



The Honorable Ted Cruz
United States Senate Senator
167 Russell Senate Building
Washington, D.C., 20510

Dear Senator Cruz,

The Fair Election Fund writes to draw your attention to a troubling new development that follows a now-familiar pattern of behavior by Microsoft. The company is once again using its reach in American classrooms to advance a partisan agenda, shaping how the next generation thinks, what they trust, and how they vote. It is doing so through a partner whose record of politicizing children's education should disqualify her and the organization she runs from any seat at this table.

AI will define the intellectual formation of the next generation of American voters. The tools students use today will shape how they think, what sources they trust, and what they believe is true—for the rest of their lives, and ultimately at the ballot box. That is precisely why AI policy for students cannot be left to self-regulation by parties with a demonstrated ideological agenda.

The Announcement

On September 9, 2026, Microsoft President Brad Smith and American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten announced a "National AI Safety & Privacy Standard for Schools" — a set of legally enforceable protocols governing how Microsoft's AI products operate in classrooms across the country.¹ School districts can incorporate these standards directly into their Microsoft contracts, making Microsoft and the AFT the de facto architects of AI policy for tens of millions of American students.

Weingarten framed the partnership in explicitly self-regulatory terms, saying the agreement exists because "no one else, including the federal government, has stepped up." Brad Smith reinforced this posture on CNBC's Squawk Box, where the two jointly unveiled the deal.²

¹AFT, UFT and Microsoft Announce 'National AI Safety & Privacy Standard' for Schools to Protect Students, Families and Educators, MICROSOFT SOURCE (Sept. 9, 2026), <https://news.microsoft.com/source/2026/09/09/aft-uft-and-microsoft-announce-national-ai-safety-privacy-standard-for-schools-to-protect-students-families-and-educators/>.

²Microsoft President Brad Smith, AFT President Weingarten Unveil AI Rules for Education, CNBC SQUAWK BOX (Sept. 9, 2026), <https://www.cnbc.com/video/2026/09/09/microsoft-president-brad-smith-aft-president-weingarten-unveil-ai-rules-for-education.html>.



Weingarten's claim ignores reality. The federal government has been active in shaping AI policy — from the Trump administration's AI Action Plan to recent executive actions regulating frontier models like Mythos. Microsoft and the AFT are not filling a void. They are attempting to bypass the federal government, seizing an opportunity to entrench their own ideological standards in American classrooms.

Microsoft Lied to You Before, Proving It Cannot Be Trusted

You have firsthand experience with Microsoft's willingness to deceive Congress when convenient.

In December 2024, you raised the alarm and demanded answers about Microsoft's promotion of NewsGuard — an organization whose leadership has consistently aligned with left-leaning perspectives and whose rating system has been used to target, censor, and defund conservative media outlets.³ Microsoft told your office its relationship with NewsