

From: [Lauren Phillips](#)
To: [Board of Trustees](#); [Brian Pugh](#)
Subject: Defining Anti-Semitism in Croton
Date: Monday, July 21, 2025 1:30:46 PM

*****CAUTION:** External sender.***

Dear Mayor Pugh, Trustee Nicholson, Trustee Politi, Trustee Simon, and Trustee Slippen,

Over the past several months, our nation has witnessed a series of troubling attacks directed towards the Jewish community. From the arson incident at Governor Shapiro's home in Pennsylvania to the murders of two young Jewish professionals outside the Capital Jewish Museum in Washington, DC to the molotov cocktails thrown at peaceful marchers in Boulder, CO that severely burned senior citizens – including a Holocaust survivor – advocating for the release of the remaining Israeli hostages, we are living in terrifying times.

In our own Village of Croton-on-Hudson, we are not immune. In recent years, Croton and its surrounding communities have seen a troubling rise in antisemitism including vandalism, online harassment, hateful rhetoric, and collective stereotyping. As members of the clergy who are living, working in, and serving residents of the Croton community, we strongly encourage our Village to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism.

The IHRA definition— utilized by over 40 countries and numerous institutions worldwide— offers a clear, comprehensive framework. It defines antisemitism as “a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews.” Accompanying the IHRA Definition are eleven examples that “may serve as illustrations” of how antisemitism manifests contemporaneously, ranging from age-old anti-Jewish tropes to Holocaust denial. While this definition does not silence criticism of the actions of the State of Israel, it does label as antisemitic the view that Jews do not have the right to self-determination.

The full definition reads as follows:

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

In 2021, the Town of New Castle became the first municipality in Westchester County to officially adopt the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism. Chappaqua Central School District (CCSD) has incorporated a Board of Education Resolution that is noted alongside the district's Equity Policy since 2023. In January of 2024, all CCSD instructional staff participated in antisemitism training under the auspices of the American Jewish Committee. Westchester County itself adopted the IHRA Working Definition in December 2022, as did the towns of Yorktown and Greenburgh. In 2024, Ossining, New Salem, and Rye Town followed. In addition, New York State issued a proclamation against antisemitism including the IHRA statement in 2022.

Having a shared, formal definition of antisemitism is critical for our Village. It enables our leadership to recognize and respond appropriately to antisemitic incidents, provides a framework for training and prevention, and affirms our collective commitment to protecting all students from hate. Antisemitism manifests itself differently than other forms of hate, and that is why a separate definition is necessary. Just as our community has taken steps to address racism and other forms of discrimination, we must ensure antisemitism is treated with the utmost seriousness. If the IHRA definition of antisemitism does not meet the Village's needs, we encourage our leadership to work to collaborate on a definition that will protect Croton's Jewish community.

Croton prides itself on the fact that "Hate Has No Home Here." We need to do something to combat the deeply ingrained hate that has seeped into our community. There is no place in our Village for antisemitic rhetoric, intimidation, or attacks. Let's define antisemitism in order to ensure that Crotonites of all religions and backgrounds feel safe in our community.

Sincerely,

Mark Anzani and Jim Tyre, Wardens of St. Augustine's Episcopal Church

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