

**How National Education Organizations and Their Allies
Target South Carolina Teachers, Students, and Parents**

**EDUCATION OR
INDOCTRINATION?**

...and what to do about it.

CLASH OF WORLDVIEWS

The State acknowledges that the primary and natural educator of the child is the Family and guarantees to respect the inalienable right and duty of **parents** to provide, according to their means, for the religious and moral, intellectual, physical and social education of their children.

— Constitution of the Republic of Ireland

EDUCATION/CAPITALISM

Children must be taught how to think, not what to think.

— Margaret Mead



No government of the left has done as much for the poor as capitalism has.

—Thomas Sowell, Stanford University Economist

EQUALITY



A hundred years ago, kids in classrooms were taught the color of their skin was their most important characteristic — and if they looked a certain way, they were inferior. Today, kids again are being taught that the color of their skin defines them — and if they look a certain way, they're an oppressor.

— U.S. Senator Tim Scott (R-SC)

Educators love their students and **know better than anyone** what they need to learn and to thrive.

@NEAToday Tweet 11:56pm 13 Nov 22 Washington, DC

INDOCTRINATION/SOCIALISM



I had always insisted that a good education was a synthesis of book learning and involvement in social action, that each en-riched the other.

— Howard Zinn (academic and source of The NEA 's Zinn Education Project)

To love capitalism is to end up loving racism. To love racism is to end up loving capitalism. They were birthed together from the same unnatural causes and they shall one day die together from unnatural causes.

—Ibram X. Kendi, Boston University Professor

EQUITY



The only remedy to racist discrimination is antiracist discrimination. The only remedy to past discrimination is present discrimination. The only remedy to present discrimination is future discrimination.

— Ibram X. Kendi, Boston University Professor

FOREWORD

Jonathan Butcher

At the beginning of each school year, parents and students are simultaneously excited and nervous to enter their new classrooms. New books, new friends, new teachers—sometimes even new schools—all signal that change is at hand.

In the midst of these changes, families should not also be burdened with the reality that education is beset by special interest groups who are vying for control over how education is delivered. And yet this is true around the country, and South Carolina is no exception.

Teacher unions, consultants, litigators, and national associations, to name just a few, are among the interest groups who seek to mold the local school in their own image. These groups' efforts to push increasingly radical agendas result in wresting authority—and learning options—away from families.

An overstatement?

Consider: Both the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers, the nation's two largest teacher unions, advocate for the Black Lives Matter Week of Action at School each year, a movement intent on “disrupting the Western-prescribed nuclear family structure” and promoting ambiguous ideas about “gender” in place of biological sex.

Furthermore, the National School Board Association colluded with President Joe Biden's administration in 2021 to prompt law enforcement to treat parents like domestic terrorists if they speak against leftist ideology in classroom instruction.

For these reasons and more, Palmetto Promise Institute has done South Carolina parents and children a great service by providing this handbook that identifies the interest groups that are active in K-12 schools. PPI explains, in detail, how these associations undermine parent efforts to direct their child's educational, moral, and religious upbringing, complete with examples of how such groups carry out their activities.

The hour is late.

Research finds that the share of students earning D's and F's increased significantly in South Carolina during the pandemic. The latest report documenting student achievement on the Nation's Report Card showed steep declines among 9-year-olds in math and reading. Students need help now, and while lawmakers in 10 states offer children access to education savings accounts that allow families to customize a child's learning experience, Palmetto State lawmakers have not yet approved such a proposal.

Likewise, lawmakers in states around the country, including South Carolina's neighbors to the south, Georgia, and Florida, have adopted proposals that protect children from racial discrimination caused by educators' application of critical race theory in our classrooms. Here again, though, South Carolina officials have not approved statutory protections for teachers and children (see page 58)

This report describes how certain interest groups want to limit learning options for students and promote critical race theory's pernicious ideas. South Carolinians who wonder why K-12 children do not have the same kinds of private learning opportunities available in North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, and Florida*, to name a few, will understand how unions and other associations put political interests ahead of student needs after reading this Palmetto Promise dossier.

"This report describes how certain interest groups want to limit learning options for students and promote critical race theory's pernicious ideas."

* Like Education Scholarship Accounts (ESAs).
Please visit palmettopromise.org for more information.

Armed with this information about who is working against substantive, positive changes to help students succeed and how these organizations operate, parents and state lawmakers can better design solutions that give every South Carolina student the chance to succeed in school and flourish later in life. For this, state officials, voters, and taxpayers can thank Palmetto Promise Institute for pointing the way forward. †

Jonathan Butcher is the Will Skillman Fellow in Education at The Heritage Foundation in Washington, DC. He lives in Greenville, South Carolina.



INTRODUCTION

MANY ORGANIZATIONS, COMMON AGENDA



South Carolina is a center-right state,¹ meaning that its citizens identify with moderate to conservative political ideals and values. But South Carolina is also a “friends and neighbors” state.² Culturally, that means that we are optimistic about the future. Our state motto in English is “while I breathe, I hope.” But neighborliness and optimism can sometimes lead to a self-imposed reluctance to defend our deeply held core beliefs. This “don’t rock the boat” phenomenon is particularly true in the public square.

There is no better example of the unlikely coexistence of centrist citizens and radical left ideological efforts than in the area of public education.³ Right now, a broad constellation of national education organizations and their state affiliates in South Carolina are pushing a single activist agenda on students, teachers, and parents. But awareness of the undue influence of left-of-center ideas on public school life is very thin.



Most **parents** are simply too busy to be aware, and those who are aware may be fearful of the response to their speaking out. No one wants to be portrayed as bigoted or hateful, particularly while objecting to political agendas that are actually the ones that are racially discriminatory.



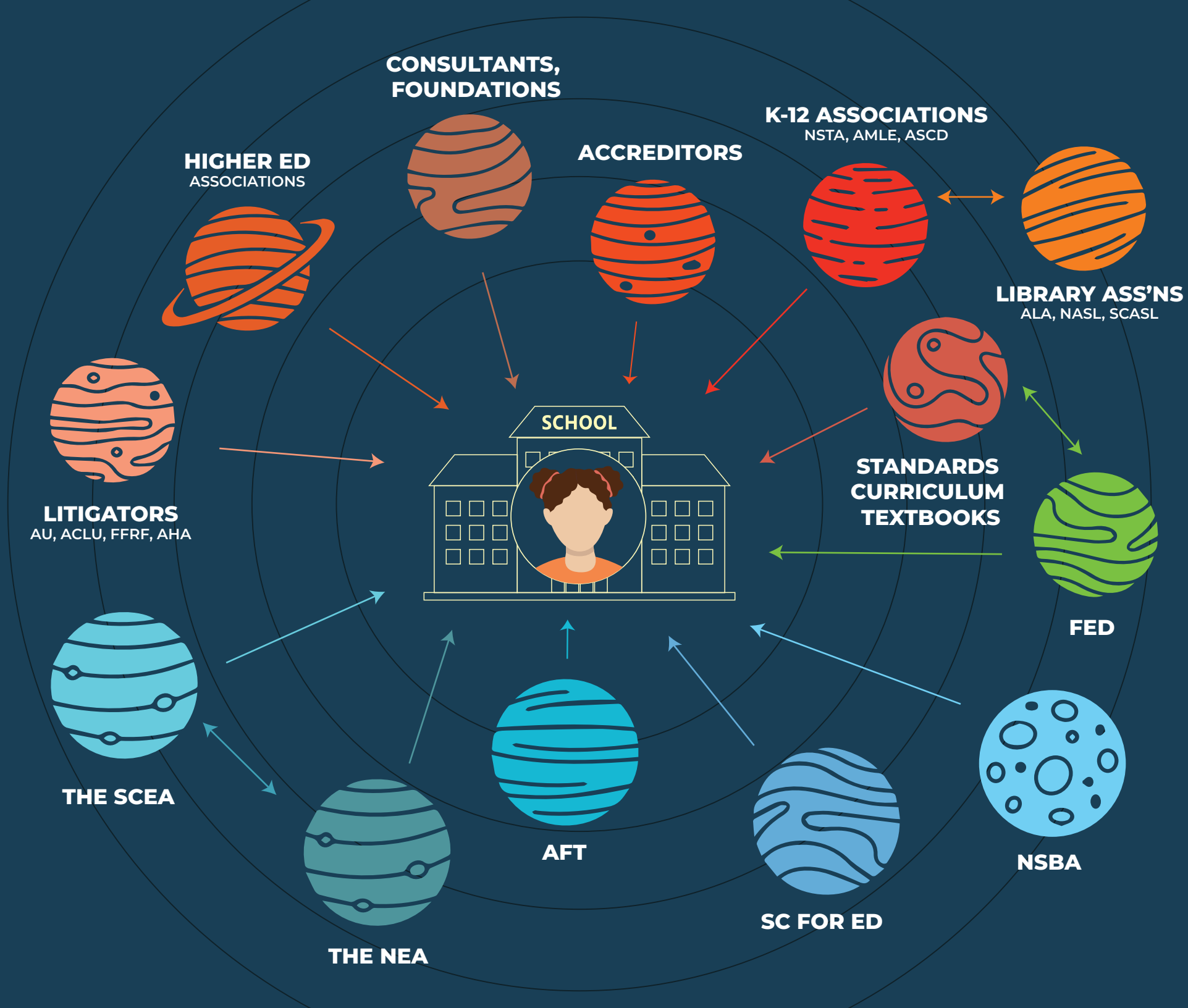
Teachers are overwhelmed with their duties and fearful of being stigmatized as well. That is why moderate and conservative teachers in South Carolina felt pressure to “like” posts of support for the left-of-center Facebook group SC for Ed in 2019, and why a large minority of teachers pay the dues that keep The South Carolina Education Association afloat.

The purpose of this report, a “dossier” of sorts, is to study the roots and agendas of the constellation of groups bearing down on Palmetto State students, parents, and teachers. Where possible, we allow the organizations to speak for themselves using their own words. Our appeal is based on facts alone, leaving the reader to decide his or her own level of comfort with the agenda of each organization.

Are our policy opponents evil? Do we bear any ill will toward them? Certainly not. Do they have a right to hold their views? Of course. But, we both respectfully and emphatically disagree with their beliefs about America, about the purpose of education, and their goals for South Carolina children. 🌱

Oran P. Smith, PhD is Senior Fellow at Palmetto Promise Institute. He lives in Columbia, South Carolina.

**THE CONSTELLATION
OF THE
EDUCATION LEFT
AND ITS TARGETS**



1.

**AMERICAN
FEDERATION
OF TEACHERS**

First, let us look at teacher unions. Teacher unions are the major opponents to meaningful education reform, and these organizations consistently advocate for progressive causes and against public and private school choice. South Carolinians need to know more about the two largest teacher unions in America and their presence in the state, so these represent #1 and #2 in the constellation.

1. AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

One of the oldest teacher unions is also the most left of center currently. With the motto “a union of professionals,” AFT was founded in Chicago in 1916. Educator, philosopher, and religious skeptic John Dewey— known as “the father of progressive education”—was among AFT’s founders.



The spirit of Dewey reigns over AFT to this day. Dewey was so prolific, that he is loosely cited today in support of a number of causes. But several relevant principles⁴ can be supported by his writings. These beliefs continue to influence organizations like AFT.

John Dewey

- Dewey held a progressive and romantic view of education. (This view has its share of learned and progressive critics, including E.D. Hirsch.)⁵
- Dewey opposed the teaching of Classics and high culture in public schools as undemocratic.
- Dewey took numerous shots at American free market capitalism, most notably in his *Impressions of Soviet Russia and the Revolutionary World*⁶ after a visit to the USSR.
- Dewey’s opposition to “personal competition” and “desire for private profit in our economic life” were consistent with his obsession with “social consciousness” in education.
- Dewey seemed to believe that the correct view of any issue or subject could be determined *socially*, and that once determined by the group, all should get on board with that one view.
- A primary goal of education should be social change. Writing in *My Pedagogic Creed*,⁷ Dewey said that “I believe that all education proceeds by the participation of the individual in the social consciousness of the race” and that “I believe that education is a regulation of the process of coming to share in the social consciousness; and that the adjustment of individual activity on the basis of this social consciousness is the only sure method of social reconstruction.” More succinctly, he said:

“I believe that education is the fundamental method of social progress and reform.”



Rhonda Weingarten

AFT's current president is Rhonda "Randi" Weingarten. AFT is affiliated with the union federation AFL-CIO. AFT and Weingarten have a long resume of advocacy of radical causes, most recently serving as the last holdouts for closing American public schools to in-person learning (long after European institutions had reopened their doors). Weingarten actually endorsed strikes in the summer of 2020 to protest school reopenings.

But AFT never confines itself to education issues. Among its current campaigns are opposing the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* SCOTUS decision sending the abortion issue back to the states, and advocating for The Respect for Marriage Act. Unapologetically syndicalist, AFT observes "Workers Memorial Day" each year, not *Teachers Memorial Day*.

AFT is not as active in South Carolina as in other states, but Americans for Fair Treatment (AFFT), an organization that monitors labor union activity, is reporting that AFT organizing has stepped up

in Virginia and North Carolina. AFFT expects South Carolina to be the next membership recruiting ground for AFT.⁸

AFT is a traditional labor union, and as a labor union, it favors strikes and walkouts and other measures as leverage for *collective bargaining* (negotiating as a group with "management.") If South Carolina law permitted it, AFT would have no qualms about shutting down schools again to demand "better working conditions."

The first South Carolina "AFT Local" chapter was chartered in South Carolina in 1973 in Charleston. 🌿

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2.

**NATIONAL
EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION**



2. NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

The National Education Association (The NEA), is larger than AFT and has more local affiliates, including the South Carolina Education Association (The SCEA). A number of South Carolina educators have been active in the NEA at the national level, including the current Chair of NEA's Women's Issues Committee. From time to time, stories in printed publications and blog posts about NEA advocacy include South Carolina datelines.

