

For Gitin, and a number of other parents, this level of teaching is not enough.

“If these kids had more education, they wouldn’t choose to continue anti-semitic remarks and Nazi symbols. I have a very hard time thinking that these kids that hear Kanye West and all this propaganda, if they knew deep down the real meaning of all these hateful signs and symbols, I believe kids would choose to not go that route,” Gitin said.

But teaching isn’t all that Mor is pushing for.

“I think admin needs to have consistent, across the board ramifications,” she said.

Campus has implemented policies designed to curb the repetition of antisemitism. “We’re going to start of course, unfortunately, with a punitive measure,” Campus Middle School Principal Lisa Staal said.

“I think admin needs to have consistent, across the board ramifications.”

*Parent
Rikki Mor*

“And I say, unfortunately, because we like to address things, academically and restoratively, but we have to also send a very, very strong message that that’s not acceptable.”

Mor’s letter to the school board included a number of requests, one of which was the creation of a task force to address this epidemic.

“[The task force] kind of being a conduit between the community and the school district,” Mor said. “Part of it is to provide resources that

the district may not be aware of, like education, speakers, holocaust survivors.”

One of the actions taken by the district was to have a speaker give a historical presentation of antisemitism to 500 faculty members from Creek, Campus, and West.

“I think for some people that was helpful for them to see the history of antisemitism, and to see how it has been part of our world in different ways, and really how you could

apply that to even other things that we’re seeing like immigration [and] slavery,” Principal Ryan Silva said. “Maybe some of the parts that are next steps are, ‘So what should be done to prevent this increase that we’ve seen?’ That was not an emphasis that day.”

The task force met the speaker at their second meeting.

“I did say to that, it’s too bad that you didn’t have this for elementary school teachers,” Gitin said.

For Mor and Gitin, these presentations, that are going to be extended district wide, are a step in the right direction.

But antisemitism isn’t starting in schools.

“This is a societal problem. Can we completely eradicate hate? I’d like to think so. But in order to do that, we need allies and advocates,” Staal said. “And so as much as we are doing, and I feel like we’re doing a lot, there’s never enough that can be done. Because as long as hate exists, the work is there.”

U.S Sees Sharp Rise In Antisemitic Incidents

51% rise in

Vandalism

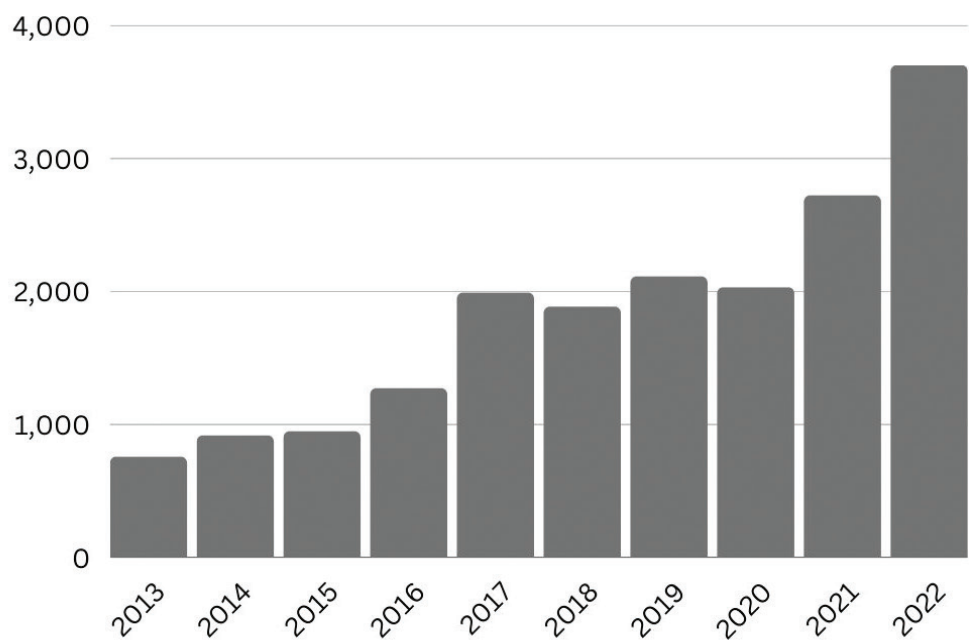
29% rise in

Harrasment

21% rise in

Assault

From 2021 to 2022



U.S Hits 3,697 Antisemitic Incidents In 2022

Over the course of 2022, there were 3,697 reported antisemitic incidents, including assault, bomb threats, organized white supremacy, and others.

