

Freedom to Learn



**NETWORK for
PUBLIC EDUCATION**

Public education at all levels is under assault. Political operators, partisan media and ideologically driven think tanks continue to churn out racialized and anti-LGBTQIA+ rhetoric, sow distrust in the role of education as a public good, and feed attacks on individual educators. Many hostile state legislatures across the country are enacting laws that undermine public schools, community colleges and universities through curriculum bans; eradication of diversity, equity and inclusion programs; attacks on science and public health; funding cuts; and voucher and privatization schemes.

We must recognize these attacks for what they are: Public education—pre-K through higher ed—is a fundamental pillar of American democracy, and attempts to control and reshape education are part of a larger effort to weaken the very institutions that prepare students to engage in a robust, vibrant, multicultural, pluralistic democracy. Simply put, the assault on public education is an assault on our freedom.

We are educators from preK-12 and higher education; teachers and administrators; labor and management; parents, grand parents and caregivers. We are united in our commitment to our students and to education as a public good—a pathway to individual opportunity, civic and democratic health, and economic growth. We pledge to defend the freedom to learn by:

- ✓ Promoting freedom to learn and access to education through working with coalition partners to support bills to increase federal and state funding for all levels of public education and protect the freedom to teach and the freedom to research.
- ✓ Fighting back against legislative bans on the teaching of U.S. history, science and psychology, and other educational gag orders, and by defending individual educators who face harassment, discipline or termination as a result of these laws.
- ✓ Supporting efforts to provide more resources to our public schools, colleges and universities and the students who depend on them every day, and resisting efforts to defund our preK-12 and higher education systems.

Signed:

American Federation of Teachers
National Education Association
Network for Public Education
American Association of University Professors
American Association of Colleges and Universities

