

Jewish Education

Resolution JYA 2202 – 5

The Jewish Education Committee of the first annual Jewish Youth Assembly,

NOTES WITH DEEP CONCERN that Jewish education today is highly focused on the religious aspect of our national identity and there is a lack of education directed towards informing and advising students and younger generations on how to foster a connection to their religious-cultural identity.

FURTHER NOTES that many Jewish communities around the world are spread out and don't have access or communication with international Jews. This is amplified due to cultural differences and language barriers and results in further cultural disconnect. Yet, in the 21st century with so much technology at our fingertips, it is more important than ever that Jews everywhere be connected and have the opportunity to learn from one another's cultures.

WE THEREFORE stress the importance of ensuring a united Jewish front around the world that is backed by education for the younger generation due to growing threats to the Jewish community which include: The global rise in antisemitism, attacks in Jewish schools where a lack of holocaust education and general history leaves students informed and less able to respond. Shrinking ties to Israel, henceforth Jewish culture and relations. Growing assimilation rates and the shrinking of smaller Jewish communities' culture and religion,

ADDITIONALLY, WE ARE ALARMED by the growing gap between the increasing number of Jews, yet a decrease of Jewish day schools and enrollment into Jewish day schools (across all denominations), which further informs us that the focus on cultural Jewish education is on the decline, and we may not be able to rely on traditional Jewish educational institutions to provide our youth with the Jewish values and cultural education that we believe they need to sustain our collective Jewish identity,

TAKES INTO ACCOUNT the rise in organizations, groups, and classroom time allocated to projecting and teaching the Jewish religion while excluding, unintentionally, the crucial step of allowing those in aforementioned settings to be provided with the necessary resources to explore and associate with their historical roots: These cultural aspects that should further be explored are: a. Holocaust commemoration and education, b. local and global Jewish history, c. Assimilation, d. Israel, e. Zionism, f. Antisemitism, BDS, Neo-Nazim, and other forms of anti-Jewish/Israel actions are manifested differently across the globe,

TO HELP SOLVE FOR THIS WE SUGGEST building out a global framework that will allow Jewish youth to connect and learn about each other's Jewish cultures and at the same time, foster relationships with one another that will bring our dispersed Jewish community closer together. We suggest a. Offering Jewish teens exchange programs to learn about other Jewish communities' life and culture, and to form networks of Jewish friends across the world, b. Offers Jewish teens to partner with countries in a global pen pal,

TO IMPLEMENT THIS IDEA community leaders should provide a framework to enable pen pals and exchange programs across Jewish communities: a. Jewish schools should come together to build out a pen-pal framework, b. Jewish communities should vet existing exchange programs and work with Jewish institutions (educational and noneducational) to provide exchange program opportunities for youth participating in the pen-pal program or build their exchange program, c. Schools should work with their students to create short fact-sheets about their respective countries which include information about their local history, holocaust, BDS, assimilation, culture, etc, and share these fact sheets with the visiting students from other countries so that those can gain insight and learn about Jewish history around the world.

THIS SHOULD GO HAND IN HAND with increased courses in Jewish education to include but are not limited to: a. Hebrew, b. Jewish Studies, c. Jewish culture/history, d. Jewish values, e. Modern Jewish community life, f. Israel relations, g. How to detect antisemitism, and how students can combat it, h. Or offer student clubs that relate to any of the aforementioned courses, i. Offers Jewish teens connection to international Jewry to learn about the variety within Jewish Culture, j. This includes forming Jewish Youth Groups to spread across the globe to reach Jewish Teens, k. Reaching out to global religious leaders.

Approved by the 1st WJC Jewish Youth Assembly, 27 February 2022