

# A MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT FORD MORTHEL: JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH



Dear BUSD community,

May is a rich month of heritage celebrations which includes the upliftment of Jewish American Heritage Month. Since 2006, May has been proclaimed as Jewish American Heritage Month. As is true of any community, there is no single way of being Jewish. In Berkeley Unified School District, we have a beautiful spectrum of the Jewish community represented by our students and families.

The Bay Area has an especially proud history of Jewish activism and spirituality embodying the Jewish concept of *Tikkun Olam*- healing the world to make it a better place for all. It is in this spirit of *Tikkun Olam*, that we offer these resources to our community. And it is in this spirit that we honor all the ways that people are connected to Judaism and Jewish American history and culture here in BUSD: through birth, adoption, marriage/partnership, conversion, and secular and religious ties-we celebrate the diversity of the Jewish American community. Through these resources we also strive to center Jewish community members who are too often marginalized: Mizrahi and Sephardic Jews, Jews of color, Jews with disabilities, LGBTQ+ Jews, and young Jewish voices.

Among the resources shared, you will find first person stories and biographies of creatives representing some of the many ways that people connect to Judaism and Jewish heritage. Some members of the Jewish community are recognizable by the clothes (kippah/yarmulke, tallit, tefillin) or symbols they wear (Star of David), and others you will only know by asking and listening to their stories.

In this month of May, it is important to unequivocally state that we as a district stand firmly united against all forms of hate, which includes antisemitism. We denounce the rise in antisemitic rhetoric against Jewish people and are committed to teaching about contemporary and historical forms of antisemitism, including the Holocaust, and what we as a community can do to stand up against hate. We also recognize that the Jewish American community is more than the stories of the discrimination against them. This month, we take time to shine a light on contemporary Jewish artists and the resilience of the Jewish people.

In unity and שלום (shalom),

Enikia Ford Morthel  
BUSD Superintendent

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# THREE THINGS YOU CAN DO TO CELEBRATE JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH BUSD FAMILY GUIDE

Compiled by the Equity Achievement & Belonging Department with BUSD Jewish community members

Portrait of Judith Heumann by Jen White-Johnson, Bay Area artist



## 1. LISTEN

### Listen to the Lived Experiences of Jewish American People

- [ARTICLE](#) 20 Black Jews You Should Know
- [ARTICLE](#) I Grew Up Jewish, But That's Not How the World Sees Me
- [WATCH](#) LUNAR Ep5: Jewish Enough. Asian Enough.
- [ARTICLE](#) 16-Year-Old Creates 'Tikkun Olam Means Black Lives Matter' Line For Charity
- [LISTEN](#) Podcast "Conversation on Race and Jews of Color with Ilana Kaufman"
- [ARTICLE](#) "Yes, You Can Be Native & Jewish"
- [ESSAY](#) on Latinx & Jewish identity
- [ARTICLE](#) "American Jews are taking a hard look at racism in their midst"

## 2. LEARN

### Learn About Jewish American Experiences & Local Organizations

- [VIDEO](#) of Hedy Epstein, Holocaust Survivor, on Social Activism
- [VIDEO](#) Kids Meet a Holocaust Survivor (middle school and up)
- [RESOURCES](#) from Jewish American Heritage Month website
- [EXPLORE](#) resources by the Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco
- [LEARN](#) resources for learning Hebrew
- [Camp Be'chol Lashon](#)
- [Camp Tawonga](#)
- [Olamim- Latinx Jewish belonging for families](#)
- [Urban Adamah](#)
- [Jewish Community Center of the East Bay](#)
- [Jewish Youth for Community Action \(JYCA\)](#)

[Jewish  
American  
Reading List  
from the  
BUSD Library](#)



## 3. LIFT UP

### Lift Up and Celebrate Jewish American Culture With Your Family

- [LISTEN](#) Spotify Playlist: Mi Granjita by Olamim, Latinx Jewish belonging for families
- [LISTEN](#) to Berkeley music group, Octopretzel!
- [ENJOY](#) this video of BUSD alum, Daveed Diggs returning to Berkeley High School
- [VISIT](#) The Magnes Collection, Contemporary Jewish Museum
- [CHECK OUT](#) the Jewish Community Center East Bay event calendar