



JCRC Omaha 2026 Jewish Voter Guide on State and Local Races
Candidate Positions on Issues of Importance to Nebraska's Jewish Community and Our Neighbors

LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD

1. How do you define antisemitism, and how should educators distinguish antisemitism from legitimate political speech or criticism?
 - Antisemitism is hatred, discrimination, or bias directed against Jewish people, their heritage, or their institutions. I look to established frameworks such as the IHRA working definition, which recognizes both direct bigotry and subtle tropes. In our schools, educators must maintain the distinction between political critique and discriminatory harassment. Legitimate political speech includes questioning government decisions, foreign policy, and world events. However, that line is crossed when discourse relies on ancient conspiracies, denies Israel's right to exist, holds Jewish students collectively accountable for international events, or creates an environment of intimidation. As educational leaders, our responsibility is twofold: protect free inquiry and civic debate while ensuring every Jewish student and staff member feels safe, respected, and supported.

2. Antisemitism can come from across the political and ideological spectrum. What responsibility do elected officials have to recognize and speak out against antisemitism, including when it comes from members of their own party, political allies, or supporters?
 - In my opinion, elected officials bear a non-negotiable responsibility to recognize and speak out against antisemitism, particularly when it comes from political allies or supporters. True accountability begins at home. If we only challenge hate when it is politically convenient, we compromise our credibility and fail the communities we are sworn to protect. In education, our primary obligation is the safety, dignity, and belonging of

every student and family. Antisemitism has no partisan boundaries, and excusing it among colleagues or supporters signals to our Jewish students and staff that their safety is secondary to politics. As an educator and school board leader, I believe principled leadership requires holding everyone to the same uncompromising standard of mutual respect, calling out harmful tropes immediately, and demonstrating that human dignity always transcends political alignment.

3. Community harmony in a polarized environment

Political rhetoric can contribute either to division or to mutual respect. What responsibility do elected officials have to avoid language that stereotypes or scapegoats religious, racial, ethnic, immigrant, or other communities, particularly during campaigns?

- Elected officials hold an absolute duty to avoid language that scapegoats or stereotypes any community. Words have consequences, and using divisive or xenophobic rhetoric during campaigns corrodes social trust and puts targeted groups, including Jewish, immigrant, and minority communities at risk. As an educator and school board leader, my focus is always on the environment we are creating for our youth. Our schools serve vibrant, diverse student populations, and our classrooms work hard to teach mutual respect, empathy, and collaborative problem-solving. When political figures use rhetoric that degrades entire groups to score political points, they betray that educational mission and model the very behavior we ask our students to reject. Public leadership is about bringing people together to solve complex challenges, not driving wedges between neighbors. Candidates and elected officials must lead with moral clarity, foster genuine dialogue, and uphold the dignity of every community they represent.

4. What role should the School Board play in helping your school district prevent and respond to antisemitism and other forms of religious, racial, and ethnic discrimination?

- The School Board's primary responsibility is to ensure that policy, accountability, and classroom practice align to protect students and staff from hate in any form. We cannot expect students to thrive academically if they feel threatened or marginalized because of their faith, race, or ethnicity. In OPS, we have established foundational policies to address this directly: Policy 1200 strictly prohibits discrimination and harassment, Policy 5415 addresses bullying prevention, and Policy 6360 ensures religious customs are respected and accommodations for holy days are honored. However, policies are only as effective as their enforcement. The board's job is to ensure these frameworks are consistently applied, reporting is accessible, and investigations are transparent and responsive. As an educator and board member, I believe prevention through education is just as important as discipline. The board must continue to champion robust Holocaust and human rights education, ensure our educators are trained to recognize subtle antisemitic tropes as well as overt bias, and keep open lines of communication with community leaders so our schools remain places of mutual respect and safety.

5. What should Nebraska students learn about the Holocaust, antisemitism, Jewish history, and contemporary religious prejudice?

- Students in Nebraska should receive an education that examines the root causes, human choices, and warning signs of the Holocaust, rather than treating it merely as a footnote in World War II history. Through our alignment with state standards under LB 888 and OPS Policy 6000, our schools have a duty to teach students how casual bias, unchecked conspiracy theories, and institutional silence can lead to catastrophe. That education must also connect past to present: students need the critical thinking tools to identify modern antisemitism and religious bigotry when it appears on social media, in the news, or in daily conversation. Just as importantly, under Policy 6360, we must teach about Jewish history, culture, and resilience with depth and respect, ensuring students understand Jewish life beyond tragedy. By pairing rigorous history with our strict anti-harassment commitments under Policy 1200, we prepare students to build a community grounded in empathy, mutual respect, and moral courage.

6. How should schools address misinformation, conspiracy theories, and extremist rhetoric while encouraging critical thinking and protecting legitimate student expression?

