



Homeland Security Academic Partnership Council

School and Campus Safety Considering the
Conflict in the Middle East Subcommittee

Office of Partnership and Engagement
December 13, 2023



Homeland
Security

This publication is presented on behalf of the Homeland Security Academic Partnership Council (HSAPC) School and Campus Safety Considering the Conflict in the Middle East (SCSCME) Subcommittee, co-chaired by Chief John Ojeisekhoba and Dr. Cynthia D. Shapira, for the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Alejandro N. Mayorkas.

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LETTER TO THE SECRETARY

Transmitted Electronically

December 11, 2023

The Honorable Alejandro N. Mayorkas
Secretary of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20528

CC:

School and Campus Safety Considering the Conflict in the Middle East (SCSCME) Subcommittee
Homeland Security Academic Partnership Council (HSAPC)
Traci Silas, Executive Director, Office of Academic Engagement
Lori Sims, Director of Resource Integration, Office for State and Local Law Enforcement
Rebecca Sternhell, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Partnership and Engagement

Dear Secretary Mayorkas,

On behalf of the School and Campus Safety Considering the Conflict in the Middle East (SCSCME) Subcommittee of the Homeland Security Academic Partnership Council (HSAPC), we are pleased to submit the attached report and recommendations. In this letter, we highlight the context for our findings and share a few additional recommendations that extend beyond the singular scope of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). We respectfully request that the Administration consider these suggested actions in order to address the safety and inclusivity concerns more broadly in K-12 schools and on campuses during this period of heightened tension due to the conflict in the Middle East. We look forward to working with you and your staff to support your work and help advance the recommendations in our report and this letter.

I. Higher Education Context: Key Factors to Understanding College Students Today and the Exacerbation of Campus Tensions Due to the Middle East Conflict

Over the course of November and December, the Subcommittee received briefings from higher education campus leaders, campus law enforcement professionals, school safety associations, policy experts, and numerous DHS offices. The college and university context are informed by several factors that would benefit from coordinated engagement by the Administration and broader public-private partnerships.

- Today's traditional undergraduate students generally are less resilient and able to handle conflict, more neurodiverse, and present with more mental health challenges, such as anxiety, depression, and suicide ideation, than in any other generation. They were born after 9/11 and understand war and terrorism as theoretical. They get their information from social media and each other. When external issues or actors stir up tension, it exacerbates these existing foundational issues.

- Both Jewish and Muslim students are hurting and need help. They can find that Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) offices, which were founded to address racism and racial inequities, are often unequipped and unable to help them feel a sense of safety and belonging on the campus. Students who aren't on "either side" of the conflict also are affected by the environment, which can feel toxic and not conducive to learning.
- Adding to the complexity is the plight of international students. Beyond the international students and scholars directly impacted by the conflict in the Middle East, other international students are dealing with heightened concerns in addition to coping with and trying to learn in a tension-filled campus climate. International students have faced politically charged threats of deportation and uncertainty about their rights to free speech and the consequences of certain types of behaviors and activities.
- Students and other audiences (e.g., administrators, faculty, parents, and outside groups) are confused by, conflate, or lack knowledge around competing campus commitments. These include commitments to free speech and academic freedom, diversity and inclusion, safety of students and other campus community members, and Title VI rights and obligations.
- The work of campus security is often driven and made harder by:
 - A relatively small number of loud voices and active agitators;
 - Outside groups (notably on both sides) without relationships or a stake in campus cohesion; and
 - The pervasiveness of social media and increased incidence of online harassment and threats utilizing social media.

II. Additional Recommendations Beyond the Scope of Work of the Subcommittee or DHS

This complex conflict requires a multifaceted approach by national, state, local, and campus experts, as well as partnerships with faith leaders, community leaders, and other leaders. To that end, we respectfully request that you and the Administration consider the following recommendations for the purposes of achieving our common goals of preventing and mitigating threatening or violent behavior and incidents on campuses and in schools during the Middle East conflict.

A. Convene a White House summit to address the issue of safety on higher education campuses and K-12 schools considering the conflict in the Middle East.

The Subcommittee has heard from experts at DHS, national campus law enforcement organizations, school safety associations, campus presidents, and campus student affairs leaders. Their testimony about students experiencing physical and psychological fear on many campuses in the wake of the Middle East conflict is underscored by numerous published articles, interviews, and statements by leaders of national advocacy organizations, including segments on mainstream national television news and news magazine programs.

The widespread worry or even alarm about safety at colleges, universities, and K-12 schools threatens the ability of our educational institutions to carry out their critically important learning mission.

We urge you to recommend that the White House convene a summit to address the issue of safety — physical and psychological — in the wake of the Middle East conflict. It is important that top leaders unify and help take down the temperature by separating facts from misinformation or perceptions, assure that the proper federal agencies are working closely with state and local law enforcement and campuses to anticipate and mitigate potential threatening in-person and online activities, and promote civil dialogue and peace among factions on all sides of the issue.

Participants in the White House-convened summit should include leaders from the relevant federal departments, such as the Department of Education (ED) and DHS, as well as national campus religious organizations and campus and school public safety leaders. We recommend that the summit be organized and convened in a timely fashion, recognizing that the current Middle East conflict likely will continue for several weeks or months. We believe that such a summit may help restore some confidence and build unity on campuses and in communities.

