



December 12, 2024

Dear Mr. Bernstein, Mr. Fingerhut, Mr. Deutch, and Mr. Greenblatt:

I write to express my profound remorse over the divisive and hurtful rhetoric expressed on stage at last week's NAIS People of Color Conference in Denver. There is no place for antisemitism at NAIS events, in our member schools, or in society. Your willingness to offer your perspectives speaks to your commitment to education and dialogue — commitments we share.

Your letter was particularly affecting in describing Jewish students compelled to hide their Stars of David. That any student would feel the need to conceal their identity at our conference is antithetical to our mission and our values.

We have already begun implementing meaningful changes to our speaker selection and content review processes. Going forward, all keynote presentations will be submitted in advance, including detailed outlines or full remarks, along with slides and materials. No last-minute changes will be permitted without explicit review and approval.

We understand that antisemitism is one of history's oldest and ugliest hatreds. It manifests not only in obvious acts of violence and discrimination but in subtle erasures and exclusions. In this regard, we recognize the particular importance of acknowledging Jewish people of color — including educators — who have too often been rendered invisible in discussions of both Jewish identity and racial justice.

You have offered to serve as resources to help us address these issues. We have worked with several of your organizations in the past, and we gratefully accept the offer for additional support, especially as we look ahead to our national conference in February.

For almost four decades, the PoCC has welcomed diverse voices and points of view, and it is essential that these voices come together in a way that is respectful and safe. We are committed to ensuring that future NAIS events will be places where difficult topics and conversations are approached with sensitivity and care for all. We know that rebuilding trust will take time and consistent action. We are prepared to do that work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Debra Wilson', is written over a light blue circular watermark.

Debra Wilson
President, National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS)