

# The Star-Ledger

**A Jewish student was allegedly harassed for years. Her N.J. school may be at fault.**

By Blake Nelson

NJ Advance Media for NJ.com and The Star-Ledger

Published Nov. 7, 2019

Swastikas on a lunch table.

Students publicly reading “Mein Kampf.”

The phrase “I H8 JEWS” photographed in the sand.

For three years, a Jewish girl allegedly endured anti-Semitic harassment from her classmates at the Marine Academy of Science and Technology, and the Sandy Hook school did not do enough to stop it, according to the state Attorney General’s Office.

The civil rights division announced Thursday that, after a preliminary investigation, it had found enough evidence to back up “reasonable suspicion” that the district had broken New Jersey’s anti-discrimination law.

The Monmouth County Vocational School District must now work out a plan to fix the problem, according to the attorney general’s office. If a solution is not reached, these complaints may lead to fines and prosecution.

It’s ultimately the responsibility of school officials to make sure kids are safe from hate, State Attorney General Gurbir Grewal said in a statement. Rachel Apner, who leads the civil rights office, added that administrators may not have “acted reasonably.”

Messages left with the superintendent’s office and with the academy’s principal were not immediately returned.

The school did respond to some of the harassment, according to a news release.

After a teacher found a rock with the word “Adolf” on it placed near the girl, the teacher removed the rock but didn’t report it.

Three students were also suspended after the girl was texted a photo of the words “I H8 JEWS,” which were written in the sand at a school event. But after her father complained about the image, the girl was shunned, harassed and called a “snitch” at school, officials said.

The girl, whose name was not released, eventually transferred.

Grewal has previously said that similar incidents may be increasing in the state, and has spoken in personal terms about prejudice he has experienced.