B. In addition to the convening, DHS can collaborate with other agencies and campuses to produce and/or collate the following resources:

- Issue best practices and guidance on de-escalation and in what situations campus leadership should take actions that are de-escalatory versus when it is necessary to deploy public safety measures. Colleges need help in distinguishing the difference, in real time, between actual threats and activity that does not rise to the level of potential physical harm. These guidelines should take into account that campus leaders are faced with the need to make split-second decisions to address events that may be unfolding.
- Tailor the Office of Partnership and Engagement (OPE)'s "Resources and Information for Faith and Community Leaders Regarding the Israel-Hamas Conflict" [webpage](#) to meet the specific environment of higher education campuses and direct it to campus presidents.
- Expand collaborative DHS and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) programs on mental health wellness, tailored to the needs expressed now by Jewish and Palestinian/Arab/Muslim students during this conflict. Model the resource on the program developed for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) focused on rising suicide rates.
- In coordination with campus legal experts, ED, Department of Justice (DOJ), and other relevant offices, develop and offer a webinar on Title VI protections and the technical assistance and resources available to colleges and universities. Campuses have expressed thoughtful and pressing concerns that they are facing regarding competing obligations to free speech, academic freedom, and Title VI protections.
- Support and/or collaborate with ED to issue a "Dear Colleague Letter" to higher education institutions guiding campus leaders to work closely with their campus public safety departments to develop proactive steps to prevent, prepare for, and respond to incidents of antisemitism and Islamophobia. To address any disconnect between higher education leaders and public safety departments, the letter should encourage senior campus leaders and their public safety departments to work together closely and provide guidance,

including on how to address and track such incidents. There is precedence for such a step since these incidents currently fall under the hate crimes section of the Clery Act.

Thank you for this important opportunity to support your work and help ensure the vital goals of fostering safety and inclusivity in our K-12 schools and higher education campuses.

Sincerely,

Chief John Ojeisekhoba
Co-Chair, SCSCME Subcommittee
Immediate Past-President, International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators

Dr. Cynthia Shapira
Co-Chair, SCSCME Subcommittee
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On November 14, 2023, Secretary Mayorkas tasked the Homeland Security Academic Partnership Council (HSAPC) with forming a Subcommittee to address school and campus safety considering the conflict in the Middle East. Given the pressing nature of the matter and the urgent need for the Subcommittee's advice, the Secretary requested that the Subcommittee submit its findings and recommendations to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) no later than 14 days from the date of the tasking memorandum.

Educational institutions at every level have an obligation to meet the physical safety needs of students, faculty, families, and the larger academic community. For an academic institution to carry out its educational mission, every member of the community must be made to feel safe and protected. The Subcommittee was tasked with providing advice and recommendations on how DHS can support K-12 and higher education communities in fostering safety and inclusivity in schools and on campuses; and, outside of funding, what additional resources and capabilities the Department can provide to support campus law enforcement professionals and others charged with keeping our academic communities safe.

In preparation for this report, the Subcommittee was briefed by stakeholders, subject matter experts, and leaders from DHS. Members heard consistent themes, leading to the following key findings:

1. Campuses and schools need help to address identification and management of potential violence and threats on their campuses and schools while recognizing that Jewish and Muslim (and sometimes Sikh) students, parents, and communities are hurting.
2. The challenges faced by higher education campuses and K-12 schools in identifying and managing potential and real threats and violence is further amplified by confusion and tension around multiple campus and school objectives.
3. Existing DHS violence prevention, preparedness, and response programs and resources should be retooled, made more readily available and accessible, and in plain language, to the leadership of K-12 schools, higher education institutions, law enforcement, and public safety departments.

To address these findings, we make the following eight (8) recommendations:

1. Within the next 14 days, retool and disseminate relevant DHS programs and initiatives currently in use within the violence prevention/mitigation space tailored to the specific characteristics of antisemitism and Islamophobia currently being manifested on higher education campuses and in K-12 settings.
2. Immediately address gaps and disconnects in information sharing and clarify DHS resources available to campuses, recognizing the volatile, escalating, and sometimes urgent campus conditions during this Middle East conflict. Include top decision-makers, such as presidents.
3. Build a trusting environment that encourages reporting of antisemitic and Islamophobic incidents, threats, and violence. With a partnership approach, work with applicable federal

agencies, campus administrators, law enforcement, and Fusion Centers to establish this culture in lockstep with school officials in communities.

4. Recognize and amplify that the DHS Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) has Title VI responsibilities.
5. Earmark congressional funds for emergency grant funding to specifically aid campuses with quick turnaround financial support to meet safety and related needs during this Middle East conflict.
6. Immediately designate an individual to serve as Campus Safety Coordinator and grant them sufficient authority to lead DHS efforts to combat antisemitism and Islamophobia.
7. On a monthly basis, at a minimum, proactively engage school and higher education associations to amplify the ways DHS reaches out to campus leaders who need more support managing the potentially threatening and disruptive actions that are taking place during this Middle Eastern conflict.
8. To support the safety and inclusion of impacted individuals, DHS should designate Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and authorize Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) for the Palestinian territories and Israel, accompanied by the announcement Special Student Relief (SSR) for international students and other campus community members impacted by the conflict.

METHODOLOGY

The Secretary's tasking:

1. How DHS can support K-12 and higher education communities in fostering safety and inclusivity in schools and on campuses; and,
2. Outside of funding, what additional resources and capabilities DHS can provide to support campus law enforcement professionals and others charged with keeping our academic communities safe.

In carrying out the Secretary's tasking, the Subcommittee met with subject matter experts internal and external to DHS. Throughout November and December 2023, the Subcommittee was briefed by a number of DHS professionals and external experts. A complete list of all DHS and external subject matter experts is available in [Appendix 2](#). Written materials and resources provided to the Subcommittee are listed in [Appendix 3](#).

The Subcommittee's methodology entailed the following steps:

- Collected and assessed data through briefings and review of written materials;
- Worked in smaller groups to address Questions 1 and 2;
- Came together to write the report; and
- Developed recommendations to help DHS respond to the current moment and be useful in the longer run.

KEY FINDINGS

KEY FINDING #1: Campuses and schools need help to address identification and management of potential violence and threats on their campuses and schools while recognizing that Jewish and Muslim (and sometimes Sikh) students, parents, and communities are hurting.

In the higher education sector, college executive leaders expressed to the Subcommittee that they have a fundamental difficulty navigating the difficult waters of pinpointing what is violent or threatening or potentially violent activity on campus. Managing that imminent or existing activity within an understanding of what constitutes such behavior complicates their ability to take quick action. “We could use help in distinguishing real threats from ordinary politics,” one campus leader told the Subcommittee during a briefing. “Help us identify when the right moves are de-escalatory, when to encourage civil dialogue and engagement, and when we need to ramp up our public safety. Campuses are trying to make those decisions on the fly, and it feels uncertain and that there are certain risks that we do not have the expertise to handle.”

Jewish students are hurting and feel unsafe. According to the Hillel International/Benenson Strategy Group Survey: Jewish College Student Experience, Post Oct. 7 Wave 2, more than half of Jewish students feel less safe on campus than before the war began, more than one in three believe they need to hide their Jewish identity, and 43% say their campus climate is either scary or unsafe. Hillel International tracked a 700% increase in antisemitic incidents during the six weeks since October 7, 2023, compared to the same period in 2022. Incidents include harassment, intimidation, vandalism, and assault, according to Hillel International tracking.

There are similar concerns among Arab and Muslim students on campuses. According to [PEN America](#), these students have been the targets of “violent attacks, threats, and targeted, hateful and menacing rhetoric” at multiple higher education institutions. Other students who are not Arab or Muslim, such as Sikh students, may be mistaken for belonging to one of these groups and become the subjects of targeted threats and hate speech.

K-12 experts validated that K-12 schools also lack concrete and validated definitions of what constitutes antisemitism and Islamophobia. K-12 principals do not have the tools to lead through this, and teachers and students do not have the tools to talk through this. Subcommittee contributor Randi Weingarten noted that her organization American Federation of Teachers (AFT) was working with school systems and schools on a four-point plan including:

- Producing good definitions of antisemitism and Islamophobia;
- Producing plans for schools to support free speech and for students to feel safe;
- Delivering tools for administrators to lead through this conflict; and
- Delivering tools for teachers, students, and families to talk through this conflict.

Several of the experts that briefed the Subcommittee noted that while we exist in a resource-rich environment, people rarely know that these resources exist, where to find them, or how to use them. DHS can make a difference, as we note in Key Finding #3, below.

KEY FINDING #2: The challenges faced by higher education campuses and K-12 schools to identify and manage potential and real threats and violence is further amplified by confusion and tension around multiple campus and school objectives.

For administrative leaders and campus and school security leaders, understanding and integrating these multiple objectives is vital to effective situational assessment and planning. Leaders cannot afford to let confusion or complexity get in the way of clear and decisive action.

College and K-12 administrators routinely juggle several objectives in striving to achieve their mission. Broadly — but heightened in the context of the current Middle East conflict and its ramifications on our educational institutions — they must:

- Build cultures that understand, respect, embrace, and protect free speech as a central pillar of the learning process;
- Provide equal opportunity access to education under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;
- Ensure the physical safety of students and staff;
- Ensure a productive learning environment;
- Support the psychological safety of all members of their community; and
- Endeavor to create an environment where all students and faculty feel a sense of belonging to the larger community beyond legal responsibilities.

Not surprisingly, these objectives can be confused and come into conflict with each other. Many community members do not understand that free speech comes with limitations, such as threats to physical safety, as well as time, place, and manner restrictions. K-12 experts told the Subcommittee that school administrators often cannot distinguish between free speech and the need to feel safe: “There is a need to hold multiple truths.”

Members of targeted groups define what constitutes hurtful speech and threatening behavior to them but given the adaptive nature of antisemitism and Islamophobia and general unfamiliarity by many in the general community, this assessment can be challenging and vary substantially by situation and person.

Our experts told us about incidents where harmful behaviors (threatening or harassing) are incorrectly labeled as free speech and permitted. We also heard examples of merely uncomfortable situations being blown out of proportion. In addition, certain language or behaviors may be both legally permissible and damaging to communal norms, such as when incidents may call for both protecting the speaker and the subject of the speech.

Throughout our Subcommittee briefings we heard a common refrain: confusion and tension around these objectives is a driver of increased tension, action, and inaction. Rigorous education on these issues — and on the Middle East conflict and history itself — will help administrators, boards, faculty,

staff, law enforcement, students, parents, and other community members avoid inflaming tensions, and be better prepared to develop solutions.

KEY FINDING #3: Existing DHS violence prevention, preparedness, and response programs and resources should be retooled, made more readily available and accessible, and in plain language, to the leadership of K-12 schools, higher education institutions, law enforcement, and public safety departments.

The Subcommittee learned through high-level briefings from the Office for State and Local Law Enforcement (OSLLE), the Office of Partnership and Engagement (OPE), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) that DHS has developed an enormous number of programs and resources that may further aid higher education and K-12 to be better prepared to prevent, prepare, and respond to threats and potential acts of violence related to the Middle East conflict.

The Subcommittee also received briefings from college and university presidents, campus law enforcement and campus public safety chiefs, and professionals involved in K-12 school safety. There is a strong sentiment among the campus law enforcement chiefs, including the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA), that while OSLLE and OPE have done a superb job developing initiatives and delivery methods, many campuses are not aware of the information. This is in part due to lack of proactive steps and intentionality on the part of the campus law enforcement and campus public safety departments. Thus, information intended to assist campus and school law enforcement to better mitigate risks from the Middle East conflict may not be fully accessible or reaching all the necessary campus law enforcement officials or campus public safety leaders.

