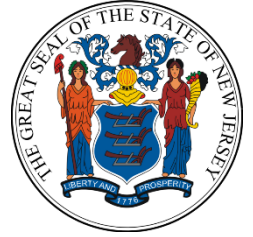


**State of New Jersey
Commission on Holocaust Education**

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New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education
3rd Quarter Commission Meeting
New Jersey Department of Education
Friday, March 13, 2026
11:00 am
Minutes

Presiding: Maud Dahme, Chair

Managing Director/ST: Brianna Doherty

Present Constituting a Quorum:

Nicholas Capuano
Allison Connolly
Phil Kirschner
Irvin Moreno-Rodriguez
Beth Chevat
Marvin Raab
Rabbi Avi Richler
Ilyse Shainbrown
Frank Stebbins
Shana Stein
Yitz Stern
Isabella Fiske
Heather Monan
Colleen Tambuscio
Elyse Wolff
Gene Woods

Staff (not constituting a quorum)

Brianna Doherty

Absent

Amanda Lanceter
Abe Foxman
Igor Kotler
Jeff Zeiger

Convening

The New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education Chair, Maud Dahme, convened the public meeting at 11:00 a.m. with the reading of the statement pertaining to the public session of the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education, as it complies with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act.

The Open Public Meetings Act was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon.

In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time, and place thereof posted in the Department of Education, Secretary of State's Office, and notice was also given to the State House Press Corps, the Governor's Office, and Commission Members.

And seeing there was a quorum, the meeting of March 13, 2026, was called to order.

Adjourn To Executive Session

The Chair, Maud Dahme, then read the resolution pertaining to the executive session of the NJ Commission on Holocaust Education quarterly meeting, as it complies with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Whereas, in order to protect the personal privacy and to avoid situations wherein the public interest might be disserved, the Open Public Meetings Act permits public bodies to exclude the public from that portion of a meeting at which certain matters are discussed, now therefore be it

Resolved, that consistent with the provisions of N.J.S.A.10:4-12b, the NJ Commission on Holocaust Education will now adjourn to executive session to discuss personnel and legal issues. The NJ Commission on Holocaust education immediately adjourned to executive session on March 13, 2026.

Reconvening

Chair Maud Dahme reconvened the open meeting at 11:30 a.m. with the reading of the resolution pertaining to the resumption of the public session of the NJ Commission on Holocaust Education quarterly meeting as it complies with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Whereas, consistent with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b., the NJ Commission on Holocaust education will now adjourn from executive session to resume the open session of this meeting.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion duly seconded and carried, the NJ Commission on Holocaust Education approved the minutes of the public meetings conducted on December 12, 2025.

Executive Committee Report

Chair Report – Maud Dahme

The Chair formally announced that the NJ Commission on Holocaust Education has nominated Colleen Tambuscio to be the new Executive Director of the NJ Commission on Holocaust Education.

As there were new members in the room, the Chair asked for a round of introductions.

The Chair also acknowledged the reappointment of Allison Connolly and Irvin Moreno Rodriguez.

The Chair provided an update on the annual summer seminar. The Managing Director will write the bid and submit it to the Office of Budget and Accounting by the end of the fiscal year.

The Chair was invited to attend a Ramadan dinner where she met the new Attorney General and the Superintendent of State Police.

The Chair has also been busy speaking at schools across the state.

Vice Chair Report – Marvin Raab

The Vice Chair (VC) provided an update on the virtual guided tours of Sobibor and Majdanek.

The VC opened up a discussion about digitizing books and other resources.

Managing Director/Secretary Treasurer Report – Brianna Doherty

The Managing Director (MD) congratulated the reappointed members and the new members.

The MD went through the folders that were provided. The following items were highlighted:

- Upcoming programs from the Holocaust Resources in partnership with the Commission
 - o Teacher Study Day at Seton Hall University
 - o The Fallen at Ramapo College
 - o Anne Frank: A History for Today at RVCC
 - o Yom HaShoah: Survival at Treblinka at CHHANGE
 - o 2nd Annual Gail Hirsch Rosenthal Memorial Program: Life From the Ashes at Stockton University
- Articles of Note
 - o Pennsylvania Girl Scout Launches Holocaust Education Patch Program. The Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh worked with Lily to create this patch. It follows standard patch format; ; there is a discover phase featuring the text How the Girl Guides Won the War, as well as videos and curriculum created by the center in Pittsburgh. Next is the connect phase, where Girl Scouts working on the patch after completing the discover phase connect what they learned with their own experience as Girl Scouts today. The past phase is the take action phase (the Commission, as well as numerous other commissions/center nation wide, have been asked to participate in this phase). This is where the Girl Scouts must conduct either a remembrance, volunteer, or educational activity in partnership with a commission or center for their community. MD is putting together a group of adults (previous Girl Scouts, Troop Leaders, and Educators) to complete the patch this year. If you are interested, please let the MD know.
 - o One of our speakers, Micky Blask, was featured in an article for Manchester Township after telling her parents' story of survival to the students there. After the school program, she participated in a special lunch and Q&A session with select students.
 - o The Sara and Sam Schoffer Holocaust Resource Center has been accepted as a CHEC (Community of Holocaust Education Centers) Partner with USHMM. Stockton is the 6th and final center to be accepted in NJ. Other centers in NJ include
 - The Bildner Center at Rutgers
 - CHHANGE
 - The NJ Commission on Holocaust Education
 - Saint Elizabeth University
 - The Holocaust Resource and Education Center of Kean University
 - o The Commission was specifically mentioned in the article by Paula Mann Choosing to be an Upstander. The MD highlighted the remarks, so they are easy to find
 - o The lights were again lit yellow for IHRD. Thank you, Irvin, for organizing that.
 - o The Claims Conference released its annual report on Holocaust Survivors. Per the Claims Conference, approximately 196,600 Holocaust Survivors are remaining worldwide, approximately 31,000 in the United States. There is a lot of really interesting information in the report.