John Dewey and his ideas were prevalent in The NEA as well, but his progressive influence did not fully take hold until the 1960s. (Dewey died in 1952.) Before that, some NEA materials acknowledged the vital role of religion and the Bible, and emphasized the primacy of parents.

The NEA uses several strategies and is active in a number of public venues to influence the education conversation and education laws and policy. These include courtrooms, statehouses, and schools.

NEA LITIGATION

There are numerous well-known litigation arms on the left that do little more than sue. We will discuss those entities later (page 47), but The NEA itself can be quite litigious.

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Nicole Solas, Rhode Island Parent

Possibly the most shocking recent example of the organized education left lashing out with litigation was the case of the Rhode Island mom (and school officials) who were sued by the NEA.⁹ The NEA Rhode Island affiliates took action to attempt to prevent school officials from responding to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests filed by parent Nicole Solas. Solas was attempting to determine the curriculum being used in her daughter's school. The Rhode Island suits (that is *suits*, plural) are a wake-up call for anyone in denial about the agenda of the NEA or concerned about protecting the role of parents in education and the right of citizens to expect transparency from their government.

NEA POLICY AGENDA: NEA TODAY



NEA Today Cover

As we stated in the introduction to this dossier, the natural human tendency to give neighbors the benefit of the doubt is especially strong in South Carolina. Even criticism or confrontation conducted in a professional manner can be a last resort in the Palmetto State. Citizens here rightly require evidence for a hard-left agenda before speaking up.

Here is that evidence.

In every case, we seek to allow The NEA to speak for itself with only limited comment.

NEA Today, the NEA's national magazine that is published five times annually, bears NEA and SCEA logos, and both the SCEA President and Executive Director contribute a column to each issue. The SCEA sends the magazine far and wide, even to students majoring in Education at public colleges in South Carolina.¹⁰

Perusing a random issue of *NEA Today* (January 2022 edition), we found that the NEA/SCEA:

- Sided with United States Attorney General Merrick Garland in his threats to silence parents, grouping those concerned parents with “extremist right-wing groups.” (p.10).
- Promoted “Social & Emotional Learning (SEL),” an effort to add some of the typical functions of a therapist or social worker to the job of the teacher. Teachers would engage with a child’s beliefs, attitudes, and values.¹¹ (p.11) (Note: SEL can easily go too far. We feel that this is the role of parents and guardians alone. Such practices can lead to self-fulfilling prophecies: nearly every student can be found to be traumatized by something. This can lead to less resilient students and more extra-parental influence.)
- Opined that an early defeat for adoption of the concept known today as Personalized Learning was “blamed on teachers unions.” According to *NEA Today*, it was actually the free market that stood in the way of innovation because businesses “didn’t see how they could turn a profit” from it. (p.12). (As we shall see later, hatred for the American free market system seems to be baked into The NEA’s DNA.)
- Decried election reform legislation as “anti-voting” and “Jim Crow 2.0,” taking a position on an issue that falls well outside of education. “[R]equiring voters to show identification” as a modern “voter suppression” tactic. (p.14; p.34-36) “Extreme” and “egregious” state efforts included Florida’s Senate Bill 90

that requires “a voter’s mail-in ballot signature to match the person’s most recent signature on file with the state.” (p.15).

- Celebrated “union engagement and advocacy” in general (p.16) and “skills as a union member”. (p.20)
- Asserted that “educators have no choice but to speak up” on “societal issues”. (p.16) (Note: Teachers should be allowed to talk about controversial issues, but they should not: a) be forced to do so or b) force students to agree with them.)
- Described in glowing terms #TeachChange, which among other classroom exercises encourages students to “list all the things that must change to make the world better.” (p.24-25). (Note: That would be a marvelous exercise were all responses deemed equally valid.)
- Took credit for Loudoun County (Virginia) school board passage of a “transgender rights policy allowing students to access school facilities and groups, such as sports teams, that match their gender identities” because of their political support for “pro-public education” candidates.” (p.56). (Note: The two were clearly linked. Can a person be sincerely opposed to such policies as potentially harmful to biological females and still be pro-public education? Not according to The NEA.)
- Discussed the fight of “district, *union*, students, parents, and community groups” in Durham, North Carolina against “takeover” by “private charters”¹² that was run “like a *union-ization* campaign.” (p.38-41). [Note: emphasis ours.]
- Described teacher associations at the district level as “locals” and offered resources for “labor-management collaboration” (p.44) while celebrating Los Angeles Teachers’ Union strikes (p.41).

NEA POLICY AGENDA: ANNUAL RESOLUTIONS



The resolutions passed or revised by The NEA annual meeting provide a clue to the bent of The NEA.¹³

Please note that some of these policy positions cited here may not be problematic in themselves, but the programmatic liberal perspective is *overwhelming*. Few resolutions could be described even as “centrist” or “center-left.” None could be described as conservative. The NEA agenda is clearly not the balanced approach that should characterize an organization dedicated to informing its members on education policy issues and other issues of policy, particularly when those members stand before P-12 classrooms.

Education Policy Positions:

- 1.** Believes in redistribution of wealth in order to guarantee adequate education funding (“a tax burden distribution that reflects the ability to pay”). Specifically supports progressive taxation, estate taxes, and a higher minimum wage.
- 2.** Believes that school boards should be “fiscally independent,” (meaning that they would have full taxing authority). Restrictions should not be placed on their budgets or borrowing capacity.
- 3.** Charter schools should be authorized by “locally elected school boards.” (Note: South Carolina charter schools can be

authorized by local boards or statewide authorizers that are not connected to local school districts.)

- 4.** Opposes state takeovers of schools, school districts for any reason, including for poor performance.
- 5.** Supports robust federal involvement in education in part to “ensure equity.” Opposes efforts to “dismantle and erode the effectiveness” of the United States Department of Education.
- 6.** Opposes restrictions on federal government education spending, advocating a “substantial increase” in federal spending instead.
- 7.** Believes that schools should be granted additional funding if raising student performance is mandated.
- 8.** Opposes all “privatization” and school choice, including vouchers and any and all efforts to lessen dependence on public education.
- 9.** Opposes immigration law enforcement on school property.
- 10.** Supports “freely available information and knowledge about sexuality” in school for the “developing child.” “Educators and health professionals must be qualified to teach in this area and must be legally protected from censorship and lawsuits.”
- 11.** Opposes standardized testing when used to compare “students, educators, programs, schools, communities, and states.” Opposes using student test scores to determine teacher compensation.
- 12.** “The Association also believes that school library media specialists have the expertise and knowledge to select media for their communities.” “Teachers and school library media specialists must have the right to select and use materials and techniques without censorship or legislative interference.”

- 13.** Opposition to homeschooling (homeschooling “cannot provide the student with a comprehensive education experience”) and parent-run education pods. Supports banning homeschooled children from participating in public school student clubs and athletics. Calls for requiring only approved public school curriculum to be used by homeschool families.
- 14.** Students are entitled to “direct and confidential access to comprehensive health, social, and psychological programs and services.” Parental consent is unclear. But “students should have access to gender-affirming health care.”
- 15.** Teachers should be allowed to strike, and schools should close completely when a strike occurs.
- 16.** “School districts [should] implement implicit bias, diversity, equity, cultural competence, and other racial justice training for all educators (including administrators) and regularly evaluate progress and outcomes in applying racial equity tools to decision-making and practices.”
- 17.** The influence of the American labor movement must be “an integral part of the curriculum in our schools.”



Policy Positions Beyond Education:

- Federal political campaigns should be publicly funded “to enable greater equity.”
- Climate change “as caused by human activity,” global warming, ozone depletion, “effects of population growth patterns,” and a Green agenda should be taught in school.
- Supports statehood for the District of Columbia.
- Opposes arming teachers as preventative measure against armed intruders.
- Wants “Cesar Chavez Day” and “Indigenous People’s Day” (the latter replacing Columbus Day) to be state holidays in all states. (Columbus seems to take it on the chin regularly, as we see elsewhere in this guide.)
- “[T]he Association will actively advocate for social and educational strategies fostering the eradication of institutional racism and white privilege perpetuated by white supremacy culture.”
- “The Association acknowledges that students and educators experience discrimination from the effects of mispronunciations, misgendering, misrepresentations, incorrect documentations in systems of record, or the use of deadnames.”
- Opposes efforts to legislate English as the official language of the United States.
- Supports “full repair and reparations for descendants of enslaved Africans.”
- Opposes the detaining of undocumented immigrants.

3.

**SOUTH
CAROLINA
EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION**



3. SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Active SCEA membership has fallen by 20.3% over the last five years. But there remain over 5,000 active dues-paying members of SCEA.¹⁴

SCEA POLICY AGENDA: CENTER FOR EDUCATOR WELLNESS

In some cases, South Carolina organizations affiliated with national groups have a quite different feel and agenda from The Mother Ship. The South Carolina School Boards Association is a case in point. SCSBA was so uncomfortable with NSBA’s efforts that seemed to target parents that they cut ties in 2022.¹⁵ After all, the SCSBA is concerned with policies like state education funding formula reform and programs like training school trustees, while the NSBA conspires against parents who simply want information about the curriculum in their child’s public school (see page 38).

CEWL
Center for Educator Wellness & Learning

Home Wellness Learning Retreat Panels

25 AUGUST 2022 **CEWL IDEAS** **7:00 - 8:00 PM**
THE URGENT NEED TO STOP RADICAL MISINFORMATION FROM RUINING EDUCATION

DR. GLORIA BOUTTE
Carolina Distinguished Professor
University of SC

KATIE HARRIS
Fifth Grade GT Teacher
Fort Mill Schools

DR. CHARLES KING
Retired Administrator
Kershaw Schools

SHAQUETTA MOULTRIE
Middle Level Social Studies
Columbia, SC

PETE STONE
President
Chester County Education Association

CEWL **LIVE ON FACEBOOK** **FACEBOOK.COM/THESCEA** **THE S·C·E·A**



NEA sign at the South Carolina Statehouse walkout (5/1/19).

As our review of the *NEA Today* magazine indicated, The SCEA and The NEA are closely tied. A member of the Palmetto Promise Institute’s team on the ground at a South Carolina “Red for Ed” rally discovered visual evidence of NEA involvement. The SCEA also links to the NEA website from its homepage and has a similar design.

So, just how liberal is The SCEA?

A better question is whether The SCEA leadership knows just how liberal and out of touch they are.

The SCEA Center for Educator Wellness and Learning recently hosted an online seminar to provide support and encouragement for teachers. The moderator of the panel stated that one of the additional goals of that particular training was to “relax the public.” The SCEA felt that “radical misinformation” had been disseminated about Critical Race Theory (CRT) and other issues and the webinar would explain to educators how they could “tell their stories” to parents so that parents would not be so “fearful.”

WEBINAR HIGHLIGHTS

But if calming parents were the intent, the proceedings got off track quickly. From the opening bell, much of the content would have horrified the average South Carolina parent. Among the highlights (emphasis ours throughout):

- Teaching is by its nature *political*, and teachers need to become more politically active to advocate for themselves.¹⁶
- Concerns about the public school curriculum are orchestrated. These concerns come from outsider fear-mongers who do not support public education anyway.
- Systems that perpetuate racism, lack of equity, inadequate funding and low teacher retention rates are the real problems, not CRT, which they claim is *non-existent*.
- We do not have just an education problem but a *societal* problem because past generations of adults were taught partial history.
- The current curriculum and pacing guides, to which the teacher is tied, are a form of Eurocentric *indoctrination*.
- We should be able to teach “The 1619 Project,” but the “powers that be” do not want that. One presenter asserts that teacher education programs, including theory and pedagogy, are 80%-85% Eurocentric. [Note: “The 1619 Project” has factual inaccuracies¹⁷ and a clear radical ideological bent.]
- Teachers need to point out the negative role of *capitalism* in the curriculum. We need to “name it.” The curriculum we are required to teach is designed to groom people to be working class because the world needs working class workers not top tier workers. “I tell my students that society is set up so that there is always classism.”

- The intent of *school choice* programs is to divert funding from public schools so that children of color can be excluded and segregated from white students.
- Parents don’t react correctly when they see complaints on Facebook about the curriculum. They do not call the school. They don’t seem to know that the curriculum is *available on the school district website*.
- Other countries teach about World War II correctly. They don’t teach that America is the “best place” to be or that the United States was a “great savior” in that war. “I tell my fifth grade students that history is written by the victors.”
- We need to join The SCEA “and other national organizations and movements.” We need to *organize* and advocate for ourselves. We need to be more vocal. We need to serve our *own self-interest* by voting, speaking out and looking out for ourselves. We should never forget that “we are amazing.”
- Teachers are professionals, but teaching is the *only profession* in which others are allowed to advise the professional on what and how to do their job.
- The May 1 [International Socialist] Day of Action had no effect because the same politicians got re-elected. What we need is change.
- Christopher Columbus did not “discover” *anything*, has no redeeming qualities, and is not someone to honor as a founder.¹⁸

Feeling relaxed now?

SCEA POLICY AGENDA: LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

In its SCEA Legislative Agenda 2023, The SCEA proves it can count. (There are 88 Republicans and 36 Democrats in the South Carolina House.) That Agenda avoids ideological content as that found in its podcasts, focusing instead on the fruit of the socialist tree: union-lite type grievances and demands for more money. But there is this clear shot over the bow at a conservative legislature:

Trust Educators as Education Experts. Educators are highly trained and experienced in the field of education and the *content* they teach; they believe in their duty to set their students up to be successful contributors to society. The General Assembly should seek to protect the relationship and community between parents, educators, and schools and to respect the frontline expertise of educators by refraining from passing any legislation that limits what history our children can learn and what books they can read. In addition, educators should have the freedom to teach the honest, complete facts about historical events without political censorship, undue scrutiny, or top down bureaucratic policies and processes that impede timely, natural communication between educators and parents.

No arguments here.