University presidents informed us they too want access to vital threat and potential violence information in clear language that is accessible to them, particularly during this time of tension on campus due to the Middle East conflict. There is mixed feedback from university presidents about the flow of information from campus law enforcement and campus public safety leaders and presidents' offices. This was echoed by IACLEA and the campus law enforcement officials and campus public safety chiefs who briefed us.

Campus law enforcement and campus public safety leaders informed the Subcommittee that the duration to secure the different kinds of FEMA grants is too long and impedes preparedness, which is a key goal of the grant.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1: Within the next 14 days, retool and disseminate relevant DHS programs and initiatives currently in use within the violence prevention/mitigation space tailored to the specific characteristics of antisemitism and Islamophobia currently being manifested on higher education campuses and in K-12 settings.

- Direct that FEMA, in partnership with the White House and Department of Education (ED), develop a toolkit specifically for campuses to address hate and acts of targeted violence considering the current Middle East conflict. Use DHS's [*Allied Against Hate: A Toolkit for Faith Communities*](#) as the model.
- Tailor a similar toolkit for K-12 settings. Use as the base the toolkit developed by Safe and Sound Schools (in association with National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO), the National Center for Trauma Support Network (NCTSN), and the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)). Edit it with text to help schools navigate the difficult conversations with Jewish and with Palestinian/Arab parents and guidance to schools on protecting school communities with significant populations of Palestinian/Arab or Jewish students. Include guidance for protection of Sikh students as they are being targeted as well (likely due to being mistaken as Arab or Muslim).
- Direct FEMA to work with Hillel International and an analogous national organization for Arab and Muslim students on campus to develop a program that mitigates against current elevated and potentially dangerous tension between Jewish students and Palestinian, Arab, Muslim, or sympathizing students, using community service, bridge-building, allyship, and dialogue as the tools. Adapt this from the FEMA and Interfaith America model.
- Direct DHS's Center for Prevention, Programs, and Partnerships (CP3) to develop technical and educational strategies and materials focused on further prevention of targeted violence in the context of the Middle East conflict and outside actors fomenting potentially dangerous disruptions on campuses.
- Direct OSLLE to immediately re-design its regional trainings (with DHS CRCL and the White House) to address specifically the most likely threats generated by the Middle East conflict. Working with OPE, offer training at regional and national conferences convened by national higher education organizations such as the American College on Education (ACE), the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU), the Association of American Universities (AAU), the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC), the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU), the IACLEA, and the NASRO.
- Tailor OPE's "Resources and Information for Faith and Community Leaders Regarding the Israel-Hamas Conflict" page to meet the specific environment of higher education campuses; direct it to campus presidents. As stated in the findings, campuses and campus leaders find themselves wrestling with conflicting goals and maintenance of mission, such as free speech versus protecting students from harm and harassment, dealing with adolescents who are living away from home for the first time and often are less prepared psychologically to

manage their reactions and be resilient, and pressure from external actors (e.g., legislators and national politicians, donors, and the media) to take or not take measures in addressing campus climate during this conflict.

- Work with appropriate agencies to support Campus Safety and Resilience clusters to redesign the campus resilience program model to include specific information and training about antisemitism and Islamophobia tropes and activities taking place on campuses during this Middle East conflict. Utilize existing materials, tools, and the collaborative approach as follows:
 - Explain and describe the history of antisemitism and the historical persecution of the Jews.
 - Explain and describe modern antisemitism and Islamophobia characteristics including tropes and how social media distorts news items and perpetuates tropes.
 - Engage campuses through DHS regional symposia.
- Direct the Protective Security Advisors (PSAs) that work in DHS CISA to work with key partners in the faith-based space, such as Hillel International, Secure Community Network, and others especially Arab/Muslim organizations that are primarily engaged in student life and security, to undertake coordinated outreach and engagement with Jewish and Arab/Muslim student organizations and associations, to include assessments of facilities.
- Compile existing DHS resources and best practices created for election officials related to social media threats and doxing, and retool for students, faculty, and staff of K-12 and higher education institutions with the goal of creating campus-specific best practices and tailored recommendations to counter social media threats and doxing.
- Building on what CISA and partners created for election officials and other by tailoring to higher education and collate campus best practices, scale the initiatives delivered by the DHS CP3, including:
 - The Invent to Prevent (I2P) high school and undergraduate student experiential program in which students design customized programs with the goal of decreasing the likelihood of targeted violence, hate crimes, and terrorism in their schools.
 - The Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention Grants program (TVTP), which includes an important track on building youth resilience.
 - Use the template developed by University of California, Irvine (UCI) including guidelines for students and one for faculty/staff.
- CP3 is the only DHS office dedicated solely to foresight and prevention of targeted violence and terrorism. The anti-Jewish and anti-Arab/Muslim (and sometimes Sikh) hate that campuses and schools currently are experiencing are within CP3's purview. The agency could act quickly to focus on a set of campuses and schools/school districts that have not yet reported major incidents of hate due to the current Middle East conflict, to forestall such. Consider the following, to leverage this work and push prevention out in case of future violence-triggering situations:

- Create, with four-year public comprehensive institutions and community colleges, violence prevention certificate and credential programs, designed for matriculated students earning associate or bachelor's degrees in a range of majors (e.g., social work, mental and behavioral health, psychology, and criminal justice).
- Provide model social media posts to university presidents that enable them to call for calm and raise concerns.
- Host a webinar to highlight the new resources the Department creates within the 14-day period.
- Prepare practical guidelines and decision considerations for preparing to respond to high visibility events on campus.
- Prepare a glossary of potentially antisemitic terminology for university presidents and other campus leaders.

