



June 15, 2021

Ms. Randi Weingarten  
American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO  
555 New Jersey Ave., N.W.  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Ms. Weingarten,

The undersigned organizations write to you because we are concerned about the recent adoption by two American Federation of Teachers (AFT) affiliates of anti-Semitic resolutions that falsely accuse Israel of “apartheid and war crimes” and that formally endorse the Boycott, Divest, and Sanction (BDS) movement. The goal of the BDS movement is the destruction of Israel.

We are troubled that you have not condemned this egregious embrace of anti-Semitism by the United Educators of San Francisco (UESF) and United Teachers of Los Angeles (UTLA) or demanded that the AFT affiliates repeal the resolutions. You are leaving the impression that anti-Semitism, unlike other forms of bigotry, is tolerated in your ranks.

This is a terrible message to send at a moment when clarity and leadership are needed. We saw once again in recent weeks how inflammatory and dishonest anti-Israel rhetoric, when left unchallenged, can escalate to physical attacks on Jews. It is unacceptable that the teachers’ union you head has affiliates that are using the AFT’s name and infrastructure to promote this kind of hateful rhetoric.

We would like to suggest the following steps in order to remedy this situation:

First, please clearly and publicly call on UESF and UTLA to repeal the anti-Semitic resolutions they are now supporting and explain the consequences for failing to do so. You should also hold accountable those in leadership positions who put anti-Semitism on the agenda of the AFT and its affiliates. We believe you would do nothing less in an instance of racism against another group or homophobia.

Second, please institute new training programs that educate AFT affiliates and members on anti-Semitism. Last summer, AFT [passed a resolution](#) on “Confronting Racism” that “lays out 19 commitments to combat systemic racism.” Your organization has an anti-Semitism problem. What commitments will you make to combat it?

Third, please engage with your San Francisco and Los Angeles affiliates to develop a plan to repair the damage that has been done by their recent actions. Jewish students and parents in these two large school districts – including thousands of Israeli students and parents – need to see that AFT is committed to eliminating anti-Semitism. Federal law forbids discrimination against students on the basis of national origin and it forbids creating a hostile environment for students. The AFT and these two affiliates in particular have significant work to do to show students and parents that the union is committed to upholding basic civil rights protections.

Ms. Weingarten, we ask you to put yourself in the shoes of a Jewish child sitting in a classroom run by a teacher who, for reasons we cannot understand, is obsessed with the Jewish state. This teacher falsely accuses Israel of all manner of crimes and offenses, embraces in the name of “social justice” the anti-Semitic and often violent BDS movement, and supports the destruction of only one country in the entire world – the Jewish country. How should that Jewish child feel about his or her teacher and school? And how should all this make the rest of us feel about your leadership of the AFT?

For the sake of our schools, AFT and its affiliates should end its support for racist ideologies like BDS. It should get back to its true calling: educating our children.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Constructive Ethnic Studies  
Alliance to Protect Children  
American Freedom Alliance  
American Principles Project  
California Policy Center  
Californians for Equal Rights  
Citizens for Renewing America  
Coalition for Jewish Values  
Concerned Women for America  
Educators for Quality & Equality  
Family Research Council  
For Kids & Country  
Freedom Foundation  
Independent Women's Forum  
Independent Women's Voice  
Parents Defending Education