Pop Culture Invites Surge of Antisemitism

BY PETER PHILPOTT

Managing Editor

It goes without saying that X (formerly Twitter), has gone through some changes since tech billionaire Elon Musk took the wheel, changes that are not just limited to its name.

But since the change in ownership, many have criticized Musk for becoming overly lax on community moderation, particularly in the sphere of antisemitism and white supremacy.

“On [X], you can find anything,” said sophomore Scott Weiner, a member of the Jewish Student Connection club (JSC), who has claimed to go through a lot of hate at Creek for his religious traditions and beliefs. “Many far-right people have gone on there and started just blasting all their beliefs.”

Weiner noticed that the difference in community moderation is clear when X is compared to other sites, like Instagram and TikTok. “It is because of Elon Musk just repealing every single restriction there,” Weiner said.

According to Weiner, the heat of the antisemitic debate peaked with a controversial Kanye West tweet, where West said he would go “[def]con 3 on Jewish people.” West has also claimed, not just limited to that tweet, that he couldn’t be antisemitic because “black people are actually Jew[ish].”

Weiner remembered the JSC meeting after the tweet was published and went viral. “When it happened, Kanye was one of the main things we talked about. A lot of my Jewish friends are fans of Kanye, even my brother,” Weiner said. “I do not like Kanye at all. I was kind of a fan of his music, but now I barely listen to it.”

In the JSC club, Jewish students have the chance to discuss topics of activism, tradition, and antisemitism in the world of Judaism, from injustice at home to global matters. The sponsor, Michael Kahn, is a member of the nonprofit Jewish Colorado, which runs

similar clubs to the JSC all around the state.

“It’s definitely a source of community,” Khan said. “About a third of the students are not Jewish, which is amazing for us as a way to build allyship.”

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL), a nonprofit focused on fighting against antisemitism nationwide, has been involved in other ways at Creek; they lead the “No Place for Hate” movement. The mountain states (Colorado, New Mexico, and Wyoming) regional office, lead by Scott Levin, has been particularly involved around schools recently.

“Unfortunately, there are a lot of incidents that occur. Among the ones that we see these days are the painting of swastikas on either walls or equipment or on people,” Levin said. “There’s also the things that people say and do toward each other.”

On Sept. 5, 2023, Musk threatened to sue the ADL after claiming that the organization accused him and the platform of antisemitism.

After the statement, a pro-Jewish activism campaign titled X Out Hate responded in a public letter, signed by a group of rabbis and other Jewish leaders. The letter accused X of becoming a “breeding ground for some of the most dangerous antisemitic discourse in America,” and singled

out Musk as the key figure responsible.

Levin detailed the trouble the ADL has had while handling issues that spread online. “A challenge that we have these days is that with social media, there’s a megaphone that’s out there,” Levin said. “The problem that we have is that the power of celebrity is really far reaching with all the followers that they have.”

According to Levin, popular figures like Musk and West have a far greater influence than their words; he said it made it easier to be naturally antisemitic in daily life. “Pop culture, being as it is, is amplified through social media these days so easily,” Levin said. “It does work in a very negative way to normalize not just antisemitism, but also racism and homophobia.”

Levin also cited the hidden harm in memes like Pepe the frog and Bart Simpson.

What do students have to say about the

Jewish Student Connections Club?

“JSC brings the Jewish people at our school together and gives them a place to celebrate their culture with their friends.”

-Sophomore Scott Weiner

“The club [is] a fun get-together once a week where all Jewish or non-Jewish students can come to learn about Judaism, feel comfortable being Jewish, meet Jewish students, get free food, and kick back, relax, and have fun.”

-Senior Nitai Oesterle



“JSC teaches students about Israeli culture and what Judaism means to different people.”

-Sophomore Daniel Roitman

INFOGRAPHIC BY PETER PHILPOTT

“Neither ...were originally designed to be anything other than funny characters,” he said. “But they can get adopted by some of these extremists and used in really awful ways.”

An important question that students like Weiner have questioned is whether to consider those online jokes funny, or more importantly, whether to support products that profit figures like West or Musk.

“It would be antisemitic to buy a Volkswagen in 1939 because now you’re just putting more money in Nazi Germany,” Weiner said. “I don’t stand for putting money in their pockets...And that’s why I don’t really listen to Kanye’s music at all.”

Levin claimed that in this time, filled with rising antisemitism, support for Jews and organizations like the ADL is ever more important. “The Anti-Defamation League has had the same mission, since it was founded 110 years ago, which is both to stop antisemitism and to secure justice and fair treatment to all,” Levin said. “If we are going to make the world better for any one of us, we’ve got to make it better for all of us.”

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INFOGRAPHIC BY PETER PHILPOTT