RECOMMENDATION #2: Immediately address gaps and disconnects in information sharing and clarify DHS resources available to campuses, recognizing the volatile, escalating, and sometimes urgent campus conditions during this Middle East conflict. Include top decision-makers, such as presidents.

- Perform an immediate review of all relevant DHS offices and components' authorities as it relates to the services, products, and resources they can provide to sworn law enforcement, non-sworn law enforcement, public institutions of higher learning, private institutions of higher learning, and the intersection of either category to further understand gaps and more clearly define which DHS resources are allowable for campuses and universities.
 - Instruct OSLE to work externally with IACLEA and NASRO to ask Congress to address laws prohibiting DHS from providing certain resources, such as training and information, to private universities and schools. Current limitations serve as a barrier to yielding maximum optimum results.
 - In the meantime, promote internally the ability of the National Threat Evaluation and Reporting Center (NTER) Master Trainers, the instructor development certification program focused on utilizing the behavioral approach to terrorism prevention, to train private sector partners to leverage the impact of this program as a force multiplier in terrorism prevention. IACLEA board members are currently modeling this approach.
- Create a centralized website or virtual platform for DHS and other federal agency prevention, preparedness, and response resources. DHS, ED, and other federal agencies have developed rich and robust written materials, training opportunities, and other resources to assist both higher education institutions and K-12 schools in keeping people and physical assets safe. However, the existence of these resources is not widely known to campus public safety and school law enforcement. There is no user-friendly point of access to enable campus public safety and school safety officers to readily access resources during this conflict (or beyond).
 - Designate OSLE to work with IACLEA on additional methods to disseminate resources available to higher education campus law enforcement to prevent, prepare for, and respond to incidents of antisemitism and Islamophobia.

- Designate OSLE to work with NASRO on methods to disseminate resources available to K-12 to prevent, prepare for, and respond to incidents of antisemitism and Islamophobia.
- Within 14 days, create a one-page, matrix style reference guide that lists each DHS agency, department, or office and succinctly describes its respective mandate, community or sector served, whether it supplies active (e.g., training) or passive (e.g., written materials) assistance, whether it administers grant funds, and contact information. (This would include OSLE, FEMA, Intelligence and Analysis (I&A), etc.)
- Perform review of listed tools and where possible improve accessibility and applicability by designing for relevant audiences, including but not limited to administrators without law enforcement background, youth, teens, college students, and parents of K-12 students. Ways to improve accessibility include simplifying technical language, expanding and clarifying content related to social media, and (for materials relevant to parents of K-12 students) publishing in relevant languages beyond English.
- Perform review of existing DHS materials relevant to K-12 and higher education institutions, and make updates where needed, to see that they sufficiently and accurately support institutions in understanding, planning, and responding to incidents related to antisemitism, Islamophobia, and the conflict in the Middle East. (Examples of likely updates to materials include adding relevant examples and clarifying language about Title VI applicability.)
- To the extent legal authorities and intelligence considerations permit, work with IACLEA to establish a clearinghouse for all DHS safety and intelligence information and set up the clearinghouse as a link on the IACLEA website. Using login-protective protocols, make this information available to all campus law enforcement (sworn and not sworn), as well as college presidents or designees.
 - Retool the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN) to be specific around campus needs during this Middle East conflict and put it in the IACLEA clearinghouse webpage link.
- Send out by email more frequent intelligence bulletins to designated users (e.g., campus law enforcement, college presidents, or designees), similar to the Joint Intelligence Bulletin (JIB) from OSLE and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Include information about outside influences seeking to stir trouble. DHS is in a position to help colleges and universities identify the most active and potentially disruptive, or even dangerous, outside actors seeking to infiltrate campuses.

RECOMMENDATION #3: Build a trusting environment that encourages reporting of antisemitic and Islamophobic incidents, threats, and violence. With a partnership approach, work with applicable federal agencies, campus administrators, law enforcement, and Fusion Centers to establish this culture in lockstep with school officials in communities.

- DHS [Fusion Centers](#) are “state-owned and operated centers that serve as focal points in states and major urban areas for the receipt, analysis, and gathering and sharing of threat-related information between State, Local, Tribal and Territorial (SLTT), federal, and private sector partners.” DHS needs to ensure that all campuses in a Fusion Center of responsibility,

including public and private (non-profit and for-profit) colleges and universities, are touched by the Fusion Center.

- Tailor the training offered by Fusion Centers specifically focus on antisemitic and Islamophobic characteristics and modes of potential threats on campuses.
- Work to elevate and distribute resources already created by organizations heavily involved in campus safety and security — notably Hillel International and Secure Communities Network in the Jewish community and similar organizations addressing the needs of Muslim students — such as security guidance, training, and incident response protocols for students and organizations serving Jewish and Muslim students.
- Issue clarifying guidance to law enforcement regarding international students and the consequences of actions that may violate laws and campus policies.
- Ensure that, within the DHS I&A HSIN, there is a content community focused on trusted sharing of sensitive but unclassified information on current threats due to the existing Middle East conflict.

RECOMMENDATION #4: Recognize and amplify that the DHS Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) has Title VI responsibilities.

- Have CRCL collaboratively reach out to national Jewish student organizations, such as Hillel International, and analogous Arab or Muslim national student organizations, with resource material about Title VI coverage and how to file a complaint with DHS or the ED Office of Civil Rights (OCR).

