

Antisemitism in U.S. Teachers Unions

**A REPORT FROM THE ADL RONALD BIRNBAUM
CENTER TO COMBAT ANTISEMITISM IN EDUCATION**



Executive Summary

In recent years, antisemitism in the United States has reached [historic levels](#). Jewish communities across all sectors of civic life have reported heightened hostility, harassment and marginalization. Teachers unions, long regarded as pillars of labor solidarity and progressive values, have not been immune to this troubling trend. In fact, for many Jewish educators, the spaces that were once synonymous with professional belonging and mutual advocacy have become sources of profound alienation and exclusion.

ADL conducted a mixed-methods study combining a survey of 307 Jewish members of U.S. teachers unions with qualitative focus groups to assess the breadth, nature and impact of antisemitism within these spaces. The findings are alarming. Across union locals, state affiliates and national organizations, Jewish members report encountering anti-Jewish rhetoric and conduct; watching their concerns be dismissed or ignored by union leadership; and feeling compelled to hide their identities or disengage from their unions entirely.

The results of this study are clear: Jewish union members are not being treated equitably within their unions. Many feel that institutions built to protect workers are actively failing to do so. This report aims to give voice to these experiences, illuminate the scope of the problem and provide a foundation for the advocacy, reform and cultural change urgently needed within teachers unions across the country.

Topline Findings

Anti-Jewish, Anti-Zionist and Anti-Israel Conduct Is Widespread in Teachers Unions

More than 70% of surveyed Jewish union members agreed that union statements about the Israel-Hamas war that fail to condemn Hamas or the October 7, 2023 atrocities are a problem in their union (73.3% somewhat or strongly agree). Additionally, when asked about issues within their unions, 71% agreed that resolutions accusing Israel of apartheid, genocide or ethnic cleansing are a problem, and 68.1% agree that calls to cut ties with mainstream Jewish organizations are a problem.

Jewish Members Have Encountered Hostile Rhetoric Across Many Types of Teachers Union Spaces

Jewish union members report widespread exposure to harmful rhetoric in the past 12 months: 53.4% of surveyed unions members said they had encountered inconsistent enforcement of anti-harassment norms when rhetoric targeted Jews or Zionists; 51.8% have witnessed minimization or denial of October 7, 2023 atrocities; 48.9% have heard “Zionist” used as a slur or pejorative; and 43.7% have seen speakers who justify violence against Jews or Israel platformed at union events. This rhetoric has appeared across union meetings, social media, trainings, conferences and informal spaces.

Fear of Backlash Is Pushing Jewish Members to Self-Censor

Most (70%) respondents somewhat or strongly agreed that vocalizing concerns about the treatment of Jews in union spaces could lead to reputational or professional consequences. Reflecting this fear, nearly three quarters (73.6%) say they feel a need to self-censor in teachers union spaces.

Jewish Members Are Deeply Dissatisfied with Union Leadership's Response

Among respondents who raised concerns about antisemitism with their union leadership, 69.1% said they were not at all satisfied with the response they received, and not a single respondent said they were extremely satisfied. Many describe being ignored, dismissed, gaslit or told their concerns were not legitimate.

Biased Programming Is Sponsored and Promoted by Unions

More than a quarter (28.3%) of respondents said their union had sponsored or promoted programming related to Jews, Zionists/Zionism or Israel in the past 12 months. Of this group, 78.2% said these programs were biased against Jews, Zionists/Zionism or Israel.

Jewish Members Want Their Unions to Refocus and Reform

The most common changes requested include leadership clearly condemning threats and harassment against Jews (75.9%), balanced and evidence-based antisemitism education (73.3%), clear guardrails against harassment tied to Jewish identity and Zionism (71.7%) and union leadership steering away from resolutions about foreign conflicts (67.4%). Open-ended survey responses also underscored a strong desire among members for unions to refocus on their core mission by prioritizing their traditional responsibilities such as negotiating fair compensation, protecting working conditions and advocating for public education.

Introduction

Teachers unions occupy a unique and consequential position in American public life. As some of the largest and most influential labor organizations in the country, they shape not only the working conditions of educators but also the broader civic and cultural environment in which public education operates. They wield significant institutional power, from contract negotiations to curriculum advocacy, to political endorsements. For their members, unions are meant to be a source of strength, solidarity and professional protection.

For Jewish educators, that promise has increasingly gone unfulfilled. Since the October 7, 2023 Hamas attacks on Israel and the subsequent intensification of the Israel-Hamas conflict, teachers unions at the local, state and national level have passed resolutions, issued statements and promoted materials that many Jewish members view as one-sided, inflammatory and at times overtly antisemitic. The unions that were supposed to represent them have, in too many cases, become spaces where Jewish identity is unwelcome, where concerns of Jewish members are dismissed and where the line between criticism of Israel and antisemitism is routinely blurred or ignored.

It is important to acknowledge that antisemitism in teachers union spaces existed before the events of October 7. What October 7 did was accelerate and intensify dynamics that were already present, empowering those who had previously kept antisemitic attitudes beneath the surface to express them openly. As one respondent put it, October 7 became “a permission structure to express their antisemitism.”

This report is grounded in the experiences of 307 Jewish members of U.S. teachers unions, surveyed by ADL as part of a broader effort to document the scope of antisemitism in these institutions, and to empower Jewish educators to advocate for change from within. It examines the types of anti-Jewish conduct prevalent in union spaces, the personal toll on members who have tried to raise concerns and the reforms that Jewish union members themselves say are most urgently needed.

