second grade and two daughters in the sixth grade – were expelled, effective immediately.

“I do not see a path forward without trust, understanding and cooperation. In our meeting, I felt very clearly that you do not think Nysmith is the right school for your family, and the longer we try to ignore that reality, the more pain it will cause your children,” the email said.

The lawsuit noted that all three children were high-achieving students with no disciplinary issues.

In the settlement, the school agreed to adopt a new nondiscrimination policy, set up a working committee to investigate discrimination, employ an outside monitor for discrimination for at least five years, mandate antisemitism training for staff, and educate students about antisemitism.

The nondiscrimination policies will incorporate the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, which equates some forms of anti-Israel rhetoric with antisemitism, including denying Jews the right to self-determination, applying double standards to Israel and comparing Israel to Nazi Germany.

The Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington will lead annual antisemitism training for at least five years. The training will be mandatory for all administrators, faculty and staff. The school will also provide a program each year to teach students about the Holocaust.

Nysmith, the school headmaster, will issue a public statement saying the school “regrets its decision to expel the children.”

“Stigmatizing Jewish students or making them feel unsafe or unwelcome based on their religious identity or expressing their Jewish identity is contrary to our school’s fundamental values of mutual respect and inclusion,” the statement says.

The school will reimburse the family for \$100,000, plus attorneys’ fees.

“Justice has been served for our clients’ family, and the resulting actions underway at Nysmith School will help prevent this kind of discrimination from happening to others. These steps are critical as antisemitism in K-12 education continues to rise,” Kenneth L. Marcus, the head of the Brandeis Center, said in a statement.

“Every child deserves to learn in an environment free from hate, intimidation, or fear,” said Virginia Attorney General Jason Miyares. “No child should feel unsafe or unwelcome in a classroom in Virginia, and no parent should fear retaliation for defending their child.”

Legal battles over antisemitism are taking place in courtrooms across the US, a struggle that has picked up steam and evolved since the October 2023 Hamas invasion of Israel. The lawsuits mostly focus on alleged discrimination on college campuses.