RECOMMENDATION #5: Earmark congressional funds for emergency grant funding to specifically aid campuses with quick turnaround financial support to meet safety and related needs during this Middle East conflict.

- The gap between submitting a new grant application and receiving the grant generally is many months and is subject to the political vagrancies of Congressional budgeting. Thus, by the time an institution receives a DHS grant, the situation on campus likely has changed for the worse.
- Identify opportunities to retool existing FEMA or other grant programs to address the immediate conflict as emergency funding in the form of micro-grants that campuses and schools can quickly access if there is an imminent threatening activity or projection of such.
- Where possible, clarify program applicability to campuses to meet the current situation.
- Identify opportunities to streamline regular grant processes so that the time frame between application and disbursement of grant monies is reduced to three months.
- Identify ways to add timeline and fund use flexibility in existing grant programs, so general security grants can be customized to meet real and specific needs at the time the funds are used (e.g., applied 12 months ago for security planning or training, by the time the planning or training occurs, allow it to be tailored to the issue of the moment like the Middle East conflict).

RECOMMENDATION #6: Immediately designate an individual to serve as Campus Safety Coordinator and grant them sufficient authority to lead DHS efforts to combat antisemitism and Islamophobia.

- On an ongoing basis, look for additional ways DHS can better respond to support higher education and K-12 in fostering safety and inclusivity in schools and on campuses considering the conflict in the Middle East.
- Review and adapt, as appropriate, any or all the 100 actions in the [White House National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism](#) to the higher education sector. Do the same with the White House National Strategy to Counter Islamophobia when that document is finalized.
- Enhance and expand antisemitism and Islamophobia training to DHS staff.
 - Develop comprehensive, discrete, and holistic antisemitism and Islamophobia trainings.
 - Working from the White House recommendation to “incorporate information about antisemitism” into federal Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) training programs, incorporate comprehensive antisemitism and Islamophobia training in all DEIA training for DHS staff.
- Ensure alignment of languages within a school’s emergency response plan.

RECOMMENDATION #7: On a monthly basis, at a minimum, proactively engage school and higher education associations to amplify the ways DHS reaches out to campus leaders who need more support managing the potentially threatening and disruptive actions that are taking place during this Middle Eastern conflict.

- Direct appropriate DHS officers to set up a series of outreach telephone calls to campus presidents and campus law enforcement officials where most of the potentially threatening and disruptive activity is taking place. Coordinate with school, higher education, and law enforcement associations to develop a list of the most threatened campuses.
 - Expand OPE listening tours to some of these key college campuses.
- Do not wait for students or campuses to contact OPE asking, “What can we do?” Be proactive and make calls and schedule visits.

RECOMMENDATION #8: To support the safety and inclusion of impacted individuals, DHS should designate Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and authorize Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) for the Palestinian territories and Israel, accompanied by the announcement Special Student Relief (SSR) for international students and other campus community members impacted by the conflict.

- Supporting international students and issuing clarifying guidance would help ensure the safety and inclusivity of these campus community members. The announcement of SSR would allow impacted international students greater flexibility to continue their education without hinderance, while acknowledging the extraordinary hardships they face due to the conflict.

- Reiterate the U.S. welcome of international students and their right to free speech on college campuses in the U.S. while directing the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) to develop frequently asked questions (FAQs) regarding the potential consequences if international students engage in actions that violate laws and campus policies.

CONCLUSION

The School and Campus Safety Considering the Conflict in the Middle East Subcommittee was privileged to undertake this research and reporting. We request swift implementation of these recommendations to directly address issues arising from the current Middle East conflict and its ramifications for schools and campuses.

Appendix 1: Tasking Letter

Secretary

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20538



**Homeland
Security**

November 14, 2023

MEMORANDUM FOR: Elisa Villanueva Beard
Chair, Homeland Security Academic Partnership Council

CC: Dr. Walter Bumphus
Vice Chair, Homeland Security Academic Partnership Council

FROM: Alejandro N. Mayorkas
Secretary

SUBJECT: **New Tasking to the Homeland Security Academic Partnership Council on School and Campus Safety Considering the Conflict in the Middle East**

Thank you for your leadership during the inaugural Homeland Security Academic Partnership Council (HSAPC) meeting on September 6, 2023. I appreciated the Council's discussion of critical homeland security issues related to academic institutions, including those on which the Council can make maximum impact.

Considering the current Israel-Hamas conflict, I request that the HSAPC form a Subcommittee to provide advice and recommendations on ways DHS can support the academic community in protecting against campus violence and promoting inclusivity across K-12 and higher education institutions. Further details are below.

Given the pressing nature of this matter and the urgent need for your advice, I request that you submit the Subcommittee's findings and recommendations to me no later than 14 days from the date of this memorandum.

Supporting School and Academic Communities

The academic community is comprised of a broad and diverse network of stakeholders, from children entering classrooms for the first time to advanced biomedical researchers. Our community of academic institutions is also extraordinarily diverse, including private faith-based institutions, public schools of all levels, and private colleges and universities. A hallmark of the U.S. academic system is the creation of space where ideas can be explored and exchanged even when they are controversial. This inherent strength is important to nurture and protect, especially at times of heightened concern over consequential and upsetting world events.

www.dhs.gov

In recent weeks, DHS has noted a dramatic nationwide increase in online expressions of hate, including incidents of vandalism and violent attacks, many occurring at or near schools and college campuses. This includes swastikas in college dorms, violent threats to professors, and acts of physical violence during First Amendment protected demonstrations. As noted in our most recent joint Public Service Announcement with the FBI, the Department is tracking increased threats against Jewish, Muslim, and Arab American communities in response to the escalating Middle East conflict. We know that members of these communities feel under threat at this time.

