



May 15, 2025

Board of Education
Evanston Township High School
via email

Dear President Savage-Williams,

We write in response to the May 12th Board meeting, where parents, teachers, and students spoke in support of Mr. Andrew Ginsberg, a history teacher at Evanston Township High School. As you know, Mr. Ginsberg was directed to remove his classroom poster containing Jewish imagery in protest of Israel's actions in the Israel-Hamas war. He and his supporters have framed this directive as a violation of his free speech rights, but they overlook both Board policy and the legal constraints on public employees in the classroom.

We respectfully urge the Board to enforce its policies and clarify that teachers' free speech rights do not supersede their professional duties. As a public employee, in the course of his duties, Mr. Ginsberg is required to abide by school policy, including Board Policy 6.80 on "Teaching About Controversial Issues," which "requires educators to provide balanced perspectives, respect the rights and opinions of everyone, and ensure topics covered in the classroom are relevant to our curriculum." Displaying a partisan message on a complex, divisive international conflict clearly violates this policy and compromises the classroom's neutrality and inclusivity.

We acknowledge Mr. Ginsberg's point that the school has not previously disciplined teachers for displaying political symbols like the Black Lives Matter flag. However, this comparison should not serve as justification to further politicize classrooms. Rather, it underscores the need for the Board to reassert the importance of classroom neutrality on controversial issues. Outside the classroom, teachers are free to share their political views and engage in advocacy that does not interfere with their contractual teaching duties. Inside the classroom, however, and while representing the school, teachers must present unbiased, balanced information to students. Failing to maintain neutrality stifles open dialogue, undermines critical thinking, and risks alienating students from the learning environment.

We urge the Board to reaffirm its commitment to balanced instruction and to ensure that all educators uphold Board Policy 6.80. We also encourage the Board to provide clear guidance and training on the legal limits on teachers' speech in their official capacity. Such steps are vital to maintaining academic rigor and a culture where all students are respected and free to think for themselves.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Dana Stangel-Plowe
Chief Program Officer
North American Values Institute