But there is a reason for curriculum standards, school library review mechanisms for age-appropriateness (see page 42), and community standards. These tools are to ensure *balance* and *age-appropriateness*. But, as we have read in their own words, balance does not appear to be the goal of the NEA and The SCEA. This is why an elected legislature that is accountable to its constituents is forced to step in to play referee for parents and the public.

“The General Assembly should seek to protect the relationship and community between parents, educators, and schools and to respect the frontline expertise of educators by refraining from passing any legislation that limits what history our children can learn and what books they can read.”

—The SC Education Association

As for “passing legislation” to restrict the free speech rights of teachers, perhaps this accusation refers to budget provisos. What words in the provisos provided on pages 57 and 58 are objectionable to The SCEA? †



**THE EDUCATION
LEFT AND
HOWARD ZINN**

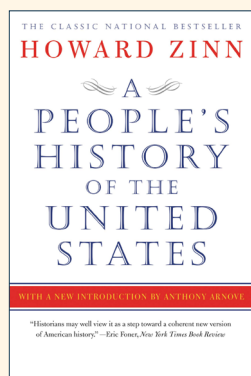
THE EDUCATION LEFT AND HOWARD ZINN

It is no surprise that The NEA and its state affiliate The SCEA have a great deal in common intellectually. But the ideology is shockingly consistent, whether casual South Carolina webinar comments or carefully crafted national annual resolutions. It is as if there is a common *liturgy* waiting just below the surface to be recited by its converts:

- Christopher Columbus was nothing but an exploiter and slaver. (No attempt at balance for the man who put America on the map.)
- America's true intentions in World War II were not noble (not the "great savior").
- Capitalism is evil (and racist).
- Capitalism needs labor to exploit.
- The winners write the histories.

But from whence do these tropes spring, like so much memorized secular scripture?

That would be Professor Howard Zinn (1922-2010).



Howard Zinn is best known for his *A People's History of the United States, 1492-Present* (Perennial Classics, 1980; 2003).

A committed socialist, in *People's History*, Zinn struggled to see American history and politics outside of the lens of oppressor versus oppressed and called for "a drastic reallocation of wealth." Furthermore, Zinn believed that the writing of history should be polemical.



It should have an *agenda*. So, it is no surprise that Zinn does not present a complete picture of American history or see the value in a nuanced or balanced approach to teaching history to the young. To read Zinn seeking to understand the warp and woof of American history would be like watching Oliver Stone's *JFK* for a factual analysis of the opposing views of the Kennedy assassination.

A fellow socialist historian described *A People's History* in these terms:

... to make sense of a nation's entire history, an author has to explain the weight and meaning of worldviews that are not his own and that, as an engaged citizen, he does not favor. Zinn has no taste for such disagreeable tasks. The fact that his text barely mentions either conservatism or Christianity is telling.¹⁹

Through The NEA Zinn Education Project, it is *this* historian and *this* approach to history that The NEA has chosen to hold up to teachers as a model academic with model content. The NEA had a chance to choose a historian dedicated to "explain[ing] the weight and meaning of worldviews that are not his [or her] own," so that American children could receive a well-rounded education, and instead they chose Howard Zinn.

What that says about Howard Zinn is no fault of his, but what it says about the intentions of The National Education Association is utterly damning. 🌱

**THE EDUCATION
LEFT AND
FREE MARKET
CAPITALISM**

THE EDUCATION LEFT AND FREE MARKET CAPITALISM

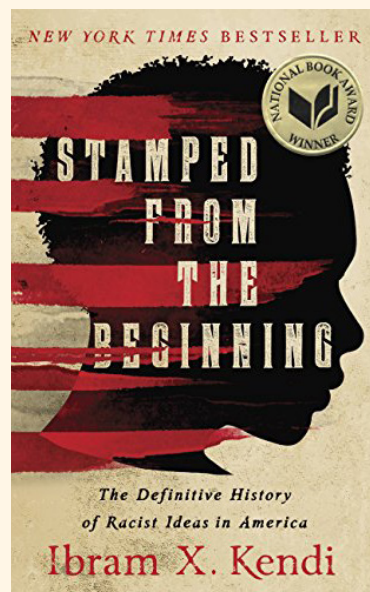
Participants in the online forum sponsored by The SCEA seemed to stick a knife into capitalism gratuitously. The NEA also annually resolves to oppose capitalism. Dewey and Zinn preach against profit and competition and capitalism as the source of all evil.

But why? Why would an educator attack the system that built this country only to see others on the SCEA Zoom respond to the dog whistle with a hearty “Amen!”?

Turns out anti-capitalism is a core tenet of the new orthodoxy among many educators, and certainly those who identify with The SCEA. In an excerpt from the transcript of a Democracy Now interview,²⁰ Ibram X. Kendi, author of *How to Be an Antiracist* explains why anti-capitalism is essential in this new orthodox worldview [emphasis ours]:

JUAN GONZÁLEZ [Interviewer]: I wanted to ask you about — in your new book, you talk about the whole issue of class and race and the relationship of capitalism to race. And in one section you write, **“Anticapitalism cannot eliminate class racism without antiracism.”** And, “Case in point,” you mention, “is the persistent racism AfroCubans faced in socialist Cuba” after the revolution in 1959. Give us a better sense of how you see this whole interrelationship between the fight against racism and also against capitalism.

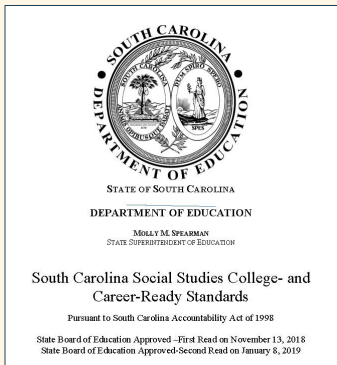
IBRAM X. KENDI: Well, I think it’s interrelated. I mean, I classify racism and capitalism as these conjoined twins — right? — from the same body but different personalities, different faces. And the reason why I do that is because I’m an historian. And so I track, particularly in my last book — the origins of racism cannot be separated from the origins of capitalism. **The origins of capitalism cannot be separated from the origins of racism. The life of racism cannot be separated from the life of capitalism, and vice versa.**²¹



“To love capitalism is to end up loving racism. To love racism is to end up loving capitalism. They were birthed together from the same unnatural causes and they shall one day die together from unnatural causes.”

—Ibram X. Kendi²²

CAPITALISM DEFINED



So, just as a refresher, what is capitalism?

The 2019 *South Carolina Social Studies College and Career Ready Standards*²³ include definitions of key concepts in the form of a Glossary. The definitions that include **economic** or **government/political** systems are as follows:

authoritarian government. a structure of **government** in which power is concentrated in an individual or small group and is built upon the demand of absolute obedience by citizens to this authority

- **absolutism.** a form of **government** in which all power is held by a single leader
- **totalitarian[ism].** the twentieth century **governmental** structure or principle in which the state exercises centralized, absolute control of all aspects of life for individual citizens
- **communism.** a **political** system in which all property and wealth is, in theory, owned by all the citizens in a classless society that is controlled by their government

capitalism. an **economic** system characterized by private ownership and investment in the means of production (i.e., capital); a system in which economic decisions are based on supply and demand, competition, and price in a free market

- **free enterprise.** an **economic** system in which private businesses compete for profit without government involvement beyond those regulations necessary to protect public interest and to keep the nation's economy in balance

democracy. a form of **government** in which political authority rests with the people and is exercised by all the people, either directly or indirectly through their elected representatives

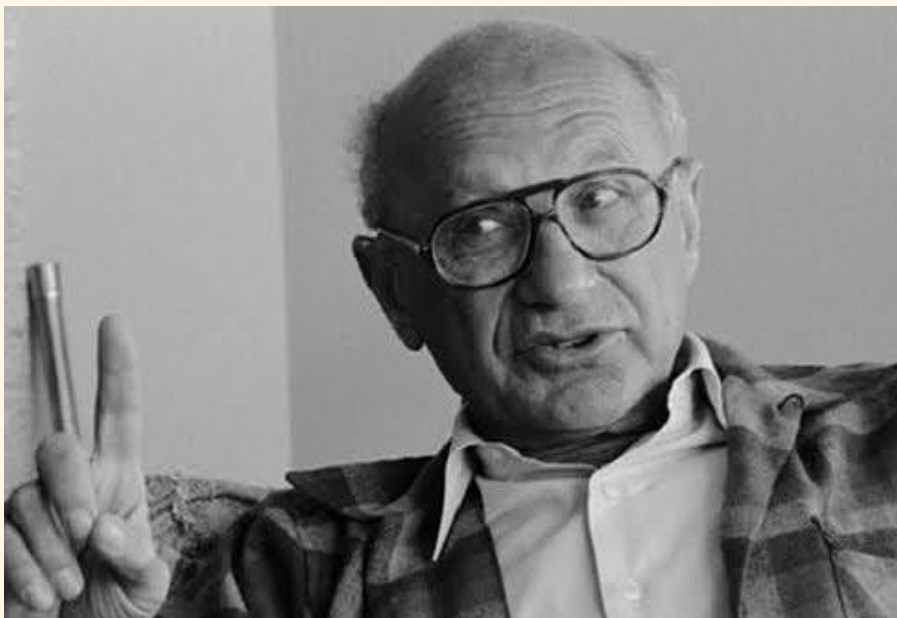
- **republican/republicanism** a form of **government** that functions through the use of representatives elected by the citizens; republican government is often referred to as “representative” government

socialism. an **economic** and **political** system in which the government owns or regulates the production and distribution of goods

This begs the question: if we follow The SCEA pronouncement that capitalism/free enterprise are bad (and ipso facto racist), and teachers should teach that free market capitalism should be rejected, what are the **economic** systemic alternatives that should replace capitalism? Look back at *The Standards* list of terms. We are left with just one: **socialism.** *The Standards* list socialism as both an economic and political system, so our **political** choices drawn from *The Standards* would be: socialism, democracy, and authoritarianism.

“If we follow The SCEA pronouncement that capitalism/free enterprise are bad (and ipso facto racist), and teachers should teach that free market capitalism should be rejected, what are the economic systemic alternatives that should replace capitalism?”

CAPITALISM DEFENDED



Milton Friedman

According to our state standards, communism is a merger of socialism and authoritarianism. But why? Why did the two end up together in the minds of Marx and Lenin (and Mao and Castro and Kim Il-Sung)? No one sums this up better than the late great Milton Friedman:²⁴

The essential notion of a capitalist society is voluntary cooperation and **voluntary** exchange. The essential notion of a socialist society is fundamentally force. If the government is the master, you ultimately have to order people what to do. Whenever you try to do good with somebody else's money, you are committed to using **force**. How can you do good with somebody else's money unless you first take it away from them? The only way you can take it away from them is by threat of force. You have a policeman, a tax collector who comes to take it away from them. Whenever you use force, the bad moral value of force triumphs over good intentions.



Thomas Sowell

But, to use the Kendi calculus, one must not be simply *anti*-socialist. One must be *pro*-capitalist! Stanford University economist Thomas Sowell expressed that position this way:

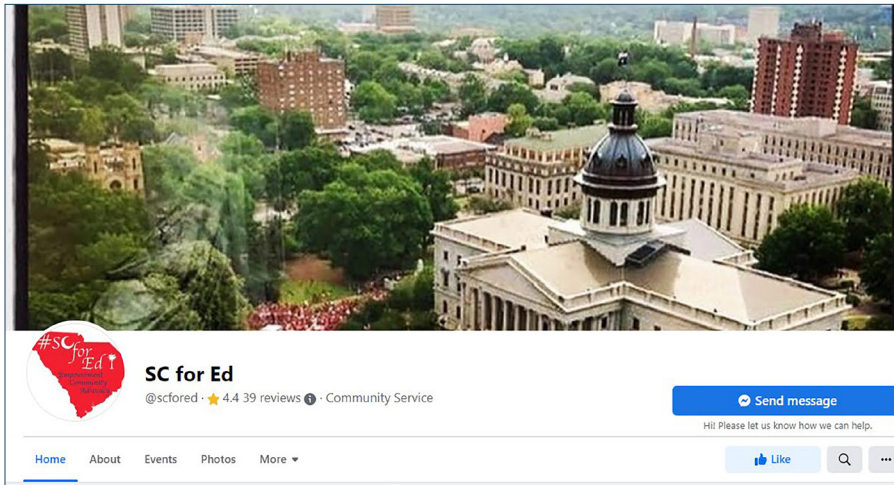
No government of the left has done as much for the poor as **capitalism** has. Even when it comes to the redistribution of income, the left talks the talk but the free market walks the walk. What do the poor most need? They need to stop being poor. And how can that be done, on a mass scale, except by an economy that creates vastly more wealth? Yet the political left has long had a remarkable lack of interest in how wealth is created. As far as they are concerned, wealth exists somehow and the only interesting question is how to redistribute it.²⁵ 🌱

4.

SC
FOR ED



4. SC FOR ED



In 2018, a new advocacy Facebook group was founded in South Carolina calling itself “SC for Ed.” The original organizational goal of its founder was to oppose “schools of innovation” legislation. The innovation bill, which was later passed by the General Assembly, allowed expansion of the Meeting Street Academy public-private school model which had achieved success in underserved communities in Charleston and Spartanburg. SC for Ed opposed the concept as an attempt at “cherry-picking” good students for Meeting Street, leaving the rest behind.

Now, four years later, SC for Ed has been incorporated as a 501c4 action organization and has earned the title “most liberal teachers organization” in South Carolina (not by a right wing firebrand, but by a strong public school apologist in the media who opposes private school choice).²⁶ SC for Ed is clearly to the left of even the alphabet soup of acronyms and abbreviations of South Carolina education organizations, making even the aforementioned NEA-affiliated SCEA look middle of the road.