Educational institutions at every level have an obligation to meet the physical safety needs of students, faculty, families, and the larger academic community. For an academic institution to carry out its educational mission, every member of that community must be made to feel safe and protected. To that end, I request that the HSAPC form a subcommittee to provide advice and recommendations on:

1. How DHS can support K-12 and higher education communities in fostering safety and inclusivity in schools and on campuses; and,
2. Outside of funding, what additional resources and capabilities DHS can provide to support campus law enforcement professionals and others charged with keeping our academic communities safe.

Appendix 2: DHS and External Subject Matter Experts

DHS (*in order of briefing*):

- Chief Heather Fong, Assistant Secretary, Office for State and Local Law Enforcement (OSLLE) and Senior Counselor for Law Enforcement to Secretary Mayorkas
- Lori Sims, Director of Resource Integration, Office for State and Local Law Enforcement (OSLLE)
- Rebecca Sternhell, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Partnership and Engagement (OPE)
- Peter Mina, Deputy Officer for Programs and Compliance, Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL)
- Rebekah Tosado, Section Chief, Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL)
- Marcus Coleman, Jr., Director, DHS Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Jeffrey Afman, Director of Counterterrorism and Security Preparedness, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Josh Bornstein, Chief Security Officer, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Perry Tarrant, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Melissa Zisler, Chief, National Threat Evaluation and Reporting (NTER) Program Office, Office of Intelligence and Analysis (I&A)
- Timothy Moughon, Director, Field Intelligence Directorate, Office of Intelligence and Analysis (I&A)
- Max Lassiter, Chief, State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial (SLTT) Branch, Office of Intelligence and Analysis (I&A)
- Dr. David Mussington, Executive Assistant Director for Infrastructure Security, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)
- Christopher Thomas, Deputy Chief of Staff for Infrastructure Security, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)
- Lindsay Burton, Program Manager, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)
- Christopher Keene, Section Chief Protective Security Advisor, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)
- Shawn Stallworth, Senior Advisor, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)
- Walter Egerton, Deputy Chief of Staff for Infrastructure Security, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)
- William (Bill) Braniff, Director, Center for Prevention, Programs, and Partnerships (CP3)
- Hala Furst, Associate Director, Strategic Engagement, Center for Prevention, Programs, and Partnerships (CP3)

External Experts (*in order of briefing*):

- Dr. Darryll J. Pines, President, University of Maryland (UMD)
- Dr. Howard Gillman, Chancellor, University of California, Irvine (UCI)
- Chief Debra Williams, President, Historically Black Colleges and Universities Law Enforcement Executives and Administrators (HBCU-LEEA) and Chief of Police, Atlanta Clark University
- Chief Angela Webb, Associate Vice President and Director of Campus Safety, Rhodes College and President-Elect, International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA)
- Chief John Thomas, Chief of Police, University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA)
- Michelle Gay, Co-Founder, Safe and Sound Schools
- Tony Montalto, President, Stand with Parkland
- Paul Cell, Executive Director, International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA)
- Dr. Jennifer Mnookin, Chancellor, University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW-Madison)
- Andrea Dine, Vice President for Student Affairs, Brandeis University

Appendix 3: Informational Materials and Links

- The Office for State and Local Law Enforcement: [The Office for State and Local Law Enforcement | Homeland Security \(dhs.gov\)](#)
- DHS Law Enforcement Resources: [Law Enforcement Resources | Homeland Security \(dhs.gov\)](#)
- Grants.gov: [grants.gov](#)
 - Search Grants > Archived > 'HSGP' ([grants.gov/search-results-detail/346417](#))
- [Partnering with Law Enforcement | ADL](#): Founded in 1913, ADL is a leading anti-hate organization. ADL works closely with federal, state, and local law enforcement to assist them in protecting communities from extremism and hate.
 - An interactive [H.E.A.T. Map](#), detailing incidents of hate, extremism, antisemitism, and terrorism in your area.
 - A [Hate Symbols Database](#), providing an overview of many of the symbols most frequently used by white supremacist groups and movements and other types of hate groups.
 - Resources on addressing [hate crimes](#), [online hate](#) and our annual *Audit of Antisemitic Incidents*.
- Department of Justice (DOJ) Community Relations Service (CRS): CRS provides support to public and private secondary schools, colleges, and universities who are experiencing tension or conflicts based on actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.
 - [College Campus Safety - Working with University and College Communities](#)
 - [Bias Incidents and Hate Crimes Forum Facilitator Guide for Community Leaders](#)
 - [Facilitating Meetings Around Community Conflict](#)
- DOJ's National Criminal Intelligence Resource Center: Responding to First Amendment-Protected Events—The Role of State and Local Law Enforcement Officers
 - Recommendations for First Amendment-Protected Events for State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies: [Recommendations for First Amendment-Protected Events for State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies](#)
 - [Role of State and Local Law Enforcement at First Amendment Events Reference Card](#)
 - [First Amendment Online Training](#): The Responding to First Amendment-Protected Events—The Role of State and Local Law Enforcement Officers videos are designed to assist law enforcement personnel in understanding their roles and responsibilities as they prepare for and respond to a First Amendment-protected event; protecting the privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties of persons and groups participating in a First Amendment-protected event; and reinforcing fundamental concepts learned at law enforcement training academies and during in-service programs.
- 21st Century Protest Response: Promoting Democracy and Advancing Community and Officer Safety: This guide provides recommendations for state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement agencies responding to mass demonstrations. [21st Century Protest Response: Promoting Democracy and Advancing Community and Officer Safety](#)
- Officer Wellness: Post Demonstrations

