



Westwood School Committee
Westwood Public Schools

Office of the Select Board
Town of Westwood

Joint Statement Addressing Hate Speech in Westwood and a Call to Action

June 10, 2026

Dear Westwood Community,

Over the course of this past school year, our community has experienced at least five separate incidents of hate speech within Westwood Public Schools. Vandalism discovered at both the high school and middle school has uncovered antisemitic symbols, including swastikas, as well as racist and anti-Black slurs, homophobic language, and misogynistic messages. Two of the incidents of racist and antisemitic vandalism appeared following Holocaust survivors who spoke with students at the middle school, which is especially concerning. It has also been reported that students have used racist and homophobic slurs.

Each of these acts has been addressed promptly by school administrators and, where appropriate, by the Westwood Police Department. In some cases, investigations remain active, and we are working in close coordination to determine both immediate responses and long-term, proactive measures to prevent future incidents. In addition, racism, antisemitism, homophobia, and other incidents of bigotry have been experienced and observed in our community more broadly.

The Westwood Select Board and the Westwood School Committee, in their roles as elected representatives of the people of Westwood, unequivocally condemn these acts. Racism, antisemitism, homophobia, islamophobia, sexism, and hate in any form have no place in Westwood — not in our schools, not in our neighborhoods, and not in our community. We recognize the deep harm these incidents cause to students, families, educators, staff, and every member of our community, and we will not minimize that harm or allow it to be normalized.

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We are committed to identifying those responsible and ensuring accountability, restorative justice, and repair. Equally important, we are committed to the sustained work of education, dialogue, and partnership that builds a safer, more welcoming, and more inclusive Westwood for everyone. Hate symbols and speech are not a one-time problem to be managed; it is a challenge that requires ongoing vigilance, honest conversation, and the active participation of every resident.

To meet this moment, we are calling on residents, families, students, educators, faith leaders, and community organizations to participate in the newly established [Westwood Community Coalition to Combat Hate Speech](#). The Coalition is being convened by the Westwood Public Schools, with membership and responsibilities shared across all sectors of the community, and a goal of bringing our community together to:

- Support community members who have been targeted or affected by hate;
- Strengthen education and awareness within our schools and throughout the Westwood community;
- Develop proactive strategies to prevent future incidents;
- Respond to hate in a restorative and educational manner;
- Build a culture that prevents bias, bigotry, and hate speech in our community spaces; and
- Ensure that Westwood is a place where every person — regardless of race, ethnicity, spiritual and political beliefs, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, physical and neurological abilities and any other aspect of identity — feels safe, seen, and valued.

We invite every member of our community to stand with us because a unified community is only built when we listen to one another, support one another, and work together. If you would like to join this ambitious effort, please email westwoodcoalition@westwood.k12.ma.us.

We are committed to ensuring that every member of our community feels safe, valued, and respected. By working together, we can strengthen our culture and build a more connected community for all.

With shared resolve,

The Westwood School Committee & The Westwood Select Board

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