SC for Ed has been quoted in the media as resisting a return to in-person teaching, calling for a return to online-only classes *after in person teaching had resumed*, supporting Black Lives Matter (the organization, not the cause), advocating for school mask requirements, opposing standardized testing, opposing merit pay for teachers, opposing school choice, supporting a repeal of Act 388 (which would result in a spike in taxes on owner-occupied homes²⁷), and supporting Elizabeth Warren’s “wealth tax.”

SC FOR ED POLICY AGENDA: ONLINE

What does SC for Ed stand for? The website for SC for Ed lists three items as its “**focus**”:

- increasing salary and improving benefits
- improving work conditions, and
- improving the funding of public schools

The site also lists four problems:

- educators are so poorly paid that record numbers are leaving the profession
- educators are no longer treated as professionals
- districts and schools are severely underfunded and have lost local rights and
- students are over-tested and an excessive amount of money is spent on testing.

On educator pay, SC for Ed makes the typical error of calling for *all* educators to be funded at the *national* average. The result would be paying excellent teachers the same as poor ones and setting teacher salary schedules for South Carolina with no regard for variations in cost of living across states.

On treatment as professionals, SC for Ed seems primarily concerned with fear of retaliation for a teacher exercising his or her free speech rights. The organization itself reported “death threats” related to its political activity and provides polling showing that teachers are reluctant to share their views for fear of retaliation by administrators.

On underfunding and local rights, SC for Ed decries the state's failure to fund Base Student Cost statewide, but also seems to call for more local control. SC for Ed wants to eliminate the Education Oversight Committee accountability agency, reform the state tax code in some way, and empower districts to choose their own start date.

On testing, SC for Ed goes farther than any of its peers, even the left-leaning SCEA. Material on testing on the SC for Ed website is in part reproduced from an organization known as Fair Test. Fair Test, which is based in Arlington, Massachusetts, calls for “end[ing] the misuses and flaws of standardized testing” but does not approve of any particular norm-referenced, criterion-referenced, or standards-referenced test.

SC FOR ED POLICY AGENDA: RALLIES 2018-2021

In May **2018**, North Carolina educators—as many as 20,000 by some counts—assembled in downtown Raleigh for a “March for Students and Rally for Respect.”

Among their grievances, according to *NEA Today* (again, the media arm of one of the organizers), was that North Carolina legislators were choosing *corporations* over *students*. Displaying a misunderstanding of the historic economic effects of reductions in corporate taxes, the NEA reported:

Since 2013, the GOP-controlled North Carolina state legislature has cut the corporate tax rate from 6.9 percent to 3 percent. The revenues lost to these tax cuts—about a half a billion dollars a year—make it impossible to adequately fund public education. And it's only going to get worse! Corporate and personal taxes are scheduled to drop again next year. The North Carolina Association of Educators (NCAE) wants the legislature to cancel these cuts until school funding is improved.²⁸

Increase
teacher salary
schedule
by 10%

Increase
salary
schedule steps
to year 28

Reword
teacher
contracts to
improve working
conditions

Fair Test dislikes national norm-referenced tests and provides an honor roll of American colleges and universities that no longer require the SAT or ACT. Fair Test even asserts that standardized testing contributes to the school-to-prison pipeline. It is mysterious how Fair Test (and therefore SC for Ed) would maintain any level of accountability at the local (school) level or compliance with federal or state law without any formative or summative assessments.



Red for Ed rally

It did not take long for the “Red for Ed” movement to move South. The SC for Ed Facebook group saw in North Carolina an opportunity for a more militant approach than had ever been tried in South Carolina. An element within the teaching profession in South Carolina did not think existing public education advocacy organizations were *progressive* enough or *aggressive* enough. Other educators who were in no way progressive, joined with SC for Ed online because they were rightly frustrated with many of the long-existing problems in public education in the Palmetto State. They were caught up in the energy of the movement without being aware of the agenda that lay behind the politics of the national Red for Ed movement out of which SC for Ed was born.

2019

The first South Carolina red rally was held at the Statehouse on May 1, **2019**. Encouraging teachers to leave their classrooms, without technically calling for a “strike” or “walkout,” the group nonetheless scheduled their protest for a regular school day. (The term some used was an “all out.”) It was in all respects a walkout. Some districts around the state actually closed schools for the day.

The South Carolina rally was orchestrated for a South Carolina legislative audience. North Carolina teacher rallies had an organized labor feel, branding their event in 2019 a “National Day of Action,”²⁹ featuring other liberal causes than education, and celebrating the agenda of Harold Zinn.³⁰ South Carolina efforts were toned down so as not to alarm the Republican supermajority in the General Assembly. South Carolina rally attendees in 2019 were sold the idea that the event was simply an effort for higher pay, smaller class sizes, and better benefits. But the NEA could not resist adding “better working conditions, and fewer charter schools” to the purpose in its reporting of the South Carolina event.³¹

2020

The **2020** event was more of a motorcade, where protestors drove around the Statehouse sounding their horns and waving placards,

a tactic also used by Planned Parenthood as well. The rhetoric for 2020 was pulled directly from the national union playbook seen around the country. Participants waved signs with messages like, “I can teach from a distance but not from a casket.”³²

2021

A Day of Protest for South Carolina Educators was scheduled for May 17, **2021** at three state capital locations: the Statehouse, the State Department of Education, and the Governor’s Mansion. Protests at school district offices were encouraged for those unable to travel to Columbia. Governor Henry McMaster and State Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman were targeted, as McMaster had prohibited mask ordinances and Spearman had lifted school mask directives. Demands listed for 2021 were: a return to in-person classes only when “safe” and other COVID-related grievances, lamenting teachers leaving the profession, and anger at the Governor’s attempt to provide funds for grants to children whose public schools were closed to attend private schools that were open. The 2021 event was eventually called off due to alleged safety concerns.

2022

On May 1, **2022**,³³ about 5,000 educators rallied at the South Carolina Statehouse. COVID was running out of steam, but organizers challenged the rights of parents to opt their children out of wearing masks in South Carolina public schools. As with other political events around the nation, including the Virginia Governor’s race, it was not difficult for observers to sense that Democrats and their activists were choosing the public education establishment over the rights of parents. Virginia actually elected a Republican governor after the Democratic incumbent’s debate performance was decidedly anti-parent. Back in South Carolina, if social media posts are a barometer (and SC for Ed and its leaders are prolific online), the real fear of SC for Ed appears to be parents encroaching on their turf (advocating for their children and their learning needs). †

**RED STATE
REVOLT:
SC FOR ED'S
INSPIRATION**

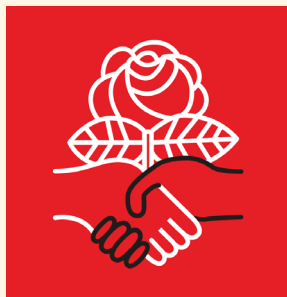
RED STATE REVOLT: SC FOR ED'S INSPIRATION

The inspiration for SC for Ed in South Carolina (est. 2019) was no doubt the West Virginia teacher strike of 2018 (February 23-March 7) and the manual it produced, Eric Blanc's *Red State Revolt: The Teachers' Strikes and Working Class Politics* (Verso, 2019).

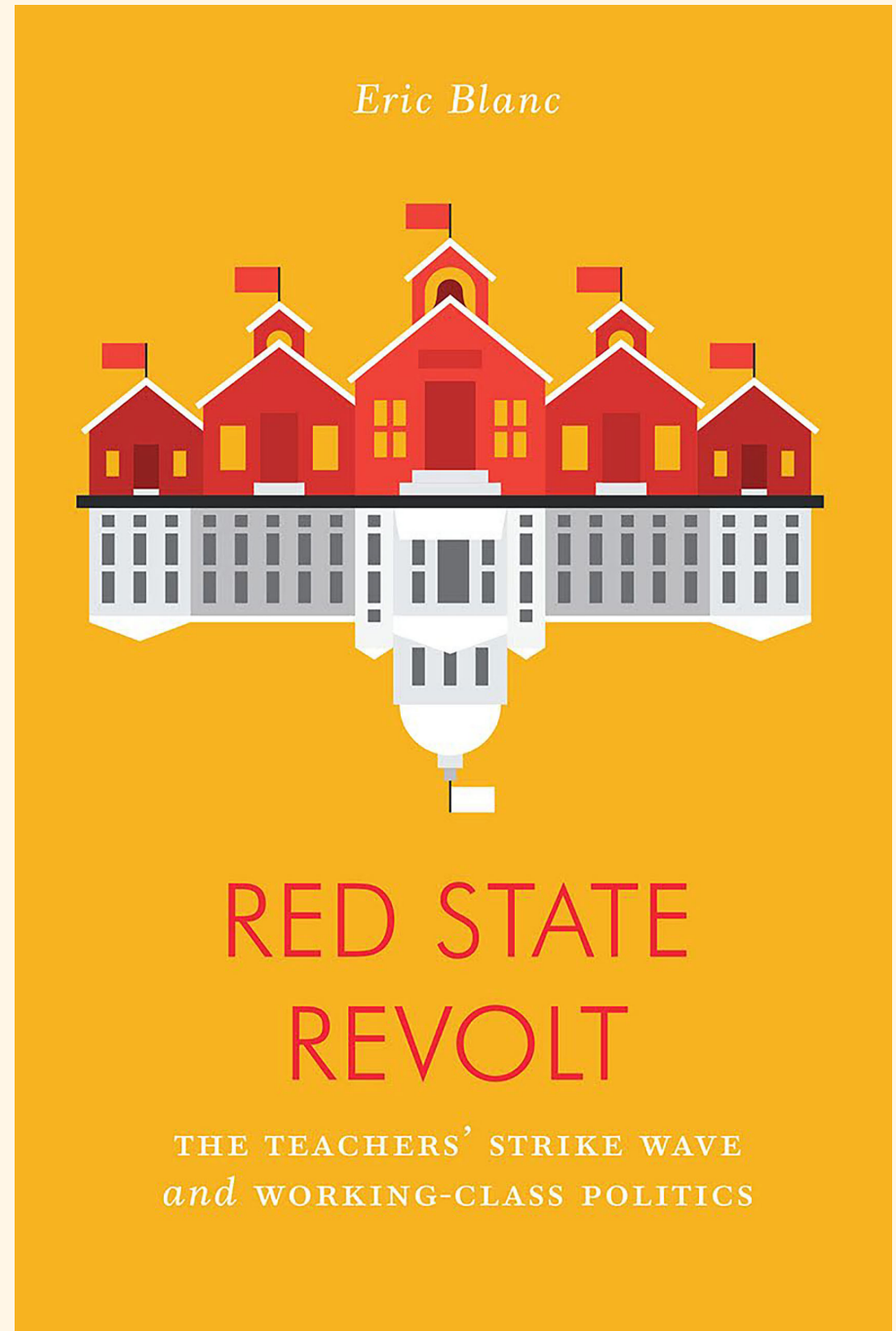
Red State Revolt is not a heartwarming story about how teachers from a broad ideological (and non-ideological) perspective reluctantly traveled to Statehouses to express their concerns and ideas about commonsense reforms to legislators in a conversational manner.

On the contrary, according to a participant in the West Virginia protest, *Red State Revolt* is a book "by a fellow radical" about "a strike" by "workers" led by "core militant teacher organizers." Key to the movement was the desire of the West Virginia chapter of Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) for "leftists looking to defeat neoliberal forces" to "make their mark in the labor movement." A reviewer and fan of the book liked it because it made it clear that: "as socialists, we also understood our responsibility to lead" and "as socialists, we saw an opening to push left."³⁴

South Carolina rally attendees no doubt had a variety of perspectives. But the inspiration of the prime mover of the event, SC for Ed, was clearly West Virginia, and this explains once again the choice of **red** as the official rally color.³⁵ †



Democratic Socialists of America



5.

**CONSULTANTS
& FOUNDATIONS**



5. CONSULTANTS & FOUNDATIONS

The most dangerous path to radical agendas entering South Carolina’s public schools can be through Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer positions in the district office, or retaining of DEI “consultants.” But education researcher Jay Greene found³⁶ that of the sixteen (16) South Carolina school districts with at least 15,000 students only two (Berkeley and Richland 2) have CDOs. That is about 13% of the larger districts. 18% of large Georgia districts have CDOs, but 82% of large Illinois districts, and 70% of large Oregon districts. Some districts have Committees that perform this function. Greene conducted a similar study of the institutions who are a part of the five “Power Five (P-5)” college football conferences.³⁷

The timeline usually works like this. A district official, (sometimes a Diversity Equity and Inclusion officer), will recommend that a review of the racial or cultural “climate” in the district or a certain school be conducted by a national consultant/firm. Students will be surveyed by a friendly firm, often without their parents’ permission. The findings will always be shockingly negative and calls for new policies to be adopted to show the world that racism (loosely defined) will not be tolerated in District X are proposed (and quickly adopted).

**DEI OFFICER (OPTIONAL) → CONSULTANT → CLIMATE STUDY
→ POLICIES
↓ AFFINITY GROUPS ↓ SEL ↓ INDOCTRINATION
↓ POLITICAL ACTIVISM**

The national organization **Parents Defending Education** has discovered that schools and school districts in the United States have retained approximately **125** different DEI consultants and firms with total expenditures of **\$22,040,757**. Often, the consultants are paid with funds from grants awarded by foundations pushing their own racial agenda.

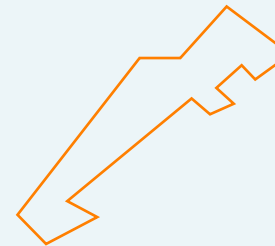
If the campus climate findings of a consultant are challenged, those findings will be reviewed by another consultant on the list. Consultant #2 will proclaim the findings of Consultant #1 to be methodologically sound, or at least in keeping with similar findings around the country.