The findings that follow represent a call to action for union leaders, rank and file, elected officials and school administrators. Teachers unions have a proud tradition of standing up for the dignity and rights of all workers. It is time for them to live up to that tradition for their Jewish members as well.

Anti-Jewish, Anti-Zionist and Anti-Israel Conduct Pervades Teachers Union Spaces

One of the clearest findings of this study is that the presence of anti-Jewish, anti-Zionist and anti-Israel conduct in teachers union spaces is not an isolated phenomenon. It is widespread, systematic and Jewish educators recognize it as a significant problem.

We [use the terms](#) “anti-Jewish,” “anti-Zionist,” and “anti-Israel” to cover the range of hostile rhetoric and behavior that Jewish members of teachers unions have experienced. Anti-Jewish and anti-Zionist behavior and rhetoric are both forms of antisemitism. We define anti-Zionism as opposition to the existence of the State of Israel or calling for its destruction. This can include opposing self-determination and statehood of the Jewish people in their ancestral homeland, saying that Israel should not exist, or should be destroyed. Anti-Zionism is distinct from criticism of the policies or actions of the government of Israel in that it attacks the foundational legitimacy of Jewish statehood. The third category, “anti-Israel,” does not signify mere [criticism of Israel](#), as we consider critical statements about Israel or the Israeli government to be legitimate and acceptable forms of public discourse. Instead, we use “anti-Israel” to mean general hostility toward Israel that is not necessarily antisemitic. This includes severe criticism of Israeli policy that does not cross the line into opposition of the existence of the State of Israel. While in some cases, such rhetoric and behavior overlaps with anti-Zionist and anti-Jewish conduct, we use “anti-Israel” in addition to those other categories to represent the full spectrum of issues that members described.

When asked how strongly they agreed that specific behaviors represent problems in their union, surveyed Jewish members identified several areas of deep concern. Almost 75% (specifically, 73.3%) somewhat or strongly agreed that union statements about the Israel-Hamas war that do not explicitly condemn Hamas or the October 7, 2023 atrocities are a problem. More than seven in ten (71%) agreed that resolutions accusing Israel of apartheid, genocide or ethnic cleansing are a problem. And 68.1% agreed that calls to cut ties with mainstream Jewish organizations are a problem.

Respondents also expressed concern about internal union practices: 63.6% of respondents agreed that restrictions on members' ability to object to or organize opposition to union action are a problem, and over half (51.4%) agreed that another problem is that key meetings and votes are scheduled on Shabbat or Jewish holidays, effectively excluding observant Jewish members from meaningful participation.

The qualitative data paints an equally troubling picture. Respondents described watching their unions pass resolutions that blamed Israel for the October 7 Hamas attack, promote curricular materials that contained links to antisemitic content and distribute training materials about antisemitism that were not created or endorsed by mainstream Jewish organizations. Some noted a pattern of singling out Israel for criticism in ways that no other country is treated.

"The Union only addresses Israel's conflicts, not any others."

"There is no need for the teachers union to be vocalizing a position on Israel and events in the Middle East, when they do not take a stand on any other foreign affairs."

"[my local union] passed a resolution as official union policy that blamed Israel for the October 7 Hamas attack...We tried to come up with...amendments, but they voted us down and shouted us down."

"My union leadership actively works against Jews/Zionist...They even hosted several events promoting extremely biased and nasty anti-Israel curriculum, including giving out flyers that praised the Al-Aqsa flood operation and glorified their martyrs...My wife...was physically intimidated at a union event. She was also attacked publicly by union leadership online on social media."

"Jewish members are not supported, silenced, and unwanted in union spaces. Any concern regarding anti-Israel or antisemitic rhetoric is gaslit or given lip service. Our union often pride[s] itself on supporting anti-Israel resolutions and does not discourage members from blurring the lines between anti-Israel and antisemitic questions and comments."

Often, the problem was not simply that their unions were taking positions they disagreed with. It was that those positions crossed the line from political speech into conduct that delegitimizes and harms Jewish members. As one member described:

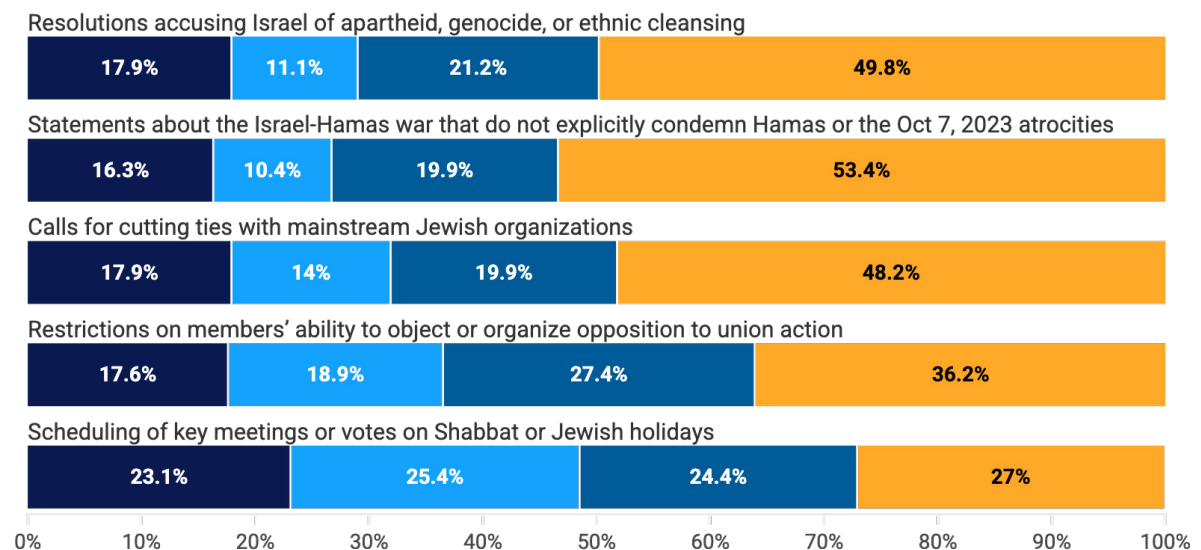
"The [state union] is specifically targeting Jews, Zionists, and Israel. They make no attempt to hide what they are doing...They use their power as a reputable teachers union to push their own anti-Israel and antisemitic agenda and it feels like there's nothing we can do as Jewish members."