- Addressing misinformation, conspiracy theories, and extremist rhetoric requires schools to lean into rigorous critical thinking, not censorship of legitimate inquiry. In Omaha Public Schools, our approach is guided by Board Policy 6390 (Controversial Issues), which affirms that free inquiry and discussion of complex topics are essential to developing informed citizens for our democracy. The policy charges our schools with fostering 'dispassionate, unprejudiced, scientific studies' where evidence leads the conversation. As an educator and school board member, I believe the best defense against misinformation and conspiracy theories is teaching students how to interrogate sources, verify claims, evaluate algorithms, and rely on credible primary evidence. Educators must serve as impartial moderators who hold space for open inquiry while holding statements to factual standards. However, we must maintain a clear, unwavering boundary: student expression is protected, but hate speech, harassment, and dehumanizing tropes are not. When rhetoric crosses the line into targeting religious, racial, or ethnic groups, violating our commitments under Policy 1200 and Policy 5415, schools must intervene decisively. By pairing strong digital media literacy with clear behavioral guardrails, we protect both intellectual freedom and the safety and dignity of every student.

7. Nebraska public schools serve families of many faiths and those of no faith. How should the Board protect both students' free exercise of religion and the constitutional prohibition against government establishment of religion?

- The School Board's duty is to uphold the First Amendment by ensuring our schools are neither a church nor hostile to people of faith. We honor the Establishment Clause by keeping the district neutral, meaning school staff never endorse, promote, or pressure students toward any religious

doctrine or absence of belief. Simultaneously, we honor the Free Exercise Clause by accommodating students' personal religious observances and protecting their right to express their faith voluntarily.

In OPS, this constitutional commitment is backed by policy. Under Policy 6360 and Policy 6361, we ensure students observing religious holy days receive academic accommodations without academic penalty. Through Policy 5301, we protect students' rights to wear religious clothing and symbols, and under Policy 6363, we study world religions for academic literacy without promoting tenets. Public education must welcome all families. When the board enforces strict institutional neutrality while accommodating individual belief, we safeguard religious freedom for all students while ensuring families of non-faith are never marginalized.

8. How would you build relationships with Jewish and other faith and minority communities—including communities whose members may disagree with you politically—and ensure they have meaningful access to you if you are elected?
 - Representation is not about surrounding yourself with people who agree with you; it is about serving everyone in our community with an open mind and an open door. As a mother, I know that what unites us—regardless of religion or politics—is the desire for our children to be safe, valued, and prepared for the future. As an educator, my career is built on dialogue, active listening, and modeling civil discourse across differences. And as a school board member, I govern with the belief that trust is built through consistency and presence. To ensure meaningful access, I don't wait for communities to come to a formal microphone at a board meeting. I believe in showing up where our families and the community is and maintaining continuous dialogue with organizations like the JCRC. When community members disagree with me on policy or politics, they will find in me a leader who listens respectfully, communicates transparently, and searches for common purpose. Every family in Omaha Public Schools deserves to be heard, respected, and represented

9. How should schools engage parents and minority-faith communities when disputes arise over curriculum, religious expression, discrimination, or school climate?
- When disputes arise around curriculum, religious expression, or school climate, schools must respond with active listening, empathy, and open communication—never bureaucratic defensiveness. As a mother, I deeply understand the vulnerability a parent feels when they worry their child’s faith, traditions, or physical and emotional safety are being misunderstood or marginalized. As an educator, I know that real trust is built through transparent dialogue and collaborative problem-solving, not by closing doors. And as a school board member, I believe our duty is to make sure families know they are valued partners in their children’s education. When disagreements occur, schools must bring parents and faith leaders to the table early, listen with cultural humility, and work toward practical solutions that respect religious conscience while preserving high educational standards. At the same time, we must maintain an absolute line: any concern involving harassment, antisemitism, or discrimination must be met with immediate care, thorough investigation, and firm accountability. Engagement cannot just happen during a crisis; it must be an ongoing commitment to ensuring every child and family feels seen, respected, and safe in our school community.
10. Israel is an important part of the organized religious, cultural, and communal identity of most Jewish Nebraskans even while holding a wide range of views about Israeli government policies. How do you approach conversations about Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in a way that respects both legitimate political disagreement and the concerns of Jewish constituents about antisemitism?
- Conversations about Israel must balance robust, open inquiry with an uncompromising stand against antisemitism. For most Jewish Nebraskans, the connection to Israel is central to faith, family, and communal identity—a reality that must be approached with respect and understanding. As an educator and mother, I welcome rigorous debate on global issues and the actions of any government. But political critique must never devolve into bigotry. It becomes antisemitic when it relies on

conspiratorial tropes, delegitimizes Jewish identity, or subjects Jewish students to blame and harassment. In our schools and community, I am committed to modeling dialogue that allows for principled disagreement while fiercely safeguarding our Jewish students and families from intimidation, ensuring our classrooms remain spaces of safety, mutual respect, and shared belonging.

11. Community security: Jewish institutions and other houses of worship have faced increased security concerns in recent years. What role do you believe elected officials should play in helping communities feel safe while preserving an open and welcoming civic environment?

- Every family deserves the fundamental right to gather, learn, and worship free from fear. As a mother and an educator, it is heartbreaking to see Jewish institutions and houses of worship forced to worry about threats and intimidation just for gathering as a community. Elected officials must take an active role by ensuring seamless collaboration between faith leaders and local safety partners, fostering responsive safety planning that keeps spaces open and welcoming rather than restrictive. Above all, leaders must provide unwavering moral support: speaking out clearly against antisemitism, standing visibly with our Jewish neighbors, and building the interfaith solidarity that keeps our entire community resilient and safe.