School District Three of York

County.³⁸ Rock Hill schools published a request for proposal (RFP) in July 2021 seeking Diversity Equity and Inclusion Consulting Services (RFP #31-2205). The consultant was to conduct

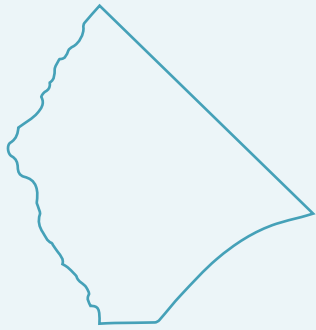
a Cultural Climate Survey. The district stated that it intended to create “affinity groups” within staff “who share an identity characteristic” to assist with its diversity training. Another objective was that “By December 2022, Library/Media Centers in all schools Pre-K-12 will include resources representative of the 8 identity groups.” The district recommends “Guideposts for Equity” from the organization Learning for Justice, which calls for students to become political activists.



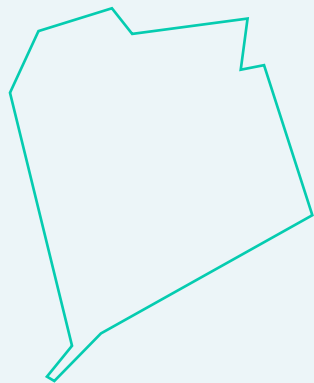
Charleston County Schools.

³⁹ The Charleston County School District implemented a Climate Survey in Fall 2021 and administered it again in Spring 2022. The school district chose Panorama Education, an organization founded by Attorney General Merrick Garland’s son-in-law Alexander (Xan)

Tanner to survey the social and emotional climate. Based on a presentation to the board, it appears that federal ARP/ESSER III funds would be used to improve attitudes. The school district’s strategic plan recommends Second Step program to teach students Social Emotional Learning (SEL) based on another organization’s (CASEL’s) “five core competences.” Both Second Step and CASEL are promoters of “SEL as levers for equity and social justice.”



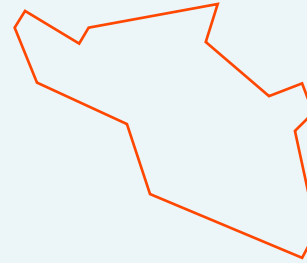
Horry County Schools.⁴⁰ The Horry County School District's website, under Family Resources, recommends resources from Learning for Justice, the Anti-Defamation League's No Place for Hate project, and CASEL. The ADL document equates failure to state gender pronouns as a form of hatred of those who are transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary.



School District of Pickens County. Parents of Pickens Middle School students received a letter and an email from the principal inviting African-American Students, Hispanic Students and Two or More Background Students to Lunch and Learns with a special speaker who would "talk with students about how to cope with being a student in a predominantly white school." Parents Defending

Education researchers were told that "students who did not fall into these categories, such as white, Asian, and others, were not invited and were excluded from these special presentations and lunch meals."⁴¹

The Pickens school district later removed *Stamped* (Jason Reynolds and Abram X. Kendi) from school libraries when parents complained. As of the date of this report, the ACLU is threatening to sue the district over its removal of the book.



Richland County School District Two. The Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer of Richland County School District Two presented "Accommodations for Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students" at an annual conference of South Carolina school leaders. The description was as follows:

"Get a review of case and statutory laws that require school districts to accommodate students based on their gender identity. Review terminology and, through the use of scenarios, discuss how districts may respond to requests and questions. The session is designed to foster reflection about how school boards can support educational equity for transgender and gender nonconforming students."⁴² But there was no mention of the new South Carolina law on women's sports that requires participants in female teams to be confined to those who were born female (sex) versus identity as a female (gender).

We need more diversity, inclusion, and equality in South Carolina, but taught without discrimination of another kind (see Proviso 1.93 on page 58). That doesn't appear to be the goal in these examples. We hope we are wrong. †



**PALMETTO
STATE TEACHERS
ASSOCIATION**

NOT IN THE CONSTELLATION OF THE LEFT

PALMETTO STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

The Palmetto State Teachers Association (PSTA) was founded in May 1976 as a homegrown and centrist alternative to the South Carolina Education Association. In its first year, the organization went on record opposing strikes by public employees (“South Carolina children are entitled to an uninterrupted education”)⁴³ and resisting involvement in political campaigns as an organization.

Six months after its founding, the first president of the organization, Elizabeth Gressette (niece of legendary Senator L. Marion Gressette), set the tone for PSTA by placing policy advances ahead of teacher pay in a presentation to the State Budget & Control Board. Above teacher pay raises to the Southeastern average on the PTSA agenda were requests for: smaller class sizes, equitable school finance, free textbooks for high school students, and requiring a proficiency test for high school graduation.⁴⁴

One of the teachers organizing PTSA said that she was done with The SCEA when she read SCEA literature and found that it was “not what I believed.” She was even more concerned that her membership in The SCEA would give the impression to the people of South Carolina that “it was what *I believed* and it wasn’t.”⁴⁵

As a part of its founding, the PSTA passed “A Declaration of Educational Principles.” That code included “putting the public back in control of its schools,” “public control of public schools free from the unreasonable demands of union non-elected union leaders,” opposition to compulsory [union or association] membership, and a belief that as teachers “the first responsibility is to the child.”⁴⁶ PSTA eschewed politics in an era when The SCEA doubled down on it.⁴⁷

Since its founding era, PSTA has continued to focus on lobbying at the Statehouse and educating its members about public policy.

PSTA stills speaks with a different voice than The SCEA, and while The SCEA lists its mission as “to defend the political, economic, and legal rights of educational workers in South Carolina,” PSTA describes its scope on IRS Form 990 as “member education and insurance.” (PTSA members are eligible for legal assistance, Liability Insurance, and Accidental Death & Dismemberment Insurance.)

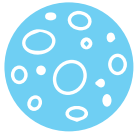
The most concerning element of PTSA’s legislative agenda is its dogged opposition to the enactment of any significant private education choice program for South Carolina. School choice does not represent a real threat to public schools. There are over 50 million students in public schools in America but only 600,000 children in private school choice programs. There are 76 educational choice programs operating in 32 states⁴⁸ proving that private choice is a tried and true method of providing alternatives to the local public school for children with unique needs. But PTSA has opposed education choice at every turn.

The latest tactic is to “poison pill” choice legislation that has gained traction by advocating that private (independent) schools that wish to participate in the choice program must administer the state public school test to school choice students rather than national norm-referenced tests. The state public school test is based on state curriculum standards and state curriculum, neither of which have a role in the curriculum or the sequencing of academic content in South Carolina independent schools. National norm-referenced tests are already administered by both public and private schools in South Carolina and therefore provide fairer comparison. But, PSTA contends that it is the state public school test that would provide an “apples to apples” comparison. †

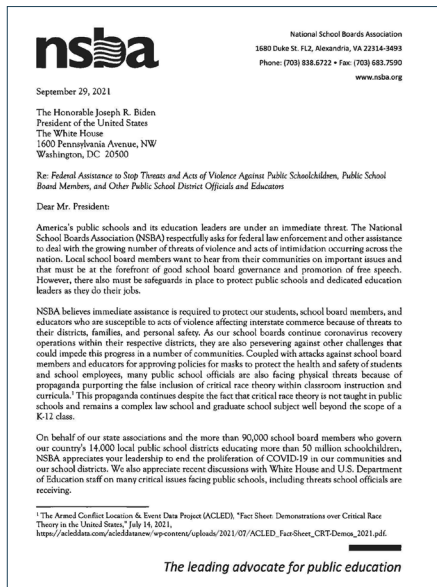
PTSA does not belong in the “constellation of the left,” so we summarize its history and agenda here as a freestanding entry.

6.

**NATIONAL
SCHOOL BOARDS
ASSOCIATION**



6. NATIONAL SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION



The onset of COVID-19 created a public health and a public policy crisis in America. Parents became frustrated as some school administrators and some school boards seemed indifferent to the learning loss their children were experiencing. Parents struggled to understand how public educators could express their comfort with a near permanent shift to virtual learning even as the coronavirus threat had all but disappeared and children were falling behind.

The organization that demonstrated the worst case of a tin ear to the concerns of parents during the waning days of COVID was the National School Boards Association (NSBA). On September 29, 2021, the NSBA sent a letter to President Biden calling on him to protect school board members from potential “domestic terrorism” and “hate crimes.” The collusion of NSBA with the Administration⁴⁹ in advance was abundantly clear when shortly afterward Attorney General Garland issued a memorandum directing federal prosecutors and law enforcement to aid local police in “discourag(ing) these threats, identify(ing) them when they occur, and prosecut(ing) them when appropriate.”⁵⁰

The backlash to the NSBA missive could not have been stronger. State Attorneys General, including South Carolina Attorney General Alan Wilson wrote to the President, decrying the attempt “to intimidate parents into giving up their constitutional rights to direct the upbringing and education of their children.”

The NSBA indicated that their letter was sent “on behalf of our state associations,” and the South Carolina School Boards Association initially retweeted the NSBA’s letter. But SCSBA eventually withdrew from the NSBA.

“Aside from an October 22 letter of apology to state associations, NSBA has taken few steps to mitigate the negative impact of the letter on many states including South Carolina,” School Boards Association President Cheryl Burgess and Executive Director Scott Price wrote to their membership. “On the whole, the board felt it was in the best interest of SCSBA’s membership to sever ties with NSBA at once.”⁵¹

One of the incidents the NSBA cited in its Biden letter was that of Loudon County (Virginia) parent Scott Smith, whose ninth grade daughter was sexually assaulted by a male in the female restroom at her school. Smith could find no evidence that the assault had been documented by the school and appeared before the school board in protest. Smith became upset when school board members and activists in the meeting rejected his daughter’s account of the incident or that transgender restroom policies had played a role in the assault. Smith was arrested for assault.

“Aside from an October 22 letter of apology to state associations, NSBA has taken few steps to mitigate the negative impact of the letter on many states including South Carolina.”
—SC School Boards Association

A juvenile court judge later determined that there was sufficient evidence to find the student guilty of sexual misconduct against Smith’s daughter. The student was transferred to another school and was soon charged with a subsequent incident in that school.⁵² †

7.

K-12

ASSOCIATIONS



7. K-12 ASSOCIATIONS

For nearly every type of school administrator, teacher or staff member, there is a national organization related to his or her specific specialty. Many of them provide support and best practices, but others are all about advocacy and seemingly bruising for a fight.

For example, there is the mainstream **National Science Teaching Association (NSTA)** but there is also the **National Center for Science Education (NCSE)**. NSTA⁵³ provided language to policymakers that bridged the divide over evolution and allowed Science Standards to be approved by both the South Carolina State Board of Education and the Education Oversight Committee.⁵⁴ Contrast that assistance with NCSE,⁵⁵ which characterized attempts to broaden the wording of South Carolina Science Standards in both 2005 and 2014 as likely to drive economic development away from South Carolina.



The AMLE is the **Association for Middle Level Education**. Among AMLE's five core values is the belief that all young adolescents deserve and education that is Equitable. That is defined as "providing socially just learning opportunities and environments for every student."⁵⁶

Then there is the **Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)**.⁵⁷ ASCD describes itself as "a passionate community of life-changing educators. Our community is empowered to be equity and instructional warriors who transform vision into practice."

The Policy and Advocacy center of the **National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)** had this to say about bills that passed overwhelmingly in South Carolina:

*[S]tate legislatures are increasingly considering legislation that **discriminates against** transgender individuals with a particular focus on students in K-12 public schools. The Human Rights Campaign reported in February 2016 that 44 anti-transgender bills had been filed in 16 states; more than double the amount in 2015. Twenty-three of the bills are targeted specifically at children in schools, including legislation regarding **school sports** and public school facilities.*

Library Associations are particularly numerous and aggressively progressive. These include the **American Library Association (ALA)**, the **American Association of School Librarians (AASL)**, and the **South Carolina Association of School Librarians (SCASL)**.[†]

8.

**HIGHER
EDUCATION**



8. HIGHER EDUCATION

The work of group K-12 Associations in concert with Higher Education can be illustrated based on a single news item and the reaction to it.

Lexington-Richland School District Five [LR-5] Book Controversy.

Rebecca Blackburn Hines, an LR-5 school board member, wrote State Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman for advice on books in the district's libraries that parents and Governor Henry McMaster had found to be "pornographic."⁵⁸ One book contained sexually explicit illustrations. In her letter, Hines noted a double standard. After parents read portions of the book aloud during a school board meeting, the District Superintendent asked the board for permission to edit out that portion of the audio before the meeting could be published online. But the controversial books remained on the shelves. In a written response, to Hines, Superintendent Spearman referred to a meeting held earlier in the school year with Superintendents where she urged districts to update their school library policies and to pull several books that had caused offense across the state. "I again strongly recommend your district to adopt and follow the model policy, remove the inappropriate texts, and ensure that students in your community are no longer subjected to obscene and pornographic depictions," Spearman wrote.

K-12 Organizations and Higher Education Organizations are separate types of entities on our chart and they can operate independently, but a recent Zoom call that made its way into the media provides evidence of the hand in hand approach that K-12 and Higher Ed organizations often take.

In this presentation,⁵⁹ leaders among South Carolina school librarians discuss parental challenges to the books they had chosen to place/allow on their shelves.

One presenter references the University of South Carolina's College of Information and Communications' "South Carolina Center for Community Literacy (SCCCL)." SCCCL's web page features "Intellectual Freedom Resources" that appear to be designed to arm librarians against concerned parents (and the Governor and State Superintendent of Education who expressed concerns about the books). The website goes on to state that if those resources are not sufficient, employees at USC are available by phone or email to provide more in depth assistance.

The presenter further states that in the Lexington-Richland 5 case discussed above, the school librarian used this USC SCCCL resource to assist in pushing back against parents who "read part of the book [*All Boys Aren't Blue*] out of context" at the school board meeting. The presenter describes the suggestion that the portions read in public were "pornographic" and the LR5 Superintendent's efforts to edit the audio before posting online as "insane."

"I again strongly recommend your district to adopt and follow the model policy, remove the inappropriate texts, and ensure that students in your community are no longer subjected to obscene and pornographic depictions."