These findings suggest that the issue of antisemitism in teachers unions is not a matter of a few bad actors. It is a structural and cultural problem, reflected in the resolutions these unions pass, the materials they promote, the training they provide and the norms they enforce. The chart below shows the full breakdown of survey responses on key problem areas:

Figure 1. Jewish Members Report Anti-Jewish, Anti-Zionist, and Anti-Israel Conduct in Teachers Union Spaces

How strongly do Jewish teachers union members agree that each of the following is a problem in their union?

● Strongly disagree ● Somewhat disagree ● Somewhat agree ● Strongly agree



N=307 Jewish members of U.S. teachers unions.

Jewish Members Have Encountered Hostile Rhetoric Across All Types of Union Spaces in the Past Year

Over the past year Jewish union members were exposed to a sustained and wide-ranging pattern of hostile rhetoric in their professional lives. When asked which harmful behaviors they had personally encountered in union meetings, committees, caucuses, trainings, listservs or union social spaces in the past 12 months, the survey results were stark.

More than half of respondents (53.4%) had experienced inconsistent enforcement of anti-harassment norms when the targets were Jews or Zionists. More than half (51.8%) had witnessed minimization or denial of the October 7, 2023 atrocities. Nearly half (48.9%) had heard the word “Zionist” used as a slur or pejorative. And 43.7% had seen speakers platformed who justify violence against Jews or Israel at union events.

Other reported experiences included Jews being labeled with pejorative terms such as “genocide supporters,” “baby killers” or “colonizers” (36.5%); Jewish members being shouted down, mocked or accused of bad faith when raising objections (36.5%); justification of Hamas’ actions (36.8%); and anti-American rhetoric being used alongside anti-Israel rhetoric (33.9%). Nearly three in ten respondents (27.4%) had encountered rhetoric equating Jews or Zionists to Nazis.

Jewish educators describe their union environments as fundamentally altered:

"There is now open hostility toward Jewish educators in union spaces from other union members. They hide it under the guise of hating Zionists not Jews but it's all the same thing."

"I think it's horrible. I've never, in all of my years of being a Jewish person in America...felt like I've been treated the way I've been treated in that organization."

"My union has made me feel isolated, bothered, and perpetuated a hostile environment where antisemitism has flourished through micro aggressions. This is the first time in 26 years of teaching that I have been so acutely aware of my Jewish identity at work, my professional space."

"Isolation, alienation, ridicule, and [shunning] from support/work."

