



– FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE –

ARPCF Condemns OCDSB's Framing of Palestine Solidarity as a Student Safety Risk

Montreal, July 13, 2026 — The Anti-Racism Program of the CJPME Foundation (ARPCF) expresses serious concern over the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB)'s [decision](#) to discourage student participation in the Capital Pride parade, and particularly over the Board's suggestion that recent Palestine solidarity activism at Pride has created safety and operational risks. While school boards have a duty to protect students, that duty must not be used to characterize Palestinian human rights advocacy as inherently dangerous, disruptive, or incompatible with student participation in public civic life. The language used by OCDSB leadership risks reinforcing a harmful narrative in which pro-Palestinian expression is treated not as political speech, but as a threat to be managed.

The ARPCF is especially troubled by the Board's references to "political activism," "unplanned disruptions," and "unexpected challenges" as the reasons for the alleged lack of safety, which appears to be directed towards public actions in solidarity with Palestinians and opposing Israel's violence in Gaza. The ARPCF [agrees](#) with Caille Metler, the Executive Director of Pride 2026, who said that "Pride is born out of political activism." Students should be supported in understanding that movements for justice often intersect, and that solidarity with oppressed communities is not a safety hazard simply because it challenges institutional comfort.

This framing is also a form of anti-Palestinian racism. "Anti-Palestinian racism includes the silencing, exclusion, defamation, and dehumanization of Palestinians and their allies, including by portraying Palestinian human rights advocacy as inherently hateful, threatening, or illegitimate," said Jamila Ewais, Lead Researcher of the ARPCF. "When a school board treats Palestine solidarity as a reason to withdraw students from a major public event, it contributes to the broader delegitimization of a movement calling attention to mass civilian suffering, including the killing and starvation of children in Gaza. The issue is not only the decision itself, but the message it sends: that Palestinian grief and solidarity with Palestinians are disruptive forces from which students must be shielded."

The ARPCF calls on the OCDSB to clarify its comments, engage directly with Capital Pride and affected communities, and ensure that concerns about student safety are not used to stigmatize Palestinian advocacy or erase the political history of Pride. The Board must reaffirm that support for Palestinian human rights is not incompatible with student safety, inclusion, or 2SLGBTQ+ solidarity. If the OCDSB is committed to equity and inclusion, it must reject narratives that turn Palestinian solidarity into a threat and instead model principled, anti-racist civic education.

About the ARPCF – *The mandate of the Anti-Racism Program of the CJPME Foundation (ARPCF) is to create public awareness about racism in Canada. This mandate falls in line with the Foundation's broader purpose of monitoring and combating manifestations of racism, xenophobia, and discrimination by increasing public awareness of such biases.*

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