

# Minutes of April 5, 2021 Meeting of Commission on Holocaust and Genocide Education

This meeting can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rDFxBZuRga8>.

## I. Attendance

Name	Contact Information	Present	Absent
Senator Jay Kahn	<a href="mailto:Kahnjay03@gmail.com">Kahnjay03@gmail.com</a> 603-352-2903 603-271-3077/work	x	
Brian Balke	<a href="mailto:Brian.balke@sau19.org">Brian.balke@sau19.org</a> 603-497-4818	X	
Dina Michael Chaitowitz, Esq.	<a href="mailto:dmichaelchaitowitz@gmail.com">dmichaelchaitowitz@gmail.com</a> 603-235-0258/cell	X	
Evan Roy Czyzowski	<a href="mailto:evanczNH@gmail.com">evanczNH@gmail.com</a> 603-502-3233	x	
Marna Ducharme	<a href="mailto:mducharme@londonderry.org">mducharme@londonderry.org</a> 603-540-0043	X	
Representative Arthur Ellison	<a href="mailto:Highland242@gmail.com">Highland242@gmail.com</a> 603-224-7425	X	
Dr. Yves Pacifique Gakunde	<a href="mailto:ygakunde@ci.keene.nh.us">ygakunde@ci.keene.nh.us</a> 603-357-9800	X	
Ashley Harbel	<a href="mailto:aeharbel@gmail.com">aeharbel@gmail.com</a> 860-908-9995	X	
Reverend Zachary Harmon	<a href="mailto:vicarstchristophers@gmail.com">vicarstchristophers@gmail.com</a> 603-329-4674	X	
Bishop Peter Libasci	<a href="mailto:lleduc@rcbm.org">lleduc@rcbm.org</a> 603-663-0129		X
Kathy Preston	<a href="mailto:katispeaks@gmail.com">katispeaks@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:jennabisbee@comcast.net">jennabisbee@comcast.net</a> (assistant)		X
Rabbi Jon Spira-Savett	<a href="mailto:rabbijon@tbanashua.org">rabbijon@tbanashua.org</a> 603-809-9736	X	
Robert Trestan	<a href="mailto:rtrestan@adl.org">rtrestan@adl.org</a> 617-406-6360	X	
Dr. James Waller	<a href="mailto:jwaller@keene.edu">jwaller@keene.edu</a> 603-358-2011	X	
Tom White	<a href="mailto:twhite@keene.edu">twhite@keene.edu</a> 603-358-2746	X	
Representative Dan Wolf	<a href="mailto:dan@hodan.com">dan@hodan.com</a> 603-763-5176 603-526-6997/work	X	

## II. Motions

Motion	Failed	Passed	Abstain
1. <b>Motion to accept minutes from February 2021 Meeting</b>		X	

**I. New member Evan Czyzowski.** Evan Czyzowski was designated to the Commission by the National Education Association (“NEA”/New Hampshire Branch). Mr. Czyzowski has been teaching in New Hampshire public schools for approximately 15 years. He currently teaches English and is the theater director at Bedford High School. While at Sanborn Regional High School in Kingston, he began a Holocaust education program that included teaching the book *Night* and a talk by Holocaust survivor Kati Preston. In 2016, he created a 10-day student tour of Poland and Germany to help Sanborn students learn about World War II, the Holocaust, and the Cold War; the trip includes stops at the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin, the POLIN Jewish Heritage Museum in Warsaw, and Auschwitz-Birkenau. Evan continues this program for Bedford students. Prior to teaching high school, Evan taught at the University of New Hampshire and in China and Poland. Next year, Evan will be teaching Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Bedford High School. Like Ashley Harbel, Mr. Czyzowski wrote a letter and testified in support of the Holocaust and Genocide Education Act.

**II. February minutes accepted.** Dr. Waller moved to accept the minutes of the February meeting; Tom White seconded. The minutes were accepted unanimously (save for Rabbi and Evan, who abstained because they were not present at the February meeting).