— Molly Spearman

The online seminar continues with how USC's SCCCL helped the L-R5 librarian "make the case for that book."

Once again, state-based organizations—the South Carolina Association of School Librarians and an arm of USC—are essential assisting national groups to carry out their mission versus seeking a consensus on community standards as Superintendent Spearman suggested. In this case, those national groups are the American Library Association, and its affiliate the American Association of School Librarians.⁶⁰

Higher Education has been the home of what came to be known as “political correctness” and “speech codes” at least as far back as the late 1980s. There exists there a form of neo-racism under the guise of “anti-racism” and attacks on the capitalist economic system are commonplace. The ideological push from the highest levels can be overwhelming. This was recently documented by researchers with the Idaho Freedom Foundation, in a case study of Boise State University, where IFF found widespread efforts from the administration down to residence hall policies and the university Writing Center to push a political agenda.⁶¹

Higher Education has been the home of what came to be known as “political correctness” and “speech codes” at least as far back as the late 1980s.

A more direct influence on the worldview of future teachers of South Carolina children is the subject matter and pedagogy content delivered by colleges and schools of education within universities, both public and private. From time to time, the media and state agencies report on the proficiency of graduates of state colleges of education (example: PRAXIS results) but worldview is not regularly surveyed or reported. This is beyond the scope of this work as well, but is a worthy study to pursue. †



9.

ACCREDITORS



9. ACCREDITORS.

National agendas can find their way into undergraduate teaching through organizations like the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) which came about through the merger of The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC). The DEI agenda seems to have been swallowed whole by CAEP (or perhaps the other way around). Notice what is expected of Colleges of Education and how “content” and “pedagogy” are defined:⁶²

Introduction: Equity and diversity measures have been specifically included in components of the standards to ensure proper attention is given and each provider must demonstrate progress toward recruiting and graduating a candidate pool that reflects the **diversity** of America’s P-12 students, as well as increased flexibility in documenting candidates [sic] academic knowledge and their impact on student learning and development.



Standard #1 [of 6]: Content and Pedagogical Knowledge.

The provider ensures that candidates develop an understanding of the critical concepts and principles of their discipline and facilitates candidates’ reflection of their **personal biases** to increase their understanding and practice of **equity, diversity, and inclusion**. The provider is intentional in the development of their curriculum and clinical experiences for candidates to demonstrate their ability to effectively work with **diverse** P-12 students and their families.



Again, diversity, inclusion and equality are important, but by whose definition, Ibram Kendi's or Tim Scott's? We suspect that there is no diversity in the definition of diversity.

This is just one of many accreditors demanding acceptance of an agenda in return for its Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval. 🌱

10.

LITIGATORS



10. LITIGATORS

National litigators that recruit plaintiffs in South Carolina to promote humanism and extreme views of separation of church and state include the American Civil Liberties Union, ACLU South Carolina, Americans United [for Separation of Church & State], the Freedom from Religion Foundation, and the American Humanist Association.

- **The American Humanist Association (AHA)** filed suit against the School District of Greenville County (2013, 2015) for holding Mountain View Elementary's Fifth Grade graduation ceremony in the chapel of nearby church-affiliated North Greenville University.
- **Americans United for Separation of Church & State (AU)** demanded that Aiken and Edgefield school districts (2007) stop allowing Laces4Love, a ministry of First Baptist Church North Augusta from providing new shoes and socks for the holidays to needy students. AU also opposed non-compulsory prayer meetings at Georgetown High School (2010)⁶³ and prayer at meetings of the Berkeley County School Board (2016).
- **The Freedom from Religion Foundation (FFRF)** sued Spartanburg County School District Seven (2009) for awarding elective credit to students for classes taken off campus at the South Carolina Bible Education in School Time (SC-BEST) ministry.
- The national **American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)** and the **South Carolina ACLU** sued Chesterfield County School District (2012) over prayer and religious activities held in district schools. The ACLU was among the organizations that advertised their willingness to take legal action against school districts that removed certain books from school libraries (2021).[†]

STATE

[GREENVILLE]

Humanist group files complaint about elementary graduation at Baptist-affiliated university —

A humanist group is complaining that a 5th-grade graduation was held at North Greenville University.

The Greenville News reported that the **American Humanist Association** has sent a letter of complaint to a Taylors elementary school that held graduation at the university, which is affiliated with the S.C. Baptist Convention.

Attorney Monica Miller with the association says the group sent the letter after two parents of students at Mountain View Elementary School complained about the May 30 ceremony at the university's chapel in Tigerville. The parents also complained about two prayers during the ceremony.

— *The Associated Press*

S C POLITICS



11.

**STANDARDS,
CURRICULUM,
AND TEXTBOOKS**



11. STANDARDS, CURRICULUM, AND TEXTBOOKS



Before the Common Core controversy (2010-present) the existence of the phenomenon known as “curriculum standards” was unknown outside the professional education bubble. But the involvement of the federal Department

of Education in placing its thumb on the funding scales in favor of states that had adopted Common Core-friendly standards (CCSS) made curriculum standards front page news. In time, most states formally pulled away from CCSS and the testing consortia tied to them.

Before 2010, controversies around what was being taught in public schools centered mostly around curriculum and books (textbooks and required readings). Examples are legion, but a number of the controversies surrounded Science (creation, evolution, intelligent design) and English Language Arts (“banned books” like *Catcher in the Rye*). One of the more notorious was that of Kanawha County, West Virginia in 1974, where schools in that county were closed for extended periods as a “textbook war” raged.

“Before 2010, controversies around what was being taught in public schools centered mostly around curriculum and books (textbooks and required readings).”

The federal Department of Education (ED) can pressure universities and local public schools—using both funding and the legal guidance documents it issues on a wide range of topics—to drive policy.

But the role of setting curriculum standards,⁶⁴ providing curriculum guidance, and choosing textbooks rests with the state (State Board of Education, State Superintendent of Education, and State Department of Education).

The [state] board is responsible for establishing minimum standards for schools, prescribing and enforcing rules for certifying teachers, prescribing the courses of study for public schools and adopting textbooks and other instructional materials to be used in public schools.⁶⁵

This all means one thing. If the textbooks, curricula, and curriculum standards used in South Carolina are to be rigorous, balanced, and reflective of South Carolina values—it matters a great deal who sits on the State Board. The State Board is appointed by the Governor (1 seat) and elected by the General Assembly by judicial circuit (16 seats) for four-year terms.

“If the textbooks, curricula, and curriculum standards used in South Carolina are to be rigorous, balanced, and reflective of South Carolina values—it matters a great deal who sits on the State Board.”

We list Standards, Curriculum, and Textbooks here as one of the potential national pressure points on local South Carolina schools because this is clearly the case at the federal level and could easily occur at the state level if NEA and SCEA members use the system to direct state dollars to textbooks, standards, and curricula they and their constellation of allies wish to insert into Palmetto State classrooms. 🌱

**EDUCATION VS
INDOCTRINATION:**

**THE BATTLE FOR YOUNG
SOUTH CAROLINA MINDS**

Our tour through the world of “radical” and “disruptive” “social warrior” organizations pressing down hard on South Carolina schools, students, teachers, and parents has had the collateral benefit of revealing the marked difference in worldview from that of the typical South Carolina parent and teacher.

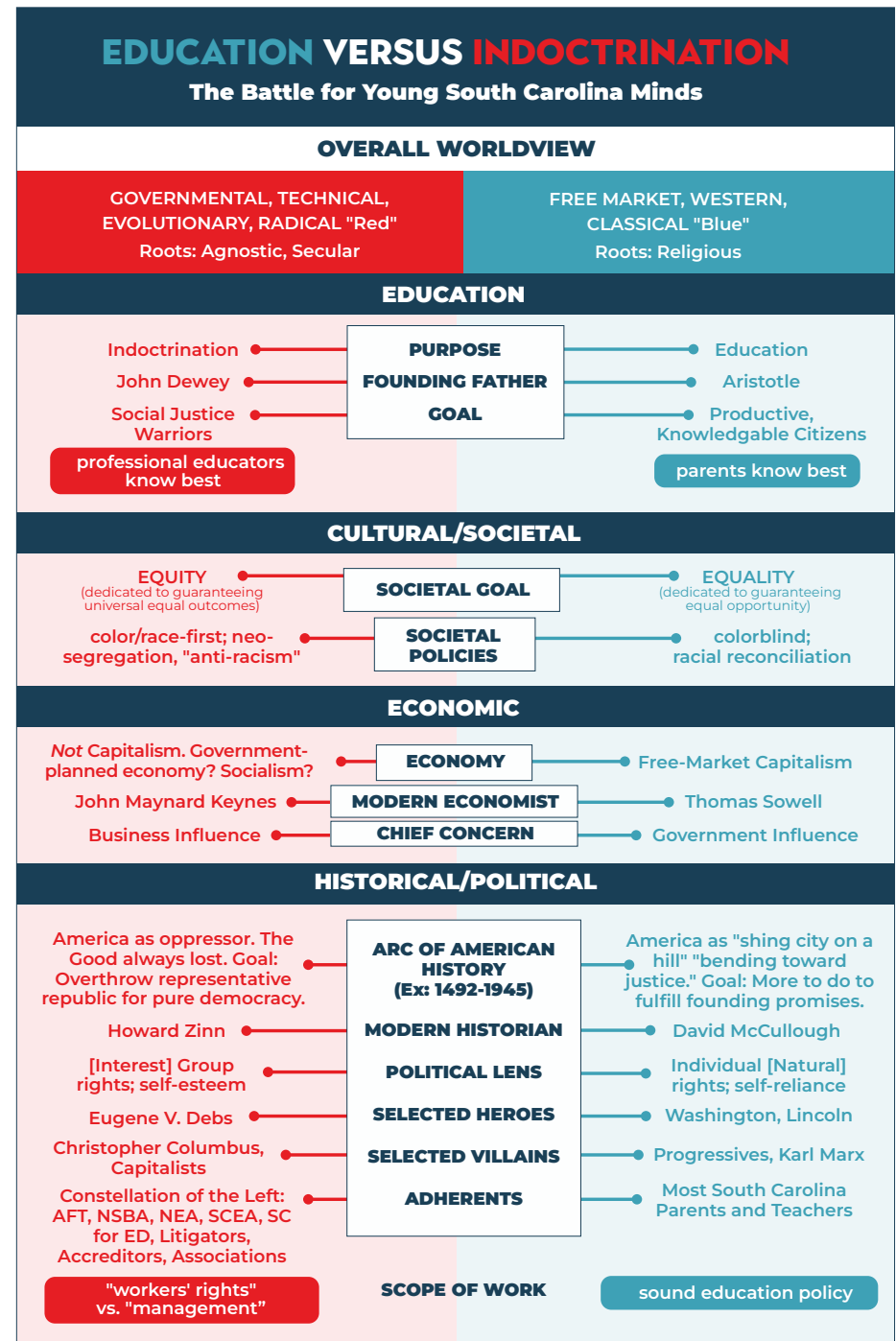
This broad “constellation” of *indoctrination* organizations has vastly different origins, goals, heroes, and villains from those of advocates of what we believe to be true *education*.

The clashing worldview systems also have dramatically different outlooks on critical matters like the purpose of education itself—and the subject areas of American economics, history, culture, sociology, and politics.

“The clashing worldview systems also have dramatically different outlooks on critical matters like the purpose of education itself— and the subject areas of American economics, history, culture, sociology, and politics.”

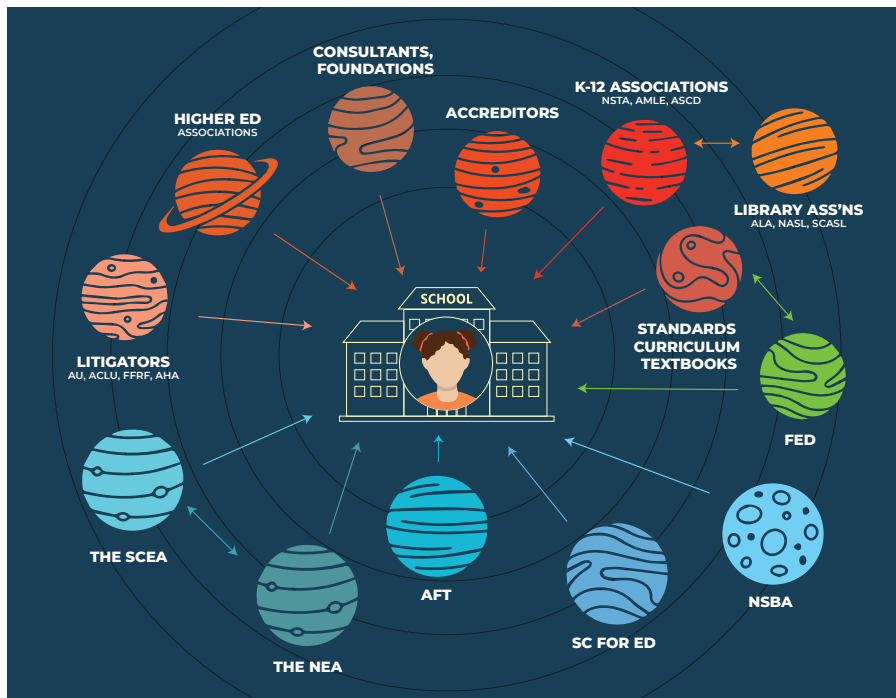
This chart, summarizing the conflict, is based on primary sources cited in this dossier, as well a vast body of proof documents and eyewitness accounts we do not have the space to even footnote here.

In reviewing this graphic, consider this: aside from our “education” versus “indoctrination” characterization, we are not sure that there would be much disagreement from the folks on the left with the details of the worldview clash as we have illustrated it here. Even indoctrination might be greeted as positive to the disciples of John Dewey, Howard Zinn, and *Red State Revolt*.[†]



CONCLUSION: WHAT'S A PARENT (OR TEACHER) TO DO?

