



Antisemitism Exposed

Josh Shapiro urges Philly schools to 'take very seriously' antisemitism as Congress opens investigation

House committee launches investigation into alleged anti-Jewish climate in nation's 8th largest school district

By [Benjamin Weinthal Fox News](#) Published [December 7, 2025](#)



Anti-Israel protesters march against the war in Gaza in Philadelphia, April 25, 2024. (Matthew Hatcher/AFP via Getty Images)

EXCLUSIVE: A spokesperson for Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro announced that the School District of Philadelphia needs to address the mushrooming spread of antisemitism in classrooms.

The alleged anti-Jewish climate in the nation's eighth-largest school district in the city, nicknamed the City of Brotherly Love, has recently sparked a congressional investigation into its education system that is reportedly infected with hatred of Jews and Israel.

Shapiro's spokesperson, Rosie Lapowsky, told Fox News Digital, "Governor Shapiro takes a back seat to no one on these issues, and as he has repeatedly spoken out about, antisemitism and this kind of hateful rhetoric is unacceptable and has no place in Pennsylvania — especially not in our classrooms. This is a matter the Governor has made clear the district needs to take very seriously."

Fox News Digital conducted interviews with parents and teachers from the School District of Philadelphia (SDP) and presented the findings, along with a November House Committee on Education and the Workforce investigation notice into antisemitism in Philadelphia public schools, to the governor's office.

The House Committee on Education and the Workforce is probing "whether there was or is a hostile environment against Jewish K-12 students," according to its letter obtained by Fox News Digital.

The congressional letter stated, "The Committee is deeply concerned that SDP is failing to uphold its obligations under Title VI. Since October 7, 2023, the Committee has received allegations that SDP is rife with antisemitic incidents, including allegations of teachers spreading antisemitism in the classroom and SDP approving antisemitic walkouts that isolate Jewish students."

The letter continued that "Because of these alleged failures, SDP entered into a federally mandated corrective action plan with the U.S. Department of Education in December 2024: however, according to press and whistleblower reports, antisemitic incidents have continued to proliferate since the plan."



Gov. Josh Shapiro speaks at the Celebration of Freedom ceremony on July 4, 2023 in Philadelphia. (Gilbert Carrasquillo/GC Images)

Fox News Digital obtained messages and a document from a private Signal phone messaging group for Philadelphia Educators for Palestine. The group formulated a "Grounding Commitments" document that defends all Palestinian "resistance." Critics say much of Palestinian resistance includes violence and also terrorism.

According to the Philadelphia Educators for Palestine, "All resistance is righteous. We reject any false equivalence between the violent systems that oppress us and our responses to them."

Signal text messages stated the anti-Israel group has recruited school children to advance their anti-Jewish state agenda. According to district policy, educators should not be communicating with students on social media platforms. "In order to maintain a professional and appropriate relationship with students, District employees should not communicate with students who are currently enrolled in District schools on personal social media sites," states SDP policy.

Fox News Digital reached out to Philadelphia Educators for Palestine for a comment.

Mika Hackner, director of research at the North American Values Institute, told Fox News Digital, "This is a shocking example of public school teachers knowingly misusing their position, and going against their own district's policies, to encourage political activism in their students. Inviting high schoolers into a private Signal chat and involving them in discussions and events which promote political violence is just beyond the pale. The School District of Philadelphia must take appropriate action."

Multiple Jewish parents and teachers spoke to Fox News Digital on the condition of anonymity out of fear of retribution from anti-Israel teachers and the School District of Philadelphia.

One Jewish parent said, "There are teachers and administrators who are perpetuating Jew-hate," adding that "[Ismael] Jimenez uses his public social media to create Jew-hate." Ismael Jimenez is the director of social studies curriculum for the SDP.



Sunrise light hits the U.S. Capitol dome on Jan. 2, 2025. (Bill Clark/CQ-Roll Call, Inc via Getty Images)

The congressional letter also references Jimenez as an SPD senior administrator who "has been widely condemned by Jewish advocacy groups in light of his 'pattern of denying the Jewish connection to the Land of Israel, refusing to speak about peace or coexistence, and downplaying the lived experiences of Jewish people in the face of violence.'"

According to the congressional letter, "Today, SDP employs numerous educators who allegedly promote antisemitic content in their classrooms. One such teacher has allegedly threatened Jewish parents and students online. She and other Philadelphia educators also allegedly use lessons from an effort called Teaching Palestine, whose class materials rationalize terrorist violence and advocate for the destruction of Israel."

The congressional letter highlights the actions of the teachers and the administrator. One who was allegedly "Threatening Jewish parents and students" was identified as Kaziah Ridgeway. Other teachers allegedly used lessons from "Teaching Palestine," according to social media posts and the letter.

A Philadelphia school teacher told Fox News Digital that the prevailing situation in SDP is "being complacent and encouraging pro-Palestinian bias in the district. There is no prescription to counter antisemitism in school."

Shelly Robinson, a Philadelphia school teacher who retired in 2021 and taught at Northeast High School, the largest high school in Pennsylvania, told Fox News Digital, that at one multicultural fair, "there was a map on stage at school and there was no Israel." Robinson, who graduated from Northeast and has deep contacts to the school,

said a "Muslim student group started selling buttons stating 'From the River to the Sea' after Oct. 7. Things got really bad for Jewish teachers at Northeast after Oct. 7."

The Anti Defamation League described the saying as "an antisemitic slogan commonly featured in anti-Israel campaigns and chanted at demonstrations."



Memorials at the site of the Oct. 7 Hamas terror attack on the Supernova music festival near Kibbutz Re'im, Israel, on May 27, 2024. (Kobi Wolf/Bloomberg via Getty Images)

The U.S.-designated terrorist organization Hamas invaded Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, and slaughtered over 1,200 people, including more than 40 Americans.

Robinson recalled a professional development trainer who told a student group called "No Place for Hate" that they "should stop promoting white heroes named Shakespeare and Einstein, and said we should promote refugees."

When Robinson noted that the German physicist Albert Einstein was a refugee who fled Nazi Germany, the development specialist for teachers said, "But he was a Jew." Robinson said, "I started to see what was going on in the school district and had been going on for 20 years."

Jimenez and Ridgeway, who are also reportedly members of Philadelphia Educators for Palestine, declined to respond to Fox News Digital press queries.

While Shapiro readily called out the situation, other leaders in the state preferred to pass the buck.

Leah Uko, a spokesperson for Philadelphia Mayor Cherelle Parker, told Fox News

Digital, "This is a matter with the School District of Philadelphia, not City government. We have no comment."

A spokesperson for Dr. Tony Watlington, superintendent of the School District of Philadelphia, told Fox News Digital that "It is the policy of the School District of Philadelphia to refrain from commenting on active investigations."

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