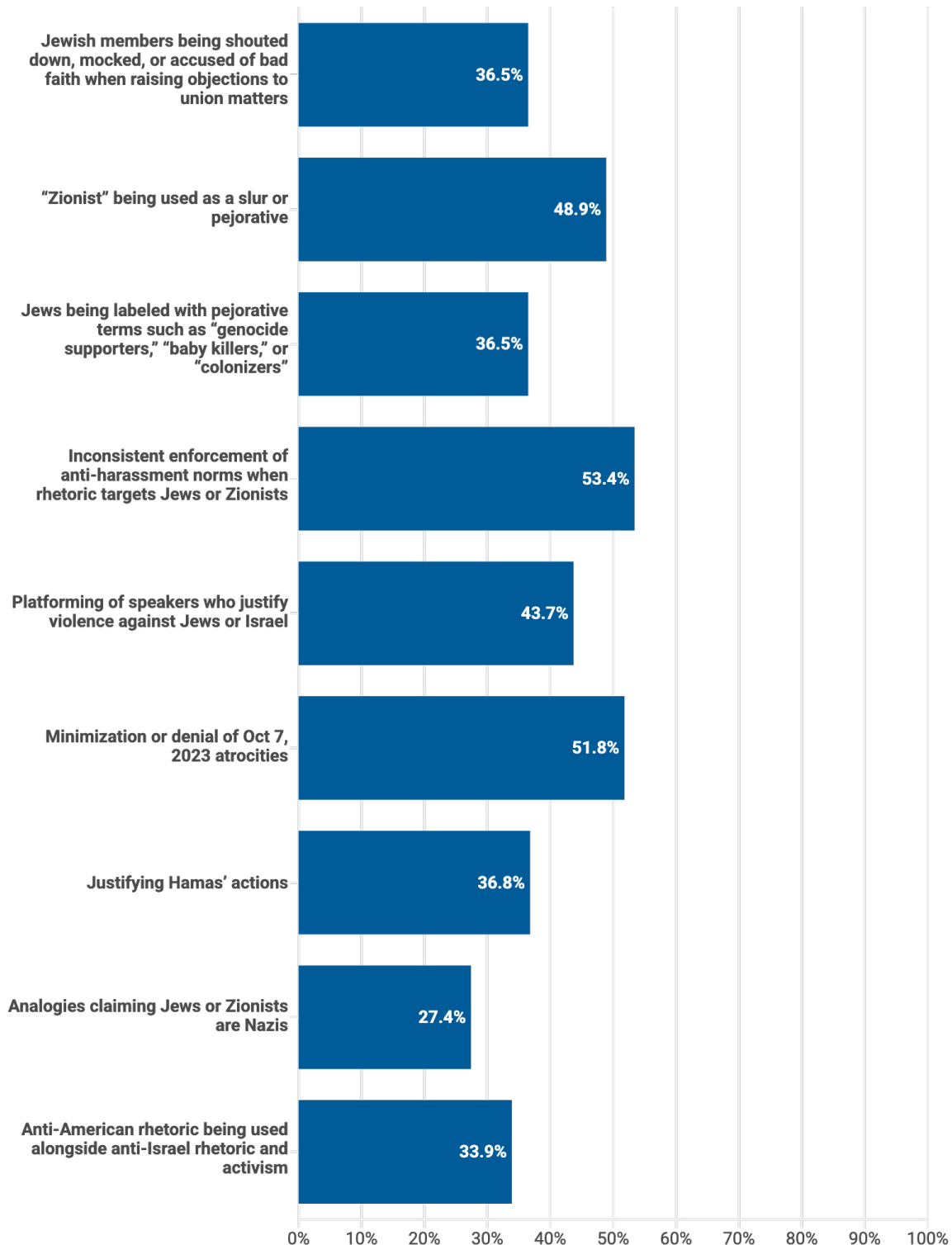
"It's very uncomfortable to be in these spaces."

"We have felt uncomfortable due to the clear hatred from many staff members/coworkers."

Many respondents emphasized that while October 7 accelerated these dynamics, antisemitism in their unions was not new. "It was present before October 2023," one respondent noted. "Now it is more overt." The personal toll is significant, with one respondent capturing the cumulative exhaustion: "Every day just feels like a fight and something new to have to argue or try and prove, it's exhausting on top of an already exhausting day working with students." The chart below shows what respondents had personally encountered in the past 12 months:

Figure 2. Jewish Teachers Union Members Describe a Year of Anti-Jewish and Anti-Zionist Concerns

Response to select all that apply question: Which of the following have you encountered in teachers union meetings, committees, caucuses, trainings, listservs, or union social spaces in the last 12 months?

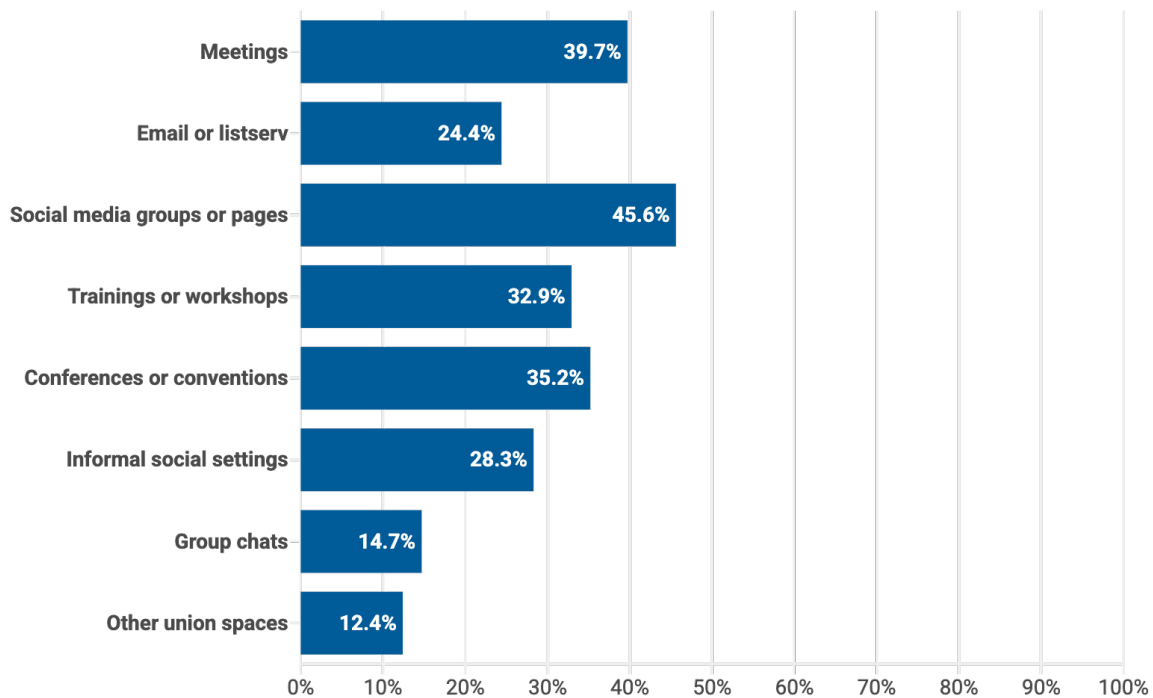


N=307 Jewish members of U.S. teachers unions.

