



Statement Against Hate and Violence Caused by Antisemitism and Islamophobia

The SELPA Administrators of California strongly condemns all acts of racism and hatred perpetrated against members of the Muslim and Jewish communities, as we do against members of all protected classes. The recent terrorist acts by Hamas have caused the long-standing conflict between Israel and Palestine to quickly escalate into war, and shocking images of violence and hateful rhetoric broadcast through various media have contributed to a scourge of antisemitic, Islamophobic, and other hate-based incidents in our schools. We stand united with Muslim and Jewish families here and abroad as they continue to grieve and process these tragic events.

We have a shared responsibility for maintaining a safe, secure learning environment for our students, free from toxic or traumatic influences. As SELPA leaders, we work intentionally to build appreciation for differences in others and to educate and grow empathy in students, staff, and the community for students with disabilities. The harm and hatred shown to members of the Jewish and Muslim communities are, as with the disability community, often rooted in fear, misperceptions, biases, and misinformation.

In our role as facilitators of dispute prevention and resolution who often lean into disagreement as a means of repairing relationships and rebuilding trust, this seemingly intractable, ongoing conflict half a world away may feel too far beyond our understanding or control to resolve. We can, however, apply ourselves as educators at this moment. Equity, tolerance, and respect are some of our core values as SELPA leaders, values that we can teach by example by displaying empathy, intervening to address discrimination and harassment, and supporting the mental health needs of our students and families.

Teaching Resources

[Fostering Civil Discourse: How Do We Talk About Issues That Matter](#), Facing History and Ourselves

[Teaching Controversial Issues: A Framework for Reflective Practice](#), Judy Pace

[Classroom Deliberations](#), Street Law

[Conducting a Civil Conversation in the Classroom](#), Constitutional Rights Foundation

Social and Emotional Learning Resources for All Ages

[How to Talk to Kids About Violence, Crime, and War](#): Common Sense Media gathers tips and conversation starters to help you talk to kids of different ages about the toughest topics.

[Talking to Your Kids About War](#): VeryWell Family explores ways families can speak with young people about war, including tips on sharing information and restricting media coverage.

[How to Talk to Your Children About Conflict and War](#): UNICEF's guide offers eight tips to support and comfort your children.

[Handle with Care: Supporting Young People During Crises](#): Learning for Justice offers recommendations and resources to help guide conversations with young people and to manage potential subsequent actions and reactions.

[How to Talk to Kids About What's Happening in Israel Right Now](#): This article from Kveller shares balanced scripts parents and family members can use with their children based on their age range.

[How to Talk to Kids About Violence in the News](#): Common Sense Media offers language for talking to and listening to children when they see or hear about violence in the world.