

Institute for Curriculum Services

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Far too often, students receive mis-information about Jewish life directly from their public school textbooks. Through a comprehensive program to influence the content of textbooks, the Institute for Curriculum Services (ICS) strategically shapes what Jewish and non-Jewish students alike learn about Judaism, Israel and Jewish holidays. Since its founding, ICS has influenced more than 4,000 corrections in textbooks read by more than 4,000,000 students across the country. Changes often address implications that the Jews crucified Jesus, misrepresentations of Jewish holidays, or one sided perspectives on the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. At this time, because of ICS's experience and reputation, major publishers accept between 70 and 85% of recommended edits on the first round of communications. ICS also works with local Jewish communities across the country to empower them to participate in statewide revisions to social studies standards and textbooks.

The other arm of ICS's work is through teacher training. In 2011, ICS seeks to expand its impact through the National Teacher Training Initiative, working with local communities to train them to attend social studies conferences and presenting ICS materials and methods for teaching about Jews and Israel. In the coming years, ICS plans to maintain its relationships with the nation's largest publishing companies in order to be fully involved as shifts to digital resources take place.

Evaluators love ICS's impact on Jewish and broader American life: "The ripple effect on curricula has been tremendous." A Slingshot Fund member reports that ICS has "great command over [its] niche mission, and [it's] getting a lot of respect from publishers, who now seek [the organization] out during state curriculum adoption processes."

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