

EDUCATORS FOR A DEMOCRATIC UNION PLATFORM

Inspired by educators around the country, the foundation of our platform is to advance the struggle for racial, social, and economic justice.

1) WE BELIEVE IN AND WILL FIGHT FOR free, democratically governed, high quality public education for all, from preschool through college and university as a right of all of our residents.

We therefore pledge to fight for dramatically increased funding, including for pre-K and especially for schools and colleges serving low-income students; free public higher education; a fair and equitable licensure process; and education that is developmentally, psychologically, and emotionally appropriate. We promise to fight the incursion of corporate tech- and data-driven instruction and online education in K-12 and higher education, while working to preserve human relationships at the heart of education.

2) WE BELIEVE that fighting for an economically and racially just society is true education reform, the only way truly to create the public schools and the Commonwealth we want to live in. We will build a union that uses its collective power to fight racism, and economic inequality, and to challenge oppression in all forms.

We therefore pledge to address economic injustice, racism and oppression in our bargaining and all that we do; we will support politicians only to the extent that they stand with us in undoing decades if not centuries of economic and racial injustice and pledge to recruit, welcome, and support educators of color in our schools and in MTA's leadership. We will work to dismantle structures of oppression within our union as well as other institutions.

3) WE BELIEVE that the MTA is strongest when rank-and-file members organize for power to solve problems in their workplaces and communities.

We will nurture and support rank and file members who organize to win at the building, local and state level using the full force of collective action, including strikes and civil

disobedience if necessary, to win the schools and communities we deserve. We will put resources into political education for our members.

4) WE REJECT policies of economic austerity that have intentionally starved school budgets and promoted efforts to privatize or corporatize our schools, including via the strategies of charter schools, turnaround plans, and takeovers.

We will continue fighting for increased funding, progressive tax policies, improved salaries and benefits, and public control of our schools. We will organize our communities in opposition to all privatization schemes, regardless of what they are called.

5) WE REJECT a regime of testing, evaluation, and standardization that damages educators and students.

We will fight for an end to high stakes testing systems, and for a return of control of public schools and colleges to educators, parents, and the community. We will demand material changes and investments to recruit educators of color to Massachusetts and clear the barriers for advancement of our existing educators of color. We will support local opt-out efforts and state legislation that end the use of testing and other dehumanizing assessments in evaluating teachers, students or schools.

6) Free, high-quality public higher education

All residents deserve the right to attend outstanding public colleges and universities debt-free, as a right. At the same time that we reduce the cost, we must improve the quality, and provide just jobs for adjunct faculty and staff, while demanding full-time staff and tenure-system faculty positions. **We will build a union that insists that free higher education is the next, just step in a two-centuries expansion of access to education.**

7) We stand for the continued expansion of civil rights, for people of color, for immigrants, for people of all genders and sexual preferences.

Students of color should not be concentrated in one school, and white students in another school, nor should race and social class based tracking systems lead to de facto segregation within a school. Immigration status and the process of learning

English should not be barriers to education. Sexual orientation should not result in students being bullied or shunned. **We will build a union that will reengage in the struggle to end segregation and discrimination, as an essential task for achieving outstanding public education.**

8) WE BELIEVE in dignity, respect, and autonomy in the workplace for all educators, particularly the most undervalued and least protected.

This means we will organize to increase our members' power at the school and district levels and fight for workplace democracy. We will join in the struggles of education support professionals and adjunct faculty and staff as much as classroom teachers and professors. We will fight anything that threatens academic freedom in both K-12 and higher education, and will work to preserve acquisition of learning as a basic right, not purely a means to providing a workforce for businesses. Public education must be broad, democratic and liberatory. We will work to organize any not-yet-unionized workers in our schools.

9) WE BELIEVE the MTA must work in coalition with community and civil rights groups, other unions, and students and parents to achieve the public schools and colleges Massachusetts deserves.

We will build these coalitions at the state level, but also locally and regionally. We will provide resources to encourage our locals to work closely with nearby MTA locals, other unions and community groups, and to coordinate bargaining across unions within municipalities. This means being there for others in their fights and not just expecting their support when we need it. We will build relationships with parents and others so that our adversaries cannot divide us from each other.

10) WE BELIEVE in union democracy at all levels. We believe that contested elections and vigorous debate are essential elements of democracy.

Our union needs to be open, transparent, democratic, and participatory; ordinary members should understand and debate the issues, then be involved in decision making. We believe that contested elections and vigorous debate are essential elements of democracy. We will campaign based on our principles and expect our members to hold us accountable to them. We will not make backroom deals; rather we

will encourage respectful debate and will fully involve our members in making major decisions concerning bargaining and other union initiatives. We will work toward dismantling hierarchies in our workplaces.

11) WE STAND in solidarity with educators and other workers in the U.S. and abroad. Their struggle is our struggle.

Our struggles in Massachusetts are the struggles of education workers around the world. We will work to build solidarity with these and other workers internationally.

We recognize climate change as a global existential crisis and pledge to fight for a rapid and just transition away from fossil fuels and toward sustainable practices – in our union, in our workplaces, in our country and throughout the world.