This hateful rhetoric and behavior has not been confined to any single type of union space. The chart below shows where respondents have personally observed harmful rhetoric in the past 12 months:

Figure 3. Harmful Rhetoric Targeting Jews, Zionists, and Israel Appears Across Many Teachers Union Spaces

In which types of union spaces have Jewish teachers union members observed the use of harmful rhetoric against Jews, Zionists, or Israel in the last 12 months?



N=307 Jewish members of U.S. teachers unions.

Fear of Backlash Is Driving Jewish Members to Self-Censor and Withdraw

One of the most consequential findings of this study is the degree to which Jewish teachers union members have internalized the hostile climate around them and altered their own behavior in response. Far from feeling empowered to push back against antisemitism in their unions, the majority of respondents described a posture of self-protection: staying silent, hiding their identities and retreating from professional spaces they once valued.

"It is an unsafe space, both physically and emotionally for Jewish people."

"I don't feel safe in my union or at any union rallies."

The data are striking: 70% of respondents agreed that vocalizing concerns about the treatment of Jews in union spaces could lead to reputational or professional consequences. Reflecting these fears, nearly three quarters (73.6%) said they feel a need to self-censor in teachers union spaces. Almost half (47.6%) said they had reduced their participation in certain union activities or spaces because of harmful rhetoric or behavior targeting Jews, Zionists/Zionism or Israel.

The qualitative data illuminates the many ways this self-censorship and withdrawal manifest in practice. Some respondents have stopped wearing Jewish symbols. Others have stopped attending meetings. Still others have gone to extraordinary lengths to conceal their identity:

"Some have become afraid to show their Star of David."

"Jewish educators have gone into hiding. They do not admit to being Jewish or wear any identifying clothing/jewelry. We are still being told not to speak."

"We have to either claim to hate a part of our own identity, be quiet, or be shunned."

"I gave up my role as the secretary of the division."

"We are no longer safe."

"It is an unsafe space, both physically and emotionally for Jewish people."

"I have found myself no longer feeling safe in these spaces."

"I no longer attend rallies."

The silencing dynamic is reinforced not just by peer pressure but by explicit warnings from union leadership and members. One respondent recounted being told directly: "The way I was speaking about antisemitism in the union was causing backlash against teachers. I was asked to stop speaking publicly about it." Another reflected that "They mocked me, minimized my concern, called me a genocidal Zionist, and prevented me and other Jews from speaking." For some, being silenced represents a betrayal of institutions they had long trusted:

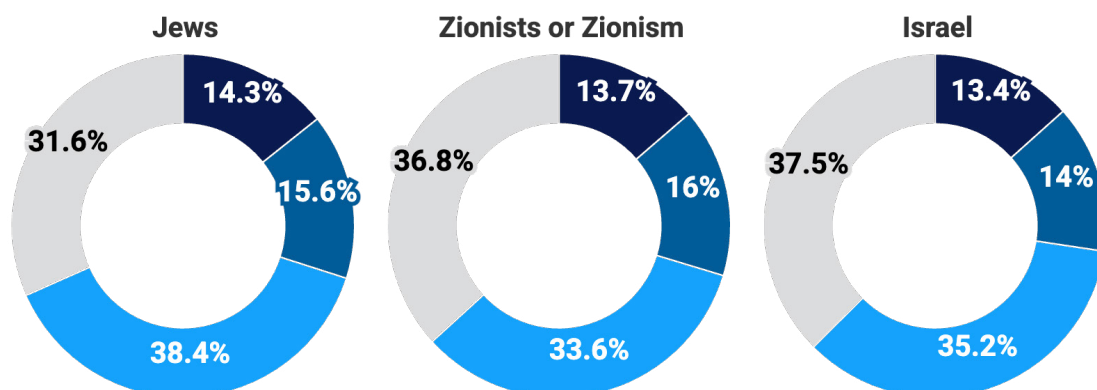
"We feel othered, isolated, and betrayed...I used to be a proud union member but since Oct 7th, I have felt so isolated."

These findings are further illustrated in the charts below:

Figure 4. Jewish Union Members Fear Backlash for Voicing Concerns About Anti-Jewish, Anti-Israel, and Anti-Zionist Issues

How strongly do Jewish teachers union members think vocalizing concerns related to the treatment of Jews, Zionists, and Israel in union spaces could lead to reputational or professional consequences?

● Strongly disagree ● Somewhat disagree ● Somewhat agree ● Strongly agree

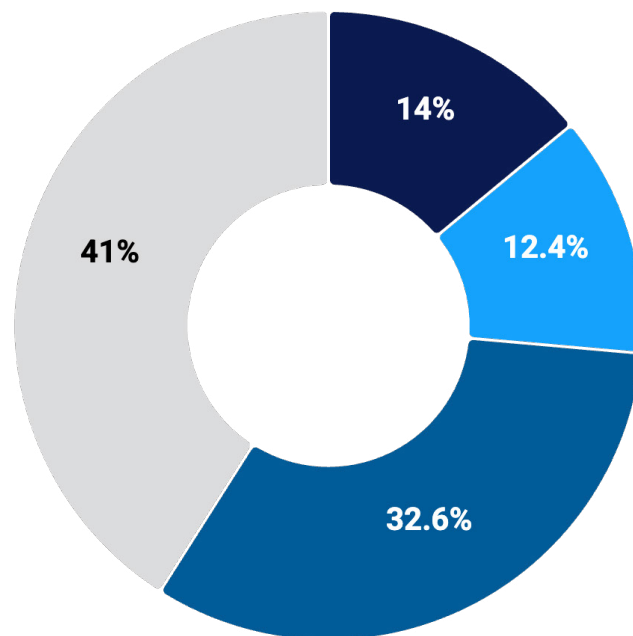


N=307 Jewish members of U.S. teachers unions.