- The Evolution of Protests and the Impact on Law Enforcement Wellness. This 90-minute online training/recorded event was presented on October 5, 2021, under the BJA VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Initiative. Co-hosted by St. Petersburg College's Center for Public Safety Innovation and the National Police Foundation (now the National Policing Institute), designed to inform law enforcement of the changing nature of current day protests and their potential impact on officer wellness. [The Evolution of Protests and the Impact on Law Enforcement Wellness](#).
- Staying Healthy in the Fray: The Impact of Crowd Management on Officers in the Context of Civil Unrest. Through a partnership between the National Policing Institute and the Bureau of Justice Assistance's (BJA) VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Initiative, a guide was developed for law enforcement agencies on ways to recognize and protect the physical and mental well-being of officers during responses to intense and protracted protests and demonstrations. [Staying Healthy in the Fray: The Impact of Crowd Management on Officers in the Context of Civil Unrest](#) or [Staying Healthy in the Fray: The Impact of Crowd Management on Officers in the Context of Civil Unrest \(interactive\)](#).
- Law Enforcement Resource Guide: The DHS Office for State and Local Law Enforcement maintains the [Law Enforcement Resource Guide](#), which consists of a comprehensive summary of resources for state, local, tribal, territorial, and campus law enforcement partners. This resource is available online and highlights our DHS resources to all law enforcement, including training, technical assistance support, and grant opportunities to support our law enforcement partners to evolving and emerging threats.
- Security Assessment at First Entry (SAFE): SAFE is a rapid physical security assessment that assists facility owners and operators in implementing effective security programs. Using SAFE, CISA Protective Security Advisors (PSA) provide a structured review of a facility's existing security measures and delivers feedback on observed vulnerabilities and options for improving security. [SAFE Fact Sheet | CISA](#)
- Resources and Information for Faith and Community Leaders Regarding the Israel - Hamas Conflict: [Resources and Information for Faith and Community Leaders Regarding the Israel - Hamas Conflict](#)
- CNN: [3 Palestinian students were shot in Vermont. Civil rights groups are calling for a close look at the motive](#)
- The Hill: [Jewish students unimpressed with universities' response to rising antisemitism](#)
- K-12 Bystander Reporting Toolkit: [K-12 Bystander Reporting Toolkit](#)
- CISA Insights: Mitigating the Impacts of Doxing on Critical Infrastructure: [CISA Insights: Mitigating the Impacts of Doxing on Critical Infrastructure](#)
- DHS Office of Partnership and Engagement (OPE): [Partnership and Engagement | Homeland Security \(dhs.gov\)](#)
- DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL): [Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties | Homeland Security \(dhs.gov\)](#)
- The U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism: Key Actions by Pillar: [The U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism: Key Actions by Pillar | The White House](#)
- FACT SHEET: Protecting Individuals from Discrimination Based on Actual or Perceived Shared Ancestry or Ethnic Characteristics: [FACT SHEET: Protecting Individuals from Discrimination Based on Actual or Perceived Shared Ancestry or Ethnic Characteristics | Homeland Security \(dhs.gov\)](#)

- Title VI Overview and Requirements at the Department of Homeland Security: [Title VI Overview and Requirements at the Department of Homeland Security](#)
- DHS Resilience Resources: [Resilience | Homeland Security \(dhs.gov\)](#)
- Report: Improving School Safety Through Bystander Reporting: [Improving School Safety Through Bystander Reporting | United States Secret Service](#)
- SchoolSafety.gov: [SchoolSafety.gov | School Safety Resources](#)
- Project Unite: [Project Unite: The Four Integrated Systems for School Violence Prevention | National Association of School Resource Officers \(nasro.org\)](#)
- National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC): [National Threat Assessment Center \(secretservice.gov\)](#)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): [FEMA.gov](#)
- Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP): [Nonprofit Security Grant Program | FEMA.gov](#)
- Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans: [Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans | SchoolSafety.gov](#)
- CISA Security Planning Workbook: [Security Planning Workbook | CISA](#)
- Allied Against Hate: A Toolkit for Faith Communities: [Allied-Against-Hate A-Toolkit-for-Faith-Communities September-2023.pdf \(whitehouse.gov\)](#)
- International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA): [International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators](#)
- Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA): [Home Page | CISA](#)
- Office for Bombing Prevention (OBP): [Office for Bombing Prevention | CISA](#)
- School Safety | Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA): [School Safety | Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency CISA](#)
- National School Safety Summit: [National School Safety Summit | CISA](#)
- School Safety Planning | Tools to Get Started: [School Safety Planning | Tools to Get Started](#)
- K-12 School Security Guide Product Suite: [K-12 School Security Guide Product Suite | CISA](#)
- Division of Student Affairs | Brandeis University: [Division of Student Affairs | Brandeis University](#)
- Principles | Free Speech and Free Expression | Brandeis University: [Principles | Free Speech and Free Expression | Brandeis University](#)
- Improving the Campus Climate Initiative: [Academic Engagement Network: Improving the Campus Climate Initiative](#)
- Center for Prevention Programs and Partnerships (CP3): [Center for Prevention Programs and Partnerships | Homeland Security \(dhs.gov\)](#)
- Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention (TVTP) Grant Program: [Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention Grant Program | Homeland Security \(dhs.gov\)](#)
- Invent2Prevent (I2P): [Invent2Prevent — EdVenture Partners](#)
- National Threat Evaluation and Reporting (NTER) Program Office: [National Threat Evaluation and Reporting Program Office | Homeland Security \(dhs.gov\)](#)
- Prevention Resource Finder: [Prevention Resource Finder | Homeland Security \(dhs.gov\)](#)