Resolution Worksheet  
Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ

**Title of Resolution:** A Resolution Supporting Public School Educators, Academic Freedom, and Equity Efforts in Schools

**Date Resolution Submitted:**
March 15, 2022

**Name of Submitting Body:**
United Church of Christ in New Brighton  
1000 Long Lake Road  
New Brighton, MN  55112  
Phone: 651-633-1327  
Email: uccnb@uccnb.org

**Spokesperson:**
David McMahill  
2609 36th Avenue, N.E.  
Minneapolis, MN  55418

**Summary Statement of Intent of the Resolution:**
This resolution is intended to voice support of public-school educators at a time when academic freedoms are threatened. We wish to provide a response to efforts to control curriculum, ban books and media, and restrict equity efforts in schools. Further, we intend to raise awareness and provide members of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ with information that can be used for the development of talking points about these issues.

**Background and Supporting Statement:**
See attached.

**Resolution:**
See attached.

**Additional Resources:**


Education Minnesota, Minnesota Administrators for Special Education, Minnesota Association of School Administrators, Minnesota Association of School Business Officials, Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals, Minnesota Elementary School Principals’ Association, Minnesota School Boards Association. (2021, September 13). *Public school leaders pledge to support and expand education equity programs intended*


A Resolution Supporting Public School Educators, Academic Freedom, and Equity Efforts in Schools

Whereas the United Church of Christ was founded by four denominations with education as a central aspect of our identities and has always been a firm advocate for education, founding many colleges and universities, including Harvard, Oberlin, Carleton, Doane, and many more, including many Historically Black Colleges and Universities, which grew from the hundreds of schools founded by the American Missionary Association after the Civil War; and

Whereas the United Church of Christ has been committed to being an Open and Affirming, Anti-Racist, Environmental Justice, Just Peace denomination; and

Whereas we in the United Church of Christ believe there is “ever more truth and light to be brought forward” from our scriptures, as well as from our world and our people; and

Whereas the United Church of Christ has claimed to be a thinking church as well as a feeling and believing church; and

Whereas we are committed to learning about the sins and legacies of slavery, segregation, Jim Crow laws, and other racist practices, all of which have contributed to ongoing disparities of resources and opportunities, and we do not fear the discomfort that is likely to accompany such learning; and

Whereas we are committed to learning about and addressing the sins of violence and oppression experienced by LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities, people of religious minorities, immigrants, refugees, Native American/Indigenous people, Black people, Latinx people, Asian people, and all others who have suffered oppression in this country; and

Whereas we believe it is vital that every person, of every race, skin color, culture, religion, language status, gender, sexual orientation, ability, income, or family background is given an opportunity to learn about who they are and where they came from; and

Whereas we believe that students are better equipped to reach their full potential as critical thinkers in school environments that continually strive for equity in all aspects of schooling, from academics and curriculum to extra-curricular activities and school culture; and

Whereas we believe students benefit greatly from the study of literature and art that addresses the full range of being human; and

Whereas we believe that proposals to ban discussions of sexual orientation and gender identity in schools send a profoundly negative message of non-acceptance to students who are realizing that their romantic attraction does not conform to heteronormative assumptions, and to students who may be experiencing gender dysphoria or who have already realized that their real gender does not match that which was assigned at birth and by socialization; and
Whereas we believe that on-going thoughtful evaluation of teaching methodology and content is a necessary part of strengthening our public schools, but harassment of teachers, administrators, and school board members makes them and the students they serve pawns in a bigger struggle.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ at its 2022 Annual Meeting

• affirms support of our public education systems and public school educators
• rejects efforts to ban books and media or to impose a political template over content and methodology
• affirms the need for on-going evaluation of educational practices that has the goal of better serving students and providing proper support for teachers
• affirms academic freedom for educators; teachers’ rights to tenure and due process, and the right of educators to make decisions that are in the best interest of ALL students, consistent with research and best practices; and
• rejects efforts to inflame the public with hateful rhetoric against educators; censor what is taught in public school classrooms; censor books and media in school libraries; deny the histories of oppression experienced by marginalized groups; deny racism, sexism, heterosexism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and other forms of prejudice, bias, and hate; impose burdensome disclosure mandates related to classroom lessons, assignments, and activities.

We ask Conference Minister and Associates, clergy, and lay members of United Church of Christ congregations in Minnesota to use this resolution for the development of speaking points in public arenas where such matters are being dealt with, including the Minnesota State Legislature, local school boards, Parent-Teacher Associations, Ministerial Associations, coffee shops, and the like.

Funding: Funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected entities and the funds available.

Implementation: The Conference Minister, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the Minnesota Conference UCC will determine the implementing body.