Let's return to our graphic.



It is easy to see how when faced with myriad ideologically driven organizations bearing down upon them from all sides, South Carolina parents and teachers may be faced with either joining the ideological jihad or remaining silent lest they suffer academic or reputational harm (or both).

The deck is clearly stacked against rights of conscience, academic freedom in education, and *sanity*.

So, what is a teacher or parent to do?

✓ **Seek a Parental Bill of Rights.** One option that is gaining steam around the nation is to put a statute on the books that codifies common sense about the role and rights of parents. South Carolina is one of the **32** states that protects parental rights as fundamental by requiring “strict scrutiny” in courts when parental rights are in question. But South Carolina is not among the **15** states⁶⁶ that have laws affirmatively protecting parental rights.

Parental Bills of Rights typically have at least four elements. Those are that **parents**: 1) are their children's primary caregivers, 2) must provide permission before health services can be administered to their children, 3) should be allowed to view the curriculum being taught to their children. The fourth element is that **children** should be protected from being compelled to profess any idea or belief. This is particularly relevant on the issue of race because the Civil Rights Act of 1964 forbids discrimination based on membership in any race (among other protected classes).

On the curriculum issue, South Carolina has a unique history. Since the enactment of the Comprehensive Health Education Act in 1988, sexuality education has been a source of periodic controversy. Advocates of “comprehensive” sexuality education have sought to loosen the restraints of the law, while abstinence-based educators have worked to shore-up its restrictions. Both sides seemed to agree that transparency was desirable, so over 10 years ago, Senator Larry Grooms (R-Berkeley) proposed a proviso for the state budget that would require each school district to report its specific sex-ed (health-ed) curriculum and post a link to it on its website (see page 57). Compliance has not met the requirements and spirit of the proviso, but the transparency principle has been in state law in one curriculum area for over a decade. Transparency should be in statute rather than proviso, include all curricula, and include penalties for failure to comply.

Recommended Resources:

“Protecting Children and Families with Parents’ Bill of Rights,” Jonathan Butcher and Lindsey Burke, The Heritage Foundation, Issue Brief #5262, April 11, 2022.

“State Lawmakers are Combatting Racism the Right Way. Here’s What You Need to Know,” Jonathan Butcher, The Heritage Foundation, February 9, 2022.

“Parental Rights: A Foundational Account,” Melissa Moschella, The Heritage Foundation, December 9, 2020.

✔ **Work for true diversity, equality, and inclusion.** Real diversity, equality and inclusion in an education setting means that all students are made to feel welcome and included. Students should not be segregated by race in school for any purpose or be made to feel shame because of their race. It means that to the extent possible, all students should have an opportunity to engage with teachers and administrators who look like them.

Real diversity and inclusion mean that no teacher or student shall be compelled to hold a particular viewpoint or speak/write in support of a particular political position.

Real equality means that there shall be a color-blind, (and in some cases gender-blind, etc.) level playing field within a public school for all students rather than “race first” or “gender first” policies that segregate students based on their immutable characteristics.

Real equality means that education funding is based on a fair state/local split depending on the wealth of the district or area, and that schools are adequately compensated for students who require more resources to educate (funding weights). Funding should be student-centered, not program-centered, and funding should follow the child. True equity also means that schools actually provide the services for which they receive weighted funding to provide.

It is a clear violation of the Constitution’s First Amendment to require educators as a condition of employment to commit to a political agenda or affirm programming that promotes treating individuals differently based on skin color.

Recommended Resources:

Opinion of the Attorney General, State of Montana, Attorney General Austin Knudsen, Volume No. 58, Opinion No. 1, Critical Race Theory and Antiracism, May 27, 2021.

“Scott Yenor and Anna K. Miller, “Social Justice Ideology in Idaho Higher Education,” Idaho Freedom Foundation & The Claremont Institute, December 2020.

Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964. Protects against segregation, compelled speech, and viewpoint discrimination.



✓ **Understand the evils of racism past and present.** A part of racial reconciliation involves acknowledgement of the evils perpetuated upon people of color in America. It also means an understanding that racism exists today and must be fought in the myriad strongholds where it continues to lace its poison. Senator Tim Scott described how he has been stopped by law enforcement *18 times*—even stopped on his way to the floor of the U.S. Senate with his U.S. Senator pin clearly visible in his lapel! At the same time, Senator Scott, in his response to President Biden’s address to Congress in 2021 had this to say about the difference between fighting racism and the “anti-racism” agenda:



Tim Scott

When America comes together, we’ve made tremendous progress. But powerful forces want to pull us apart. A hundred years ago, kids in classrooms were taught the color of their skin was their most important characteristic — and if they looked a certain way, they were inferior. **Today, kids again are being taught that the color of their skin defines them — and if they look a certain way, they’re an oppressor.**

From colleges to corporations to our culture, people are making money and gaining power by pretending we haven’t made any progress. By doubling down on the divisions we’ve worked so hard to heal. You know this stuff is wrong. Hear me clearly: America is not a racist country. It’s backwards to fight discrimination with different discrimination. And it’s wrong to try to use our painful past to dishonestly shut down debates in the present.

Scott went on to say that “[o]riginal sin is never the end of the story. Not in our souls, and not for our nation. The real story is always redemption.” Remarkably, at nearly the same point in history, Columbia University professor John McWhorter was publishing his book on the anti-racist movement led by Ibram X. Kendi. McWhorter, an African-American political liberal, told NPR later that same year (2021) that it is a question of how racism and inequality is to best be fought:



John McWhorter

This is a religion where instead of it being about your faith in Jesus, it’s about showing that you know that racism exists above all else, including basic compassion. That’s religious.

And then also, the way we talk about white privilege is eerily consonant with the way one talks about original sin. You have it from the beginning, it’s a stain that you’ll never get rid of. You’re supposed to always think about it. It’s there regardless of the condition of your life, and you’re going

to die with it. So white privilege becomes the original sin that you’re supposed to live in a kind of atonement for.

The idea is to help people who need help. The modern idea that microaggressions and how white people feel in their heart of hearts is what we should be thinking about to me is a detour.

Great minds think alike!

Recommended Resources:

Trey Gowdy and Tim Scott, *Unified: How Our Unlikely Friendship Gives Us Hope for a Divided Country* (Tyndale, 2018).

Tim Scott, *America, a Redemption Story: Choosing Hope, Creating Unity* (Thomas Nelson, 2022).

John McWhorter, *Woke Racism: How a New Religion Has Betrayed Black America* (Portfolio, 2021).

Irshad Manji, "Fighting Racism without Shaming," Heterodox Academy (HxA), YouTube, August 21, 2020. Other resources at www.heterodoxacademy.org.

Frederick Douglass, "What the Black Man Wants" (1865).

✔ **Learn about the alternatives to The NEA and AFT.** There are alternatives to The NEA and AFT that teachers can join. Some offer the same benefits as the "large and left" without the indoctrination. School districts should not deduct any organization dues from educator paychecks, neither should they publish a list of organizations available to teachers and parents. But if they do, the list should include alternatives.

Recommended Resources:

Association of American Educators. The Association of American Educators (AAE) is the non-union professional educators organization, established in 1994 by nationally recognized educators who saw the need for a professional educators organization that focuses on student achievement without an emphasis on partisan politics and that provides genuine professional benefits at a reasonable price.
aeteachers.org

✔ **Participate in the life of the school, school district, and state education advisory boards.** Parents and teachers who are uncomfortable with an ideology-driven education system (led by the twelve or so influencers from a left perspective we have illustrated in this document) cannot quit the field and leave public education wide open to only one perspective. There are innumerable opportunities for service in schools, school districts, and statewide.

Volunteering in a school, running for district board of trustees, or making your willingness to serve on state curriculum committees (or even the State Board of Education or Education Oversight Committee) can help right the ship and help ensure that education is not about indoctrination or stigmatizing one group or party or ideology for problems in our society.

✔ **Parents should talk with their children regularly** about what they are learning in school and what books they are reading and be prepared to share any concerns with school boards or principals.

✔ **We invite citizens to visit the Palmetto Promise Institute website and social media** often and to subscribe to our weekly email. Palmetto Promise will track important education reform efforts like Parent's Bill of Rights, Open Enrollment, and Education Scholarship Accounts (ESAs). (See item 2 of Proviso 1.48 on page 57.) 🌳

DOCUMENTS & DATA

STATE BUDGET PROVISOS



SOUTH CAROLINA 2022-23 BUDGET PROVISOS **1.48: SDE: HEALTH EDUCATION.**

1. Each school district is required to ensure that all comprehensive health education, reproductive health education, and family life education conducted within the district, whether by school district employees or a private entity, must utilize curriculum that complies with the provisions contained in Chapter 32, Title 59 and aligns to all standards and regulations adopted by the South Carolina State Board of Education. Each district shall publish on its website the title and publisher of all health education materials it has approved, adopted, and used in the classroom. If the department determines that a district is non-compliant with mandated health education upon review of the district's annual CHE Compliance Surveyor if the district fails to publish the title and publisher of materials on its website, then the Department of Education shall withhold one percent of the district's funds allocated in Part IA, Section 1, X - Student Health and Fitness Act until the department determines the district is in compliance.

2. Any person may complain in a signed, notarized writing to the chairman of the governing board of a school district that matter not in compliance with the requirements of Chapter 32, Title 59 is being taught in the district. Upon receiving a notarized complaint, the chairman of the governing board must ensure that the complaint is immediately investigated and, if the complaint is determined to be founded, that immediate action is taken to correct the violation. If corrective action is not taken within 60 days of such a determination, or if no investigation is made within 60 days of the chairman's receipt of the notarized statement, then the complainant may within 60 calendar days, give written notice to the department. The notice must include the original notarized complaint. If, upon investigation, the department determines that the district has not taken appropriate immediate action to correct a violation, then the Department of Education shall withhold one percent of the district's funds allocated in Part IA, Section 1, X - Student Health and Fitness Act until the department determines the district is in compliance. †



SOUTH CAROLINA 2022-23 BUDGET PROVISION 1.93: SDE: PARTISANSHIP CURRICULUM.

For the current fiscal year, of the funds allocated by the Department of Education to school districts, no monies shall be used by any school district or school to provide instruction in, to teach, instruct, or train any administrator, teacher, staff member, or employee to adopt or believe, or to approve for use, make use of, or carry out standards, curricula, lesson plans, textbooks, instructional materials, or instructional practices that serve to inculcate any of the following concepts:

- 1.** one race or sex is inherently superior to another race or sex;
- 2.** an individual, by virtue of his race or sex, is inherently racist, sexist, or oppressive, whether consciously or unconsciously;
- 3.** an individual should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment solely or partly because of his race or sex;
- 4.** an individual's moral standing or worth is necessarily determined by his race or sex;
- 5.** an individual, by virtue of his race or sex, bears responsibility for actions committed in the past by other members of the same race or sex;
- 6.** an individual should feel discomfort, guilt, anguish, or any other form of psychological distress on account of his race or sex;
- 7.** meritocracy or traits such as a hard work ethic are racist or sexist, or were created by members of a particular race to oppress members of another race; and
- 8.** fault, blame, or bias should be assigned to a race or sex, or to members of a race or sex because of their race or sex. Nothing contained herein shall be construed as prohibiting any professional development training for teachers related to issues of addressing unconscious bias within the context of teaching certain literary or historical concepts or issues related to the impacts of historical or past discriminatory policies. †

SELECTED NATIONAL EDUCATION ORGANIZATIONS

A large number of national organizations, many of them headquartered in the Washington, DC metropolitan area, are dedicated to P-12 education issues or P-12 occupational specialties. Some of those listed below may be concerned with higher education, but every attempt has been made to limit the listing to P-12. Each organization represents an opportunity to influence education in South Carolina. We provide this list not to call out each one listed as supporting "indoctrination over education" but to show the large number of national groups (of whatever perspective) in existence. Readers are encouraged to research each group for themselves.

KEY: *Policy positions unknown (if any).*

Discussed in this dossier.

American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD)

Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE)

American Association of Physics Teachers (AAPT)

[American] School Superintendents Association (AASA)

American Association of School Librarians (ala.org/aasl)

American Association of School Personnel Administrators (AASPA)

American Association of Teachers of French (AATF)

American Association of Teachers of German (AATG)

American College Personnel Association (ACPA)

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)

American Educational Research Association (AERA)

American Evaluation Association (AEA)

American Federation of Teachers (AFT)

American Historical Association (AHA)

American Library Association (ALA)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA)

Association for Career & Technical Education (ACTE)

Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI)

Association for Early Learning Leaders (AELL)

Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT)

Association for Experiential Education (AEE)

Association of Educational Service Agencies (AESAs)

Association of American Educators (AAE)

Association of Independent School Admission Professionals (AISAP)

Association of International Education Administrators (AIEA)

Association of International Educators (NAFSA)

Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS)

Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE)

Association of School Business Officers International (ASBO)

ASCD, Learn, Teach, Lead (ASCD)

Cooperative Education and Internship Association (CEIA)

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)

Council of Educational Facilities Planners International (CEFPI)

Council for School Networking (CoSN)

Future of Education Technology Conference® (FETC)

International Reading Association (IRA)
International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)
International Education Technology Association (ITEA)
Marketing Educators' Association (MEA)
Modern Language Association (MLA)
Music Teachers National Association (MTNA)
National Art Education Association (NAEA)
National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE)
National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)
National Association for Music Education (NAfME)
National Association for Pupil Transportation (NAPT)
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions (NAAHP)
National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE)
National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT)
National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)
National Association of Extension Program and Staff Development Professionals (NAEPSDP)
National Association of Geoscience Teachers (NAGT)
National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)
National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO)
National Association of School Safety and Law Enforcement Officials (NASSLEO)
National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)
National Association of Special Education Teachers (NASET).
National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS)

National Business Education Association (NBEA)
National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)
National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)
National Education Association (NEA)
National Organization for Student Success (NOSS)
National Parenting Education Network (NPEN)
National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA)
National School Boards Association (NSBA)
National Science Teachers Association (NSTA)
National Parent Teachers Association (PTA)
Reading Recovery Council of North America (RRCNA)
State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA)
Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE)
United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA) 

ENDNOTES

¹ “Most Conservative States 2022,” World Population Review. <https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/most-conservative-states>

² V. O. Key Jr., *Southern Politics in State & Nation*, Tennessee, 1949; 1984.