- USHMM also released a report based on a survey it conducted on Holocaust Education. Here are some of the Key Finding of the report
 - Students across all lesson plans in the study:
 - Demonstrated increased knowledge of the causes, events, and consequences of the Holocaust
 - They asked new questions about the Holocaust
 - They made age-appropriate connections between the Holocaust, their experiences, and their world.
- Annual Awards
 - The MD provided an update on the 2025 Axelrod Award. The MD has continued to reach out to the ADL with no response. The MD has also reached out to the Axelrod family.
 - For 2026, we have received 1 award nomination for an educator at Essex County vo-tech. She has been nominated for the Gina Lanceter Power of One award.
 - Notice of the awards was handed out at NJEA, is posted on the website, and has been shared via the NJDOE Broadcast system. A reminder can be issues but the due date is April 1st.
- Speaker Requests
 - Since our last meeting, the following speaker requests have been completed
 - Jeff Zieger spoke at Hampton Academy
 - Amy Goodwin spoke at Ocean County Library
 - Micky Blask spoke at Gloucester Township Middle School and High School
 - Maud spoke at Leonia High School and Cranbury High School
 - Randi Zucker (3GNJ) spoke at Woodbridge Academy
 - Maud spoke at Woodrow Wilson Middle School and Ranney School
 - Allan Chernoff spoke at Thomas Jefferson Middle School
 - Micky Blask spoke at Manchester Twp. School
 - Allan Chernoff spoke at John Adams Middle School and Herbert Hoover Middle School
 - Maud spoke at Scotch Plains Middle School
 - Upcoming Requests include
 - Elizabeth High School
 - Cinnaminson High School
 - Essex County Vo-tech
 - Union County STEM Academy
 - Jewish War Veterans
 - Maurice M Pine Library
 - Kingston Elementary School
 - Somerset County Education Association
 - North Brunswick High School
 - Leeds Elementary School
- Educational Experience with Davidson College Men's Basketball team
 - The Davidson College Men's Basketball team is traveling to Berlin in August 2026 for an educational tour in honor of the 90th Anniversary of the Berlin Olympics. The educational experience is being sponsored by the Benjamin Ferencz Institute for Ethics, Human Rights, and the Holocaust. The MD has been invited to serve as the lead educator for the trip. The trip also includes partnering on a curriculum for teaching the Holocaust, specifically designed for athletes. This is a fantastic opportunity for these students, the NJ Commission on Holocaust Education, and NJ in general.
- Professional Development Requests
 - Since our last meeting, the following professional development programs have been completed

