

## AFT Massachusetts 2021 Convention

### Resolution submitted by the Executive Board of AFT Massachusetts -- Supporting Racial Equity Advocacy and Leadership Development for BIPOC Members

- WHEREAS,** the AFT MA is committed to social justice and racial equity in our communities, schools, and organization; and
- WHEREAS,** the AFT MA recognizes that our fight for an America that lives up to its promise of liberty and justice for all is not yet won; and
- WHEREAS,** “separate but equal” is no longer the law of the land, but systemic inequity in education has relegated millions of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) children to under-resourced schools; and
- WHEREAS,** due to a number of socio-economic factors, Black students trail white counterparts in several measures of educational attainment, including in graduation rates, which keeps gainful employment difficult to reach; and
- WHEREAS,** starting as early as preschool, Black students are affected disproportionately by suspensions, expulsions and zero-tolerance discipline policies in schools, which ends up increasing their contact with police and fueling the school-to-prison pipeline; and
- WHEREAS,** in recent years there has been in the national spotlight an alarming number of incidents of police-involved violence against Black men, women and children, shedding light on practices that have existed for decades and are an evolution of historic systems of oppression such as slavery and Jim Crow; and
- WHEREAS,** the AFT MA is reaffirming our commitment to the fight forward to defend and uphold the rights of all Americans, including BIPOC, women, the disabled, all racial and ethnic minorities, immigrants and members of the LGBTQ+ community; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED,** **that the starting point of our work in the area of racial equity must be reflection and internal examination, whereby our union will engage our members in open and courageous conversations on racism, inequity and privilege; and**
- RESOLVED,** **that our union will work to create employment and leadership opportunities for BIPOC in workplaces throughout our society, including our union; and**

**RESOLVED,** that our union will advance the recommendations of the Social and Racial Equity Caucus as a framework for the development of education policy at the state and local board level and inside AFT MA; and

**RESOLVED,** that our union will advocate for school discipline policies to include restorative justice and equitable enforcement, including the creation of review processes and trainings in schools to ensure that BIPOC students and educators are treated fairly; and

**RESOLVED,** that our union will advocate for the development and implementation of programs that intentionally help identify, recruit, develop and retain BIPOC educators and staff, and support professional development and cultural competency training that helps educators and other school staff understand the effects of long-term discrimination and pervasive poverty and helps them examine bias, including that which resides in all of us; and

**Be it further resolved that the Executive Board of the American Federation of Teachers Massachusetts will accept periodic reports from the Social and Racial Equity Caucus to the AFT MA Board, as part of our commitment to ending systemic racism and honoring the diversity of voices in our membership in order to improve AFT MA’s work on building racial and education equity through antiracist policies and uplifting the voices of BIPOC educators.**

REVISION OR COMMENTS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

ADOPTED \_\_\_\_\_

DEFEATED \_\_\_\_\_

TABLED \_\_\_\_\_