

## Update on Club Meeting Concerns

Lisa Hirsch • hace 5 días • Friday, Nov 3 at 4:25 PM • **Desert Mountain High School**



November 3rd 2023

Dear Desert Mountain High School Families,

I am writing tonight to let you know that our school does not tolerate Antisemitism, Islamophobia or any hate speech at all. I cherish this diverse and caring community.

I want to provide you with an update regarding the concerns that have arisen following a joint meeting with the UNICEF and Amnesty International Clubs during the lunch period on Thursday, November 2nd. The slide show that students initially planned to share during the club meeting has been circulated on social media, leading to numerous emails expressing concerns received by the Governing Board, the Superintendent and myself.

Although student clubs are voluntary and student-initiated, it is a requirement that a staff sponsor be present at each meeting. The role of the sponsor is not to dictate the content of the club meetings but rather to provide guidance and support. In this instance, a preliminary review of the slide show led to some necessary edits. Following a more thorough review, I saw an opportunity to enhance our approach to advising our student clubs without limiting their freedom of speech.

This morning, I had the opportunity to meet with the leadership of both clubs along with the Jewish Student Union Club's sponsor. Our first order of business was to make sure we spoke about how each student needed to feel safe and have a trusted adult to turn to should they become overwhelmed today. We also spoke about the presentation and came up with a more specific protocol for moving forward.

Throughout the day I met with student club officers from each organization. We stand together to be sure we never prompt anyone to feel badly about their religion, culture or where they come from. It is absolutely clear that these students had no intention of promoting any form of Antisemitism. Their primary focus was to shed light on the humanitarian crisis and discuss possible ways to address it. In the future we will have a stronger review process.

During our sponsors meeting, we discussed the need to engage in these complex conversations in a civil and respectful manner, taking into account the broader context. It is important that we create an environment where all students feel safe and supported, sharing their concerns and participating in meaningful discussions.

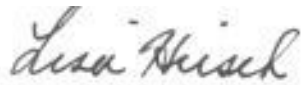
This afternoon, I spoke with a representative from the Anti-Defamation League, an organization with which I have had close to 30 years of experience working with. We agree that in this educational environment, we must create space for students to wrestle with conflicting viewpoints while also providing guidance regarding how to engage in a way that doesn't marginalize or disrespect any individual or group of people.

Our core value of empathy is grounded in a commitment to welcoming all with kindness, love, compassion, and joy. During these dark and troubled times, our school is working diligently to navigate difficult conversations in a way that honors the learning process for our students. We will continue to work to create a safe and supportive school where each person feels a sense of belonging and knows they are valued for who they are, regardless of any particular identity they have.

We greatly appreciate the guidance and expertise that organizations like the Anti-Defamation League provide as we continue to tackle these issues and promote a positive learning environment.

If you have any further thoughts or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,



Dr. Lisa Hirsch, Principal Desert Mountain High School

[lisahirsch@susd.org](mailto:lisahirsch@susd.org)

<https://www.facebook.com/dmhssusd/>

<https://twitter.com/DMHSSUSD>

-  
[Desert Mountain High School SUSD \(@dmhssusd\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)

District News

<https://www.susd.org/Page/1>