### **III. Policies Subcommittee report.**

Senator Kahn recognized Nathaniel T. Greene, Ed.D., Bureau Administrator for the NH Department of Education (“DOE”), and Amanda J. Phelps, Administrative Rules Coordinator for the DOE. Ms. Phelps coordinates all of the rulemaking for the State Board of Education (“SBOE”).

Superintendent Balke explained that we presented our draft standards to the SBOE. The standards are on its agenda for Thursday, April 8. Prior to our meeting, Ms. Phelps circulated revised draft standards to us, noting that they were on the agenda for April 8, and had not yet been reviewed by the SBOE. Superintendent Balke explained that these draft standards look largely unchanged from the draft proposal

we submitted.

Dr. Greene reiterated that there were no substantive changes made to the content recommended by the Commission. Ms. Phelps put the heart of our proposal at the end of the current academic minimum standards and embedded references to the new standards in the rules.

Ms. Phelps went through the draft that she created (attached). Following are the highlights of her presentation:

- (1) **Ed 306.04 (page 2): Policy Development.** Ms. Phelps added Ed 306.04(a)(2)(i). This addition makes this section consistent with the statute. Ms. Phelps explained that they did the same thing when civics education was added to standards.
- (2) **Ed 306.26 (page 6): Kindergarten Through Grade 8 where no Middle School has been established.** Ms. Phelps added Ed 306.26(c)(1)(i) and the phrase “as applicable,” because the proposed standard recommends that the Holocaust/genocide education begin at grade 6.
- (3) **Ed 306.26 (page 7): Middle School.** Ms. Phelps added Ed 306.26(c)(2)(k) and the phrase “as applicable.” because some middle schools start in 4<sup>th</sup> grade, some start in 5<sup>th</sup>, and some start in 6<sup>th</sup>.
- (4) **Ed 306.26 (page 8).** Ms. Phelps added Ed 306.26(h), requiring local boards of education and school districts to provide the Holocaust and genocide education described in Ed.306.49.
- (5) **Ed 306.27 (page 10): High School curriculum.** Ms. Phelps added Ed 306.27(c)(17), requiring local school boards to require a program of studies in Holocaust and genocide education. “As applicable” is not required here because the education is required as a component of high school education (regardless of the high school grade in which it is offered).
- (6) **Ed 306.27(a)(j) (page 17).** This is the provision that requires the local school board and districts to establish and provide comprehensive instruction in Holocaust and genocide education “not later than 6<sup>th</sup> grade and continuing through grade 12 as a component of a course in social studies, English language arts, or both, and across the curriculum.”
- (7) **Ed 306.37: English/Language Arts and Reading Program (Page 20).** This provision provides that local school boards require that “if not provided in the social studies program, an English/language arts

and reading program in each grade, beginning not later than grade 6, provide comprehensive instruction in Holocaust and genocide education.” During the meeting, Ms. Phelps struck “in each grade” from her draft.

- (8) **Ed 306.46: Social Studies Program.** Elementary school, middle school, and high school are broken out.
  - a. **Ed 306.46(a)(1) (page 20)** requires social studies program in Holocaust and genocide education for elementary and middle school “as applicable.”
  - b. **Ed 306.46 (b)(1) (page 21)** requires a social studies program in Holocaust and genocide education for middle school, as applicable.
  - c. **Ed 306.46(c)(1) (page 21)** requires a social studies program in Holocaust and genocide education for high school.
- (9) **Ed 306.49 (Page 22): Holocaust and Genocide Education Program.** This is the meat of the rule and Ms. Phelps didn’t make any changes to our proposed draft. Senator Kahn noticed a typo in 306.49(a)(1)(c): “into the past” should be “in the past.”

Ms. Phelps explained that the standards are on the SBOE’s agenda as a discussion item only. SBOE members will probably have questions. The proposal will probably go back before the SBOE in May for a vote. After the standards are approved by the SBOE, they will go to the Office of Legislative Services (“OLS”) and the attorneys for Joint Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules (“JLCAR”) will make comments and there will be a public hearing. If the initial proposal is approved in May, the public hearing will not likely be earlier than July. After the public hearing, it will go back to the SBOE and, if there are recommended changes, it will go into a final proposal. That final proposal will go back to OLS to be heard by JLCAR. IF JLCAR approves, the proposal will go back to SBOE for adoption. Ms. Phelps will keep us apprised of the rule-making process.

