



December 20, 2024

Dear Tammy Kolbe, Kim Gleason, Mohamed Dop, Grey Fearon, Rich Werner, Zoie Saunders, et al,

We are Shalom Alliance Vermont, a nonprofit group dedicated to supporting a bright future for Jewish life in this Green Mountain state we call home.

As the working group unpacks the proposed IRIS to the SBE committee, Shalom Alliance, Jewish Communities of VT (JCVT) and other members of the Jewish communities request participation in upcoming scheduled public meetings, and any other scheduled opportunities, where Act 1 and IRIS are being discussed.

Act 1 took an inclusionary and welcoming approach to all ethnic groups, including the Jewish people and we want to encourage SBE to follow through on the Act 1 approach because it will be an effective tool in combating the surges in the rise of antisemitism. The Jewish community believes that the IRIS standards and framework need to be revised in some key ways in order to be consistent with the goals of Act 1 and we want to present witnesses, and the opportunity, to explain why.

Vermont is witnessing and experiencing a surge of antisemitism. School environments are becoming hostile where bullying and harassment incidents against Jewish students and staff across Vermont are steeply rising. In 2023, Vermont saw the second-highest increase in antisemitic hate crimes per capita in the nation.

Thank you for your tireless work in pursuit of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging opportunities for all Vermont learners and adapting new ways for educators to be held accountable in sustaining safe learning environments.

May the holiday season bring peace and light to us all.

Warmly,

**Corinna S. Dodson**

K12 Outreach Coordinator