Figure 5. Most Surveyed Jewish Union Members say They Self-Censor in Teachers Union Settings

How strongly Jewish teachers union members agree with the following statement: "I feel a need to self-censor in teachers union spaces"

● Strongly disagree ● Somewhat disagree ● Somewhat agree ● Strongly agree



N=307 Jewish members of U.S. teachers unions.

Jewish Members View the Treatment of Jews, Zionists and Israel as Deeply Problematic in Their Unions

The cumulative weight of these experiences has led Jewish union members to conclude that their unions have a serious problem with the way Jews, Zionists/Zionism and Israel are treated. When asked to rate how problematic the treatment of each was in their union, respondents registered concerns across all three dimensions, with the treatment of Zionists/Zionism and Israel viewed as especially problematic.

Regarding Israel, 60.3% of respondents said its treatment in their union was very or extremely problematic. For Zionists/Zionism, 58% said the same. For Jews as a group, 39.4% rated the treatment as very or extremely problematic, while an additional 23.5% described it as somewhat problematic.

Because Zionist identity and Jewish identity are [deeply intertwined](#) for many American Jews, the weaponization of the label “Zionist” functions as a form of antisemitism, regardless of intent. As one respondent put it: “They believe inclusivity means excluding ‘Zionists.’”

Most respondents (67.9%) who identified their union’s treatment of Jews, Zionists/Zionism or Israel as at least a little problematic had raised their concerns with union leadership, reflecting a genuine investment in their unions and a desire for reform from within. What they encountered in response – namely, a lack of administrative interest in addressing these concerns – is the subject of the next section.

Respondents use strikingly consistent language to describe their experience: words like “othered,” “silenced,” “marginalized” and “betrayed” appear repeatedly. As one respondent put it:

"It is especially galling [in my union] because they all claim to be focused on equity for marginalized groups and minorities but REFUSE to acknowledge Jews as a minority or marginalized group."

"[My union] is specifically targeting Jews, Zionists, and Israel."

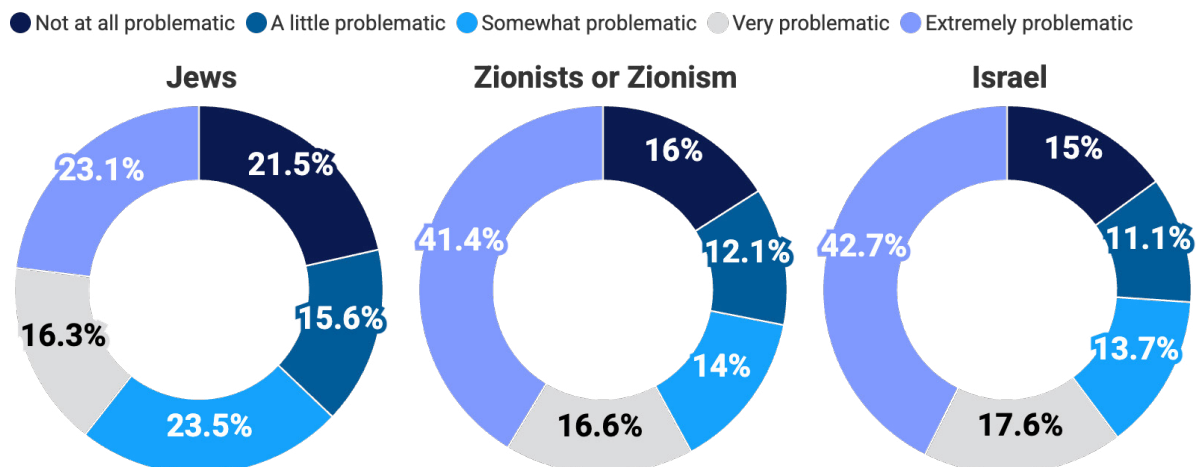
"My union leadership actively works against Jews/Zionist[s] and has tried to marginaliz[e] Jewish teachers at every turn."

"There is now open hostility toward [J]ewish educators in union spaces from other union members. They hide it under the guise of hating [Z]ionists not jews but it's all the same thing."

"I can't tell you how many times I was called 'Zionist b[*]h' behind my back."**

The charts below show how Jewish members rate the severity of the problem:

Figure 6. How Problematic is the Treatment of Jews, Zionists/Zionism, and Israel in Teachers Unions, According to Jewish Members?



N=307 Jewish members of U.S. teachers unions.

Union Leadership Has Failed Jewish Members Who Raised Concerns

When Jewish union members have mustered the courage to bring their concerns forward, they have largely been met with dismissal, deflection or silence. The survey data on this point are unambiguous: among respondents who found their union's treatment of Jews, Zionists/Zionism or Israel at least a little problematic and who raised those concerns with union leadership, a staggering 69.1% said they were not at all satisfied with the response they received. An additional 15.2% were only a little satisfied. **Not a single respondent reported being extremely satisfied.**

This near-total failure of internal accountability has not been for lack of trying. Jewish members describe making sustained, good-faith efforts to engage their union leaders, filing formal complaints, attending meetings, running for office and requesting hearings, often to no avail.