Superintendent Balke asked about the intersection of the social studies standards and this proposal. Dr. Greene said that the social studies standards were on hold. It is conceivable that when they are taken back up again, the Holocaust/Genocide standard could be combined with that effort. But in the meantime, it makes sense for SBOE to move forward on this and not wait for the completion of revisions to the social studies standards.

**IV. Best Practices Subcommittee:** Evan Czyzowski volunteered for Best Practices Subcommittee. Ms. Chaitowitz noted that no more than seven Commissioners may meet simultaneously; otherwise, the meeting becomes a full Commission

meeting and particular requirements apply.

- V. Implementation Committee.** Tom White showed us how the Cohen Center is incorporating Commission materials, including minutes, on its website.

Ashley Harbel asked if the DOE could share a link on its web page to the Cohen Center page's resources page. Senator Kahn volunteered to follow up with Dr. Greene on this.

Dina Michael Chaitowitz suggested that we replace the draft standard that is currently on the Cohen Center website with a document indicating that the standard has not been adopted yet. She will provide a version that says "as submitted."

Ms. Chaitowitz also suggested that the website distinguish between the best practices and recommendations of the Commission as opposed to everything else that is on the Cohen Center site. Tom White agreed.

Dr. Waller mentioned that he has written an article for American Educator magazine on why Holocaust and genocide education matters, and a colleague has created a list of resources. He suggests that this list be included on the Cohen Center website as well.

**VI. Presentation by Pat Yosha**

Pat Yosha is the Chair of the Education Committee of the Racial Unity Team, a 501(c) non-profit charitable organization. Its mission is "to advance relationships among people of different racial identities, increase understanding, and reduce racial bias in our communities."

Ms. Yosha expressed concern that "genocide" should include what happened to Native Americans in this country and that the Commission study not only antisemitism but other "isms," like racism. Ms. Yosha emphasized that the Racial Unity Team is also strongly opposed to HB 544, and feels strongly that we should not overlook slavery and bigotry against Asian-Americans.

Reverend Harmon explained that we have been talking about Indigenous genocide and both he and Ashley Harbel emphasized that by promoting the teaching of the pyramid of hate, we will be addressing intolerance and bigotry that may not be explicitly covered by the statute. Senator Kahn also noted that while we are limited by the statute's mandate, the best practices that we will be developing will likely be applicable

to other “isms.” Tom White invited Ms. Yosha to reach out to him.

Mr. White mentioned two upcoming Cohen Center events:

(1) Tuesday, April 13, 2021, 7 pm: Healing Spirit: The Power of Remembrance, Reflection, and Reclamation – featuring Suzan Shown Harjo who has developed landmark laws, led campaigns for Native rights, and helped Indigenous Peoples protect sacred places and recover over one million acres of lands.

(2) Thursday, April 22, 2021, 7 pm: The Enduring Genocide Against the Armenians, featuring Dr. von Joeden-Forgey, a professor of Holocaust and genocide studies at Keene State College.

Later, Commission members talked further about Native American studies and we agreed that the term “genocide” in the statute likely includes the experience of the Native Americans. The Best Practices Subcommittee will be discussing this. Tom White will follow up with Ms. Yosha when she reaches out.

## **VII. Miscellaneous**

1. Dr. Gakunde reminded everyone that Wednesday, April 7, 2021, is International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Rwanda Genocide. In Rwanda, the remembrance continues for 90 days.

2. Tom White is planning to reach out to all 13 mayors about the Governor’s proclamation.

3. Senator Kahn doesn’t have dates for a May or June meeting because there will be budget meetings at the legislature.

4. Superintendent Balke said that the Governor sent the proclamation to the SAUs.

5. Ashley Harbel wondered if we could have a big commemoration next year for Genocide Awareness Month that would be available to all schools.

At approximately 4:30 pm, Brian Balke moved to adjourn; Rev. Harmon seconded. Motion passed unanimously.