



TO: Committee of the Whole

DATE: 5 March 2024

RE: Letter to Support the Second National Summit to Combat Antisemitism

Trustee Kaplan-Myrth has given notice that she will suggest the following at the Committee of the Whole meeting 5 March 2024, in keeping with section 12.9 of the Board's By-Laws and Standing Rules:

WHEREAS data from Statistics Canada and organizations such as the Canadian Anti-Hate Network, Jewish Federation of Ottawa, Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Centre, and B'nai Brith indicate a shocking rise in antisemitic incidents across Canada over the past years;

WHEREAS since October 7, 2023, Canada's Jewish community has witnessed intimidation of its Jewish students in elementary and secondary schools and at universities; shots fired at its schools; arson attempts at its communal buildings; and boycott efforts and vandalism targeting private businesses simply because their owners are Jewish;

WHEREAS police departments across the country, including the hate crimes unit of the Ottawa Police, all report major and unprecedented increases in hate crimes since October 7, 2023, with the Jewish community being by far the most targeted;

WHEREAS the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, on behalf of Jewish students and families in Ottawa, wrote a letter on January 31, 2024, to Stephen Lecce, the Ontario Minister of Education, to express alarm at the lack of attention to the Ottawa Carleton District School Board's ("OCDSB") crisis of rising antisemitism in OCDSB schools;

WHEREAS the OCDSB has made a commitment to address all forms of hate in our schools, including antisemitism;

WHEREAS a first national summit to combat antisemitism was convened by then Special Envoy for Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism, the Honourable Irwin Cotler, in July 2021 in the wake of the war with Hamas in May of that year, alerting Canadians to a spiralling number of hate incidents involving Jews in Canada;



WHEREAS that first summit led to Canada forming a high level delegation headed by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau that made robust promises to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) Conference in October 2021 on how Canada could better confront hate aimed at Jews;

WHEREAS the Government of Canada has appointed Deborah Lyons as the new Special Envoy for Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism;

WHEREAS the authority vested in her office permits her to be uniquely placed to convene and chair such a second summit; and

WHEREAS a second national summit to combat antisemitism would provide a valuable forum for stakeholders representing all levels of government, civil servants, law enforcements, educators and community leaders to share information and agree on effective strategies to blunt the unprecedented wave of hate aimed at Jews.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,

THAT the Ottawa Carleton District School Board ("OCDSB") write a letter to urge the Government of Canada to mandate the Special Envoy for Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism to convene a second national summit to combat antisemitism;

THAT the OCDSB invite the Government of Canada to ensure the necessary funding and resources are in place to support such a second national summit;

THAT a copy of this motion be sent to the leaders of all parties represented in the Parliament of Canada.

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Pino Buffone  
Director of Education and  
Secretary of the Board

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Michele Giroux  
Executive Officer, Corporate Services

*Signatures on this Notice of Motion confirm that the Notice was submitted in accordance with Section 12.9 of the Board's By-laws and Standing Rules.*