³ We do not use the term “militant left” lightly. We are aware that what is “left” in the American South or even in America generally may be considered moderate in Britain or France or even Canada. But the groups discussed in these pages that are active in South Carolina are self-professed anti-capitalist, identify as “red,” gratuitously refer to teachers and support staff as “workers,” describe their activities as “union organizing” and hold May 1 as sacred (as do socialists and communists internationally). To suggest these groups are actually moderate and are being unfairly characterized as left is to deny basic facts.

⁴ Peter Gibbon, “Portrait of a Progressive Thinker,” *Humanities* (National Endowment for the Humanities), Spring 2019.

⁵ E. D. Hirsch, Jr., *Why Knowledge Matters: Rescuing Our Children from Failed Educational Theories*, Harvard, 2016.

⁶ John Dewey, “Impressions of Soviet Russia and the Revolutionary World,” *The New Republic*, November 20, 1928.

⁷ John Dewey, “My Pedagogic Creed,” *School Journal*, January 1897, pp. 77-80.

⁸ Suzanne Bates, “National Teachers Unions Look to the South,” *Americans for Fair Treatment*, October 7, 2021.

⁹ Samuel Chamberlain, “Teachers’ Union Sues Rhode Island Mom Over Requests for CRT Curriculum Info,” *New York Post*, August 5, 2021. <https://nypost.com/2021/08/05/teachers-union-sues-mom-over-requests-for-crt-curriculum-info/>

¹⁰ Our investigative research has not determined how an undergraduate education major at a South Carolina public college made his way onto the NEA magazine distribution list. But then how does a newly approved substitute teacher in the Lowcountry receive a membership application for the NEA before she has taught her first class? That happened too. Even if perfectly legal, the path from future educator to NEA member prospect seems technologically seamless in South Carolina.

¹¹ Robert Pondiscio, “The Unexamined Rise of Therapeutic Education: How Social-emotional Learning Extends K–12 Education’s Reach into Students’ Lives and Expands Teachers’ Roles,” *American Enterprise Institute*, October 13, 2021.

¹² A “private charter” is an oxymoron. Charter schools are by definition public schools and run by boards with public authority. Perhaps a public charter school chose to contract with a private provider of *administrative* services in this case? That would not constitute privatization.

¹³ The NEA has been increasingly secretive about the proceedings of its annual meeting in real time, but the resolutions of The NEA are available at: https://www.nea.org/sites/default/files/2022-08/nea-resolutions_2022-2023.pdf

¹⁴ “Active and Total Membership Numbers for National Education Association State Affiliates for 2019-20 Plus Percentage Change Since 2018-19 and Cumulative Percentage Change Since 2014-15,” National Education Association. States losing the most active members in terms of percentage drop over the last five years were: Nevada (-57.9%), North Carolina (-26.9%), Georgia (-24.2%), Arkansas (-21.9%) and South Carolina (-20.3%).

<https://www.eiaonline.com/NEAMembership2019-20.pdf>

¹⁵ Joseph Bustos, “South Carolina School Board Association Leaves National Group,” *The State*, November 8, 2021. <https://www.thestate.com/article255652196.html>

¹⁶ The 2023 South Carolina Teacher of the Year, Deion Jamison, wrote in July 2020: “We have to attack systemic racism from all angles. My activism is in the classroom.” He later wrote on his Instagram page: ““I was able to conduct action research in my classroom about the effects of reshaping a white-centered curriculum using the principles of culturally responsive pedagogy. My kiddos were able to use the knowledge gained to critically examine traditional literature and challenge whiteness.”

¹⁷ Two mainstream historians, who are also Pulitzer Prize winners (Gordon Wood of Brown and James McPherson of Princeton) are among the critics, but 1619 has attracted criticism from the academic left as well. These two opinion columns summarize some of the many reviews across the spectrum: George Will, “The ‘1619 Project’ is Filled with Slovenliness and Ideological Ax-Grinding,” *The Washington Post*, May 6, 2020; Elliot Kaufman, “The ‘1619 Project’ Gets Schooled: The New York Times Tries to Rewrite U.S. history, but its Falsehoods are Exposed by Surprising Sources,” *The Wall Street Journal*, December 16, 2019.

¹⁸ A fair critique of Zinn’s *People’s History* is that of a fellow socialist, Georgetown University Professor Michael Kazin. See Michael Kazin, “Howard Zinn’s Disappointing History of the United States,” *History News Network*, George Washington University, February 9, 2010.

¹⁹ Michael Kazin, “Howard Zinn’s Disappointing History of the United States,” *History News Network*, George Washington University, February 9, 2010.

²⁰ “How to Be an Antiracist: Ibram X. Kendi on Why We Need to Fight

Racism the Way We Fight Cancer,” DemocracyNow.org, August 13, 2019. https://www.democracynow.org/2019/8/13/ibram_x_kendi_class_race_capitalism

²¹ One of Kendi’s most well-known quotations is: “The only remedy to racist discrimination is antiracist discrimination. The only remedy to past discrimination is present discrimination. The only remedy to present discrimination is future discrimination.” (Kendi, *How to Be An Anti-Racist*, One World, 2019).

²² Kendi, 2019.

²³ “South Carolina Social Studies College- and-Career-Ready Standards, 2019” <https://ed.sc.gov/instruction/standards-learning/social-studies/standards/2019-south-carolina-social-studies-college-and-career-ready-standards/>

²⁴ Milton Friedman, “Socialism is Force.” <https://youtu.be/DYeYPcougmA>

²⁵ Thomas Sowell, *Controversial Essays*, Hoover Institution Press, 2002.

²⁶ Cindi Ross Scoppe, “The Primary Question,” *Charleston Post & Courier*, May 3, 2022.

²⁷ Legislative researcher Tom Cone described Act 388 in this way (“Act 388 of 2006: The Short Course,” September 27, 2016): “Act 388 of 2006... added a new homestead property tax exemption for millage imposed for school operations on property classified as owner-occupied residential property and assessed for property taxes at four percent of FMV. The exemption is equal to one hundred percent of the FMV of the residence, thus effectively eliminating property tax millage imposed for school operations on all such property. Effective June 1, 2007, the act imposed an increase in the state-imposed sales and use tax, raising that rate from five to six percent... Revenue from the additional state sales tax is credited to the Homestead Exemption, created by Act 388 to receive that revenue and from which school districts are reimbursed to offset the school operations property tax not collected because of the new homestead exemption.” Is SC for Ed advocating a return to pre-2006, when property taxes were higher and the sales tax was lower?

²⁸ Mary Ellen Flannery, “Why #RedforEd Has Caught Fire in North Carolina,” *NEA Today*, May 16, 2018.

²⁹ The Day of Action rally in North Carolina was held on May 1, 2019 (International Workers’ Day) a labor union favorite.

³⁰ Organizers sent their members to the far-left Zinn Education Project for classroom materials to teach “The People’s History.” <https://www.zinnedproject.org/>
[\[action-educators-join-together-and-pledge-teach\]\(#\)](https://www.nea.org/about-nea/media-center/press-releases/national-day-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

³¹ Tim Walker, “#RedforEd Wave Gets Bigger in North and South Carolina,” *NEA Today*, May 21, 2019.

³² Seanna Adcox, “SC schools chief starts approving district reopening plans, requires masks on buses,” *Post and Courier*, July 27, 2020; September 14, 2020.

³³ The red SC for Ed logo and the choice of May 1, International Workers Day (1886) made famous by its celebration by Communist dictatorships like the USSR (1917-1990) seemed to be making a socialist and labor statement as well as an education one. The Horry County Democratic Party (Jeremy Holland, November 22, 2021) blogged that red was chosen to represent little red schoolhouses and apples.

³⁴ Emily Comer, “Chronicles of the Red State Revolt,” Review of Red State Revolt, *International Socialist Review*, Issue #112 (2021).

³⁵ In America, the colors of the ideological perspectives are the reverse of the rest of the world. Conservative parties are nearly always represented by to color blue. Liberal, socialist (and even communist and some fascist parties) use red logos and symbols. Maggie Thatcher (UK Conservative Party) wore an enormous blue badge to campaign. The trademark of Pierre Trudeau (Canadian Liberal Party) was a red rose in the lapel.

³⁶ Douglas Blair, “The Rise of Chief Diversity Officers at K-12 Schools,” *The Daily Signal*, November 9, 2021. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2021/11/09/the-rise-of-chief-diversity-officers-at-k-12-schools/>

³⁷ Jay Greene and James Paul, “Diversity University,” The Heritage Foundation, July 27, 2021. <https://www.heritage.org/education/report/diversity-university-dei-bloat-the-academy>

³⁸ Incident: Rawlinson Road Elementary, Parents Defending Education, May 11, 2022. <https://defendinged.org/incidents/rawlinson-road-middle-school-teacher-has-students-read-by-stamped-school-district-promotes-racial-affinity-groups-and-mandatory-equity-training-for-educators/>

³⁹ Incident: Charleston County Schools, Parents Defending Education, August 8, 2022. <https://defendinged.org/incidents/charleston-county-school-district-works-with-panorama-education-to-provide-students-with-climate-surveys/>

⁴⁰ Incident: Horry County Schools, Parents Defending Education, May 2, 2022. <https://defendinged.org/incidents/horry-county-schools-counselor-promotes-race-based-event-for-students-school-district-promotes-organizations-that-push-for-educators-to-teach-social-justice-and-lgbtq-issues-in-classrooms/>

⁴¹ Incident: Pickens Middle School, Parents Defending Education, April 19, 2022. <https://defendinged.org/incidents/pickens-middle-school->

promotes-segregating-students-by-race-for-discussions-with-a-guest-speaker/#:~:text=Parents%20Defending%20Education%20received%20an,segregated%20students%20by%20skin%20color.”

⁴² There is quite a bit of research demonstrating that these programs—diversity training, bias training—are completely ineffective. Hundreds of surveys demonstrate this. This is documented in Jonathan Butcher’s *Splintered: Critical Race Theory and the Progressive War on Truth* (Bombardier Books, February 2022).

⁴³ “Teacher Group Opposes Public Employee [sic] Strikes,” *The State*, May 23, 1976, p.3-D.

⁴⁴ “Governor Edwards Praises Palmetto State Teachers,” *The State*, October 28, 1976, p.22.

⁴⁵ “Warren McInnis, “New Education Group Tells Why It Organized,” *The State*, June 20, 1976, p.9-C.

⁴⁶ Guest Editorial, “Teachers’ Professional Code,” *Charleston Evening Post*, July 7, 1976, p.7.

⁴⁷ Warren McInnis, “SCEA President Urges Active Political Role,” *The State*, August 10, 1976, p.14.

⁴⁸ EdChoice, FAQs, 2022.

⁴⁹ An outside firm hired to investigate the origin of the letter, Michael Best & Friedrich LLP, found that the Acting CEO of NSBA discussed “issues and requests expected to be raised by the letter” with the Biden Administration weeks before it was sent.

⁵⁰ Letter to President Biden, National School Boards Association, September 29, 2021. <https://nsba.org/-/media/NSBA/File/nsba-letter-to-president-biden-concerning-threats-to-public-schools-and-school-board-members-92921.pdf>

⁵¹ Read more at: <https://www.thestate.com/article255652196.html#storylink=cpy>

⁵² Justin Jouvenal, “In case at center of political firestorm, judge finds teen committed sexual assault in Virginia school bathroom,” *The Washington Post*, October 25, 2021.

⁵³ <https://www.nsta.org/>

⁵⁴ Bill Robinson, “SC Evolution Update Clears Hurdle, Headed for Final OK,” *The State*, July 29, 2014; Jamie Self, “Science Instruction Changes Opposed,” *The State*, March 1, 2006.

⁵⁵ <https://ncse.ngo/about>

⁵⁶ <https://www.amle.org/amle-at-a-glance/>

⁵⁷ <https://www.ascd.org/>

⁵⁸ Bristow Marchant, “Midlands District ‘Failed to do its Job’ by Not Vetting for Obscene Books,” *The State*, February 18, 2022. <https://www.thestate.com/news/local/education/article258495573.html>; <https://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/article255867556.html>

⁵⁹ <https://youtu.be/POBk7zRArmC> This is the FITSNEWS edited version. We will post the link to the full episode when we locate it.

⁶⁰ But that’s not all. If you thought the Common Core State Standards were pushing a national left of center agenda, you may want to be aware of the roll out of the American Association of School Librarians National School Library Standards. A deep dive into this document is beyond the scope of this study.

⁶¹ “Social Justice Ideology in Idaho Higher Education,” Scott Yenor and Anna K. Miller, Idaho Freedom Foundation & The Claremont Institute, December 2020.

⁶² <http://www.caepnet.org/~media/Files/caep/standards/2022-initial-standards-1-pager-final.pdf?la=en>

⁶³ Tony Santaella, “SC School District Ends Prayer Meetings,” *Herald-Journal* (Spartanburg, SC), February 9, 2010.

⁶⁴ Standards are written by a committee composed of both educators and citizens.

⁶⁵ Holly Ulbrich, “School District Organization & Governance in South Carolina,” Jim Self Center at Clemson University, March 2010, p.4

⁶⁶ According to Parental Rights.org, those states are: West Virginia (pre-1973), Michigan (1996), Texas (1999), Colorado (2003), Nevada (2013), Virginia (2013), Kansas (2013), Oklahoma (2014), Arizona (2015), Idaho (2015), Utah (2015), Wyoming (2017), Florida (2021), Montana (2021) and Georgia (2022). 