

HoCoJAG,

Below you'll find my commentary on the proposed policy changes. Please feel free to reach out with questions or to discuss.

1. I **support** the proposed changes because they aim to ensure **fairness, clarity, and consistency** in the application of anti-discrimination policies, including antisemitism. By focusing on measurable outcomes (such as tracking incidents) and relying on subject matter experts, the policy would strengthen HCPSS's ability to address discrimination effectively.
2. I support the proposed updates to HCPSS Policy 1080 to include antisemitism and the Jewish community. As a Jewish person, I know there are places in the world where I'm not welcome, but a year ago, I never imagined Howard County could be one of those places. I certainly never thought Jewish students would feel unsafe going to school here. While I regret that any group needs a policy like this, it is no longer acceptable for HCPSS to protect everyone except Jewish students.
3. I support these updates to HCPSS Policies 9460 and 7140 because every child deserves to feel safe at school. Calls for violence or support for organizations that promote it are completely unacceptable and intimidating to targeted groups. We need to stand up against this kind of behavior and send a clear message that there's no place for hate in our schools.
4. I support these updates to HCPSS Policy 9020. We must draw a clear line in the educational environment—bullying, harassment, and discrimination are not protected speech. Political expression has its place, but it must never come at the expense of making other students feel unsafe or intimidated. These guidelines ensure that we protect free speech while safeguarding the dignity and security of everyone in the school community.
5. I support the proposed updates to HCPSS Policy 7030 because teachers and staff have a duty to create a safe, inclusive environment for all students. Political agendas don't belong in the classroom, and school resources should never be used to push personal beliefs. Every student deserves to be treated fairly, without bias or favoritism, and these updates ensure that education remains focused on the students, not politics.
6. To fulfill its obligations under Title VI, HCPSS must take real, concrete steps to ensure Jewish students feel as safe and included as any other protected group. The policies proposed in this survey are a great first step, and they give me hope that there's a genuine commitment to supporting every student, without exception.

Best,

Julie Kaplan