The responses received ranged from passive neglect to active hostility. Many describe being completely ignored:

"I feel alienated from the teachers union and have lost faith in all of their initiatives, political suggestions, etc. as a result of the ways in which they have acted since October 7, 2023."

"Every day just feels like a fight and something new to have to argue or try and prove, it's exhausting on top of an already exhausting day working with students."

"My life and professional life has been completely turned upside down standing up against union antisemitism and antizionism."

"I have withdrawn... I've threatened to withdraw my membership, and nobody wants to talk to me."

"I got no response at all to my concern. I was completely ignored."

"Overwhelming hatred is met with silence and tacit approval...Anti-Jewish hatred that used to be politely covert is now shamelessly overt."

"They did not listen to me as the only Jewish person speaking up. A minority got shut out and put down."

Others were told their concerns were not valid or that they themselves, not the antisemitism, were the problem:

"I was told I was misinterpreting things."

"I have been ignored, told I'm not in a protected class."

"My local union has been anti-Jewish for years. As far back as 2016, I was told they were not addressing antisemitism until I dealt with my whiteness."

"My concerns were minimized because I am White appearing. The fact that I am Middle Eastern did not matter."

One respondent who tried to file a formal complaint described being turned away by the very institution responsible for protecting workers: "I went to my union because I wanted to file a hostile work environment complaint, and they told me it was a Title VI issue and would not help me file the grievance." Another reflected that "I'm facing so much abuse from my principal and from my school...there's no support from the union."

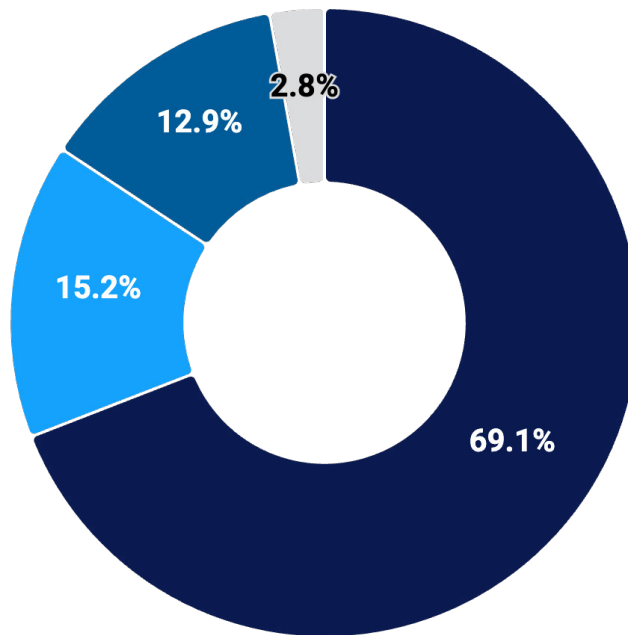
The dismissive pattern is not universal. Some members described positive experiences with individual local union leaders who listened and stood up for Jewish members. These exceptions, however, only underscore the breadth of failure elsewhere. Moreover, multiple respondents describe leadership not merely failing to respond to antisemitism but actively participating in it. As one respondent described: "Officership actively supports anti-Israel rhetoric and actions or stays silent."

Additionally, 28.3% of respondents said their union had sponsored or promoted programming related to Jews, Zionists/Zionism or Israel in the past 12 months, and of those respondents 78.2% said these programs were biased against Jews, Zionists/Zionism or Israel.

Nearly half (44%) of respondents said anti-Israel rhetoric appears in union spaces focused on other issues, either somewhat or very frequently. The chart below shows satisfaction levels among surveyed members who raised concerns with leadership:

Figure 7. Jewish Teachers Union Members Report Very Low Satisfaction with Leadership's Response to Their Concerns

● Not at all satisfied ● A little satisfied ● Somewhat satisfied ● Very satisfied ● Extremely satisfied (0%)



N=178. Restricted to respondents who said that the treatment of Jews, Zionists/Zionism, and/or Israel was at least a little problematic in their union and who said they had raised concerns about these issues to union leadership.

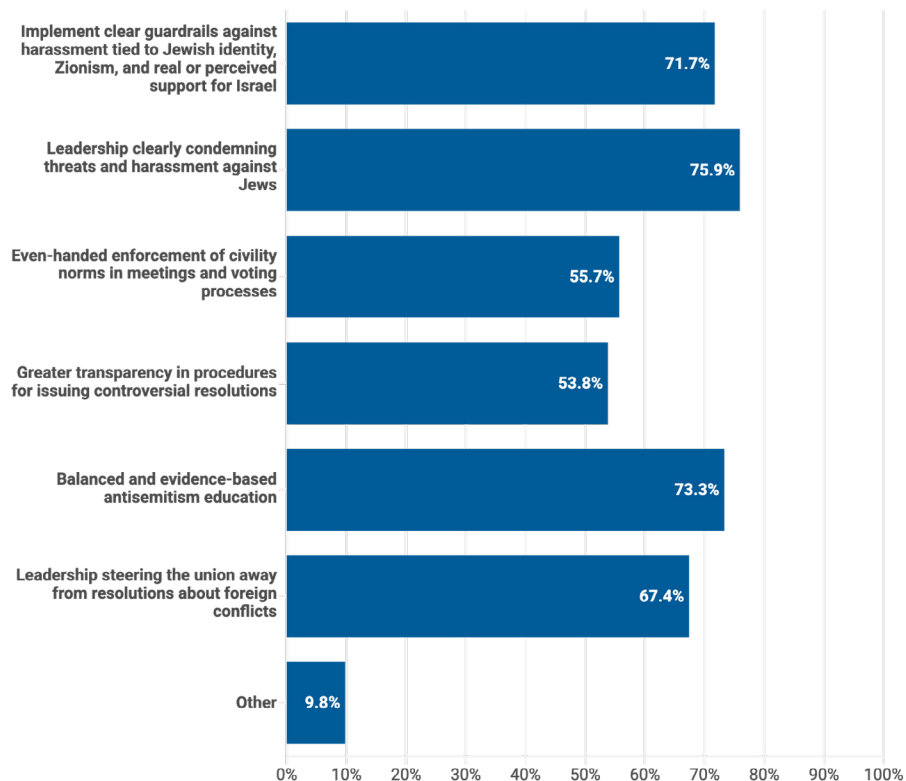
Jewish Union Members Are Calling for Clear Reform