- Colleen presented in Bridgeton
 - Colleen and I presented at Freehold Township High School
 - MD presented at the Middlesex County Education Association
 - MD presented at Cherry Hill Middle School
 - Jess presented at South Hunterdon High School
- Upcoming requests include
 - Morris-Union Jointure Commission MS and HS
 - NJEA – *How to Bring a Speaker into the Classroom*. MD will be bringing Susan Jolly with me to speak about her family's survival of the Armenian Genocide.
- Virtual Guided Tours
 - We have added a new tour to our virtual guided tours offerings. We are partnering with the Sara and Sam Schoffer Holocaust Resource Center at Stockton and the Anne Frank House to offer virtual guided tours of the Secret Annex. We had our first tour (as a test run) on March 6th. There were 180 6th-grade students in attendance and 82 college students. There will be another tour on April 10th if you are interested.
 - We have a tour of Majdanek scheduled for March 23rd and a tour of Sobibor scheduled for March 26th. Registration for both tours looks great! We also have April and May dates still open for both tours
- NJEA
 - The MD submitted the booth request for the 2026 NJEA Convention. The convention will be on November 5th and 6th.
- MCCC educator workshop
 - Due to low interest, the Dr. Paul Winkler Educator Conference at MCCC has been canceled. We are hoping to reschedule for Fall 2026.
- Since the last meeting, the MD has attended the following programs/workshops
 - Preparing for America at 250 Years: Indigenous History and Contemporary Life with Colleen and Sara at Ramapo.
 - The winter Association of Holocaust Organizations Conference, which this year was held at USHMM in DC. As always, a fantastic conference with a ton of new resources shared. NJ had an amazing group in attendance this year: Irvin, Frank, Adara from Kean, Asya from CHHANGE, Isabella, and Amanda
- NJSLS
 - The social studies standards are currently being revised. I have been asked to sit on the expert panel for the standards review. All details are confidential at this time, but I will share more as I am able to.
- Office of the commissions
 - The Office of the Commissions (Holocaust, Amistad, Italian Heritage, LGBTQ+ Youth Equity, and AAPI) is partnering on a couple of upcoming programs. The first is the program tomorrow for Women's History Month, honoring NJ women as trailblazers in the work done by our commissions. We will also be partnering with the NJ Hall of Fame on a program this fall based on inclusive education. Information will be available soon.
- Retirements
 - We have 2 long-time friends retiring this year.
 - Karen Small from the Bildner Center at Rutgers University
 - Steve Marcus from the Sara and Sam Schoffer Holocaust Resource Center.
 - MD will be sending letters of recognition to both of them from the Commission.

Standing Committee Reports

Budget/Fundraising Committee

As of this meeting, our current funds are \$33,479.04. This included the funds encumbered for the spring event sponsorship grant with the Holocaust Resource Centers. For this grant, the Commission budgeted \$30,000, after reviewing the requests, the Commission encumbered \$22,437.50 to cover the cost of the requested grants. Programs for this grant cycle include

- Drew University Spring Study Seminar
- CHHANGE International Holocaust Remembrance Day
- RVCC Anne Frank Exhibit
- CHHANGE Yom HaShoah
- Ramapo Table Read Program
- Raab/Goodwin performances of Through the Eyes of a Friend and Dear Esther
- Raab Goodwin bus trips to USHMM
- CHHANGE Student Art Exhibit
- Rowan Using Objects to Teach Hard Histories

We received 3 donations this quarter totaling \$1610, all in honor of Maud Dahme. This brings the donation account to \$111,610.

The Committee has begun discussing funding for the 2026-2027 year, as the operating budget will be around \$52,000 after hiring the Executive Director. If needed, the Commission will use the donation account to cover funds.

Legislative Committee

There were two pieces of legislation brought to the attention of the Commission. These are just for awareness and do not require anything from the Commission.

- S3706, which was introduced on March 2, 2026, as an amendment to existing legislation. This established presumption of knowledge that display of noose or nazi or Confederate symbol would cause bias intimidation; enhance penalties for said offences.
- Resolution number 109, which recognizes the 30th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide and the Dayton Accords.
 - o The MD will be sending a letter on behalf of the Commission to the legislators sponsoring the resolution to thank them.

The legislative database is updated post-election, and the legislative briefing packet is ready. MD is adding the 2024-2025 Governor Report details to the packet.

Education Committee

The Curriculum team has been working on the K-4 Units for the *Indigenous History of North America* Curriculum. The guide will be ready for review soon. We are not doing the standards alignment yet, as the NJ Social Studies Standards are currently under review.

The website edits are still in process; all lesson plans and unit plans have been uploaded as PDFs for educators to print.

Communication and Outreach Committee

Updates are still happening with the website; the NJDOE has released new guidance for the look and format of the website because of a new chatbot feature that is coming. MD was giving that guidance and is making the edits. March social media posts are scheduled; the focus is on Women's History Month. Event flyers have been shared by the MD with the mailing list.

April is Genocide Awareness Month, and MD is working on the social media posts.

Upstander stickers are done, and samples have been provided to all Commission members.

The committee met with the NJEA review, and we are now aware of the process for submitting articles. We invite commission members who are interested in writing articles.

An update on the International Holocaust Remembrance Day Program was provided.

The Committee has started planning for 2026-2027 events (Kristallnacht, IHRD, Yom HaShoah).

The committee is still planning a 2G speaker training for the spring.

The interfaith panel has been pushed to the fall.

New Business

- Search Committee
 - o The MD will reach out to the Personnel Coordinator for the Division of Field Services to begin paperwork for onboarding. We have the anticipated state date of July 1, 2026.
- Prep for reorganization meeting
 - o The Q4 meeting on June 26, 2026, will serve as the Commission's reorganization meeting. If you are interested in the Chair or Vice Chair position, please send your letter of interest to the MD by April 23, 2026. These letters will be shared with the Commission in advance of the Q4 meeting. If you are interested in serving on a committee, please let the MD know by April 23, 2026.

Adjournment

On a motion duly seconded and carried, the NJ Commission on Holocaust Education adjourned its March 13, 2026, public meeting at 1:30 p.m.