



Dear Newton Families,

The Education Center at 100 Walnut Street—our central office—has often been a showcase for student music groups and for student art shows--in general, a place for student-led learning demonstrations. Recently, our art department has aligned their work showcases with our portrait of a learner competencies (adaptability, empathy, critical thinking, communication, and having a learner's mindset).

This month we have added an exhibit by our Jewish American Studies class at Newton North. Supported by a grant from the state on addressing hate and teaching about genocide from two falls ago, this grant allowed our students to create a museum designed to educate and inform and address rising hate in our community. Due to the teacher strike last year and other world and local events, the only time the exhibit could be displayed is this spring. To celebrate their hard work, the students kicked off their exhibit with a small reception earlier this week. **The exhibit is open to the public after school hours, 4-6pm.**

As a school community, we have been concerned about a rise in acts of hate--especially last year. I am happy to report that, overall, the issues of hate and discrimination reported to us as a school system are down significantly this year. That said, reporting of this type can be imperfect--I recognize that some issues that were reported last year may have been impacted by world events. And reporting, this year, may be down for a variety of reasons--ranging from positive impacts due to education and intervention (in which we have invested a great deal), to failure to report, or world/community fatigue on certain issues. *If you are interested in learning more about our data related to these reports, you can view our recent [Annual Report](#) (p. 38).*

Recently, the Mayor shared information about the year of 2024 in retrospect:

"Hate Incidents and Hate Crimes In 2024, we had 7 hate crimes in Newton, an increase from 1 during 2023. We also saw an increase in hate incidents with 67 reported to NPD in 2024, an increase of 18 from the 49 reported in 2023.

A hate incident occurs when someone threatens, attacks, intimidates, harasses, or otherwise harms another person because of that person's identity, including their race, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or gender identity. A hate incident may or may not be a hate crime. Learn more about hate incidents and hate crimes from the Office of the Massachusetts Attorney General at mass.gov/info.

The 74 hate crimes and incidents reported to NPD in 2024 fall into different categories of hate:

- 59 Antisemitic,
- 3 Anti-Asian,
- 2 Anti-Black,
- 2 Anti-Muslim/Islamic,
- 2 Anti-Sikh,
- 2 Anti-Transgender,
- 1 Anti-Arab,
- 1 Anti-Gay,
- 1 Anti-Hindu,
- 1 Anti-Immigration.

The 74 reported hate incidents and crimes in 2024 follow 50 in 2023, 63 in 2022 and 59 in 2021 after a relatively steady five-year period from 2016 through 2020 with no more than 30 incidents each year. Officers in NPD's Community Services Bureau fully investigate all hate incidents and all hate crimes. Information on each hate incident/hate crime is shared with the Mayor, the Newton Human Rights Commission, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), and Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan's Office. Thankfully, Newton continues to be a very safe community."

As the grants hope to support, this exhibit hopes to combat hate with education and responds to the rise in anti-Semitism seen in the city in the past year. Our students were eager to share their learning with the community on Jewish Identity planned, with their teacher to share this informative exhibit on Jewish history to pull us out of only studying Jewish history as about the Holocaust or hate, but instead, a celebration of accomplishment and history. We celebrate this project as a demonstration of our Portrait of a Learner competencies and student academics.

We look forward to the public visiting our student work exhibition. Everyone can anticipate seeing more student work showcases of all types in the future, and opportunities to support student leadership in education exhibits.

Anna