Despite the discouraging picture painted by this study, Jewish educators have not given up on their unions. The majority of surveyed members (85%) said that, setting aside the treatment of Jews, Zionists/Zionism and Israel, they were still at least a little happy with their union. What they are calling for is not the end of union membership but a fundamental course correction. As one member put it, “I’ve gotten more involved to try and counterbalance all of this.”

When asked what would be most helpful in addressing the issues they have experienced, respondents identified a clear set of priorities. The chart below shows the full breakdown:

Figure 8. Jewish Teachers Union Members Urge Leaders to Condemn Threats and Harassment Targeting Jews

What do Jewish teachers union members think would be most helpful in addressing issues related to the treatment of Jews, Zionists/Zionism, and Israel in teachers unions?



N=307 Jewish members of U.S. teachers unions.

The call for leadership to condemn threats and harassment was the single most commonly cited response (75.9%), reflecting how much Jewish members simply want their unions to stand up for them:

"Every member deserves to feel safe in union spaces...If we continue to allow antisemitism to permeate our association, it will creep into the work we do with children."

Many respondents (67.4%) said they wanted leadership to steer away from resolutions about foreign conflicts, a finding that also presented itself in qualitative responses:

"My union needs to focus on what it was created for, bargaining. Our workplace protections have decreased as a result of the union's mission creep into national and international affairs."

"Stay out of geopolitics! Fight for working conditions and better schools only!"

"Stay within the scope of stated mission."

Respondents also urged adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism and called for antisemitism education developed by and with Jewish community organizations.

Conclusion

The findings of this study present an urgent challenge for teachers unions and for all who care about the integrity of labor institutions in American democracy. Jewish educators are experiencing a profound and systematic failure of representation, protection and belonging within the organizations that are supposed to advocate for them.

At the same time, this report reflects the determination of Jewish educators who have refused to give up on the promise of what they expect their unions to be. They continue to pay dues, attend meetings, run for office and advocate from within, often at real personal and professional cost. The reforms they are calling for are reasonable, achievable and consistent with the core principles that teachers unions were built upon: fairness, dignity and solidarity for all members.

ADL calls on teachers union leaders at all levels to take immediate and concrete action: to condemn antisemitism clearly and without qualification, to implement robust protections for Jewish members and fairly apply existing protections, to ensure that union programming and resources are vetted and balanced and to refocus union activity on the core labor issues that unite all educators. The alternative, allowing the current climate to continue unchallenged, risks driving Jewish educators out of their unions and entrenching a culture of exclusion that is incompatible with the mission of these institutions.

As one respondent put it: “Condemn antisemitic rhetoric and discriminatory practices. Hold people accountable. Every member deserves to feel safe in union spaces. This will allow the focus to return to bread-and-butter labor issues.” ADL agrees. The path forward is clear. What is needed now is the will to take it.

Methodology

This report combines both quantitative and qualitative data from a survey and focus groups with Jewish members of U.S. teachers unions. Survey respondents and focus group participants were recruited via snowball sampling, leveraging ADL's broad networks and connections to individuals who work in K-12 education.

The survey sample includes 307 Jewish members of teachers unions in the U.S. Survey respondents spanned 24 U.S. states, with especially large representation from California, Massachusetts and New York. The survey included both closed and open-ended questions. Near all respondents (98.7%) worked in public schools. Respondents were most actively involved in their local teachers unions (93.8%), but many were also involved in state (46.6%) and national (26.4%) teachers unions.

The majority of respondents were current or retired teachers (83.7%), and 9.8% of respondents were current or retired members of non-teaching staff, with the remaining 6.5% of respondents specifying other education roles. Most respondents (86.6%) were currently working in K-12 education, while the remaining 13.4% of respondents were retired from working in K-12 education. Respondents taught varied grade levels, spanning across the full K-12 spectrum, from kindergarten, through elementary, middle and high school. The sample includes K-12 education professionals who have been teachers union members for varied lengths of time, from less than one year to more than 20 years. The vast majority (92.5%) of respondents had a graduate degree, and the remaining participants all had bachelor's degrees.

The focus groups consisted of two groups of current union members, which included both active and retired teachers and K-12 non-teaching staff, with one group from various districts across Massachusetts, and the other from various districts across California. The Massachusetts focus group had five participants, and the California focus had seven.