

News Brief

Haredi Orthodox school in Amsterdam mishandled molestation scandal, Dutch Education Ministry says

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AMSTERDAM (JTA) — The Netherlands' Education Ministry said the country's only haredi Orthodox school "did not adequately handle" complaints about molestation by a former teacher.

The criticism over the conduct of Amsterdam's Cheider school was published Wednesday in a 44-page [report](#) on the website of the ministry titled "Specific report on social safety at the Cheider."

The school's board "at the time of the molestation case in 2012 did not adequately handle" the complaints against Ephraim Schrijver, who in May was [sentenced](#) to 1 1/2 years in prison for sexually abusing a 13-year-old, said the report, which the ministry commissioned following Schrijver's conviction.

"Despite repeated requests by inspectors, the board unnecessarily waited with complaining to police," the report said. Coupled with "too little attention to communication" with staff and parents, this "led to a prevailing lack of trust between the school and some parents," it also said.

Throughout the trial, the school's administration insisted it complied with existing regulations without delay.

"Of course we went to police straight away," said Binyomin Jacobs, a senior Dutch rabbi and spokesman for the school. "Not doing so would have endangered the children."

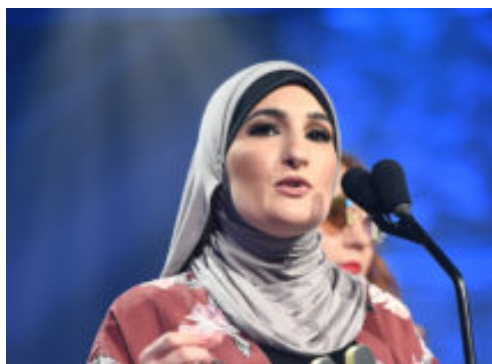
The report also said that Cheider "complies to a large degree with requirements for social safety" – a term that refers to students' susceptibility to bullying and its prevalence, as well as sexual predation and other forms of abuse. But, the report said, the school's administration also "does not sufficiently secure" this safety.

Still, it “seems most students are positive about their safety, though less so about their well being” at Cheider, the report states.

Marjolein Moorman, who is responsible for the education portfolio at the city government of Amsterdam, [told](#) the AT5 television station following the report’s publication that the school’s board should resign.

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