

Promoting Israeli Apartheid in Canadian Schools Not Okay

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The Palestinian solidarity movement must seek to disrupt the 'school to apartheid promotion pipeline'. It's past time to challenge private schools indoctrinating young minds into worshipping a violent faraway state that oppresses millions.

A recent visit to Canada by Israel's minister for Diaspora Affairs and Combating Antisemitism, **Amichai Chikli**, highlights a subject that requires far more critical attention. The Israeli Embassy Twitter account noted,

"[The purpose](#) of Minister Chikli's visit is to study unique examples of Jewish education in Canada and how this can be replicated across North America. Investment in Jewish education is an investment in the future of Israel — and the Jewish people."

Last month Chikli launched an initiative to substantially increase Israel's investment in North American Jewish schools. He announced \$53 million in funding for [the Aleph](#) Bet project, which he said, "will be focused on schools in North America with a focus on training teachers for Jewish education and Israel studies as well as principles for Jewish day schools."

During his trip Chikli visited Canada's largest private school. TanenbaumCHAT says "[Israel](#) engagement pervades our curricular and extra-curricular programming and is a shared vision — part of the consciousness of all our teachers and educators." The Toronto school even organizes "IDF days". After being taught to support apartheid, many of the Torontonians join the Israeli military or move there. Many more TanenbaumCHAT alumni speak, vote, fundraise, etc. in a manner that reinforces Palestinian subjugation.

Other Toronto schools also promote Zionism. During his recent trip to Toronto former Israeli

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett spoke at Bnei Akiva. The school promotes the Israeli military in a slew of ways. Bnei Akiva honours alumni who served in the IDF and its LinkedIn profile notes, "[upon graduation](#), students typically spend at least one or more years of study in Israel, and many serve in the IDF."

An Israeli flag flies in front of Leo Baeck elementary school and its publicity says it "[instills](#)" a "love of Israel" and "[a deep](#) and meaningful connection to ... the State of Israel" among students. The school has an [Israel Engagement](#) Committee and in 2012 it received United Jewish Appeal Toronto's inaugural Israel Engagement Community Award. That same year the Israeli Consul General in Toronto, DJ Schneiweiss, [attended](#) the launch of a new campus at Leo Baeck.

In Montréal a significant proportion of the crowd at the annual Israel Day consists of children bused in from the city's Jewish schools. Montréal's Hebrew Foundation School openly promotes the IDF and Israeli control of the West Bank. One post on the elementary school's Facebook page included a big board with the emblem of the IDF and multiple photos of Israeli soldiers. Another post mentions students assisting a charity supporting injured Israeli soldiers while another notes, "Our students and staff were enthralled with Eli's story as a soldier during the Yom Kippur war." The grade-schoolers often sing Israel's national anthem and participate in events put on by the explicitly racist Jewish National Fund, which has played an important role in the colonization of Palestine. A large map shown to the grade schoolers at a recent JNF Day included the illegally occupied West Bank as Israel.

In the paper "[Good Jewish](#) Citizens: Israel or Zionist education the key to saving North American Jewish Identity?" Bonnie K. Goodman holds up Montréal Jewish schooling as a successful model. "To combat the crisis," Goodman writes, "American Jews might look up north to Montreal, Quebec. The second-largest Jewish community in Canada has the lowest intermarriage rates and the highest number of students attending day schools and summer camps. The city is also home to an Israel engagement program arming their high school graduating class with the tools necessary to confront the anti-Israel college world and advocate for Israel. The curriculum creates a Zionist education that fosters its graduates to not only be knowledgeable Jews but good citizens versed in one of the most critical elements of Civil Judaism support and ties to Israel."

The just released film *Israelism* highlights the issue in the US. According to the summary of a documentary focused on two young people who go through a profound political transition, "[in their](#) Jewish day schools they are taught to unabashedly love and support Israel, and the Jewish state becomes central to their Jewish identity. They're taught that Israel represents the strength and pride the Jewish people were denied for so long. Simone, Eitan and their classmates sing the Israeli national anthem, drape themselves in Israeli flags" and participate in various initiatives linked to the IDF. One of the two protagonists, Simone Zimmerman, says "10% of my Jewish high school joined the Israeli army" and that she was led to believe Palestinians were "people who want to kill Jews."

It is imperative to disrupt the 'school to apartheid promotion pipeline'. It is not okay that kids are being indoctrinated to promote apartheid.

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