

Subject: Fwd: AAPS Statement on Terrorist Attacks in Israel EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
From: "Swift, Jeanice" <swift@aaps.k12.mi.us>
Date: 10/13/2023, 7:56 PM
To: boardofed@a2schools.org
CC: "Superintendent's Cabinet" <dst_sup_cabinet@aaps.k12.mi.us>

Hello Trustees,

Note: this is the first of several messages I will forward to you this evening.

I am following up this evening to forward a few of the responses I have offered to those who have written regarding the message sent out on Wednesday.

Overall, the number of responses to the email was lighter than sometimes, yet I have worked to respond to all that are deserving of a response (all but 1 or 2).

I am not sharing all of the messages received or responded to, yet sharing enough so that you are aware of the spectrum and variety of messages we received.

This information is shared only for your awareness, and I am sorry that it loads up your inbox.

Sincerely,

Jeanice

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Swift, Jeanice <swift@aaps.k12.mi.us>
Date: Fri, Oct 13, 2023 at 6:54 PM
Subject: Re: AAPS Statement on Terrorist Attacks in Israel EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@aaps.k12.mi.us>

Hello [REDACTED]

Thank you very much for taking the time to share your thoughts with me regarding my choice of words in the email shared on Wednesday.

I take your message very seriously, and am deeply sorry for sharing words that made you feel disrespected and disappointed.

Following the feedback you shared with me on Wednesday, I amended the Superintendent Statement to omit the use of the word 'terrorist,' both in the title and in the opening sentence of the message. You can see the amended message at the link listed below.

I am grateful for your outreach to me, and will take more care with the choice of words in any future messages.

I truly never want to cause you, or any of our students, to feel diminished by the messages shared.

Again, my deepest apologies,

Jeanice

<https://www.a2schools.org/site/default.aspx?PageType=3&ModuleInstanceID=17841&ViewID=7b97f7ed-8e5e-4120-848f-a8b4987d588f&RenderLoc=0&FlexDataID=26581&PageID=11460>

On Wed, Oct 11, 2023 at 4:39 PM [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@aaps.k12.mi.us> wrote:

Good afternoon Jeanice

As a Palestinian student in AAPS, I am deeply disappointed and disrespected by your use of words regarding this email. You claim that 'Israel' is under "terrorist attacks" while Palestinians have endured decades of killings from these people. I feel offended by the word choice that you used especially because you are inferring that Palestinians are the "terrorists." I would like to ask, why didn't you ever mention the several major attacks that Israel has enforced on the Gaza territory in the past decade but you have the audacity to mention this incident other the others? For example, last year during the Holy month of Ramadan, Israeli forces violently entered Al Aqsa mosque and blatantly used excessive and unjustified forces against peaceful worshipers. At least 450 men were injured and many others died, according to the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner article. This is only one of thousands of other unjustified attacks that they have made onto innocent Palestinians. I believe that all students of Arab heritage, especially Palestinian students deserve a sincere apology from you regarding your words.

[REDACTED]

On Wed, Oct 11, 2023 at 3:32 PM Jeanice Swift <swift@aaps.k12.mi.us> wrote:

Ann Arbor Public Schools Statement on Terrorist Attacks in Israel
aaps lead, care, inspire logo

October 11, 2023

Hello AAPS Community,

We are devastated by the terrorist attacks in Israel, and we are heartbroken to hear of the loss of life occurring over recent days in both Israel and Gaza. Our thoughts are with staff, students, families and community members who have been impacted by the crisis that has unfolded. These attacks come at a time of increased antisemitism in the U.S. and around the world. In the Ann Arbor Public Schools community, we believe strongly that there is no place for hate -- whether antisemitism, Islamophobia or xenophobia.

As this situation continues to evolve, it may be especially difficult for our Jewish and Palestinian students, their families and staff members, and it negatively affects us all. Remember that, even if there aren't direct connections to the attacks, this news is alarming for anyone and violence shown in the media can impact our children. In How to talk to children about the violence in Israel and Gaza, National Public Radio has shared expert advice on how to talk with children who may have questions about the conflict, wonder why other children are among those affected, or even question whether they are safe.

Please take care of yourself and those around you. These are challenging times in our world. We know that it is more important than ever for us to come together, to care for ourselves and each other, and to reach out to those who are hurting.

If you or your child needs support, please reach out to a staff member at your school. If you or someone you know needs assistance, it is important to let an adult at school know.

Let's commit to remaining close in our communication, connection and care as we deepen our commitment to the core values of respect for all, so that all in the AAPS feel the support of being united against hate, intolerance or violence of any kind. We are all engaged in the embrace and support of all our students, staff and families in this AAPS community we share together.

We are a stronger community as we honor, embrace and celebrate our diversity, work together to continually create a culture of belonging for all and value the connections that unite us as an inclusive Ann Arbor community.

Jeanice Kerr Swift

Superintendent of Schools

Ann Arbor Public Schools

www.A2Schools.org

Keep up with the AAPS News!

Online: news.a2schools.org | Twitter: @A2schools

Facebook: search for "Ann Arbor Public Schools"

ANN ARBOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION: No person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any educational program or activity available in any school on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, creed, political belief, age, national origin, linguistic and language differences, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, socioeconomic status, height, weight, marital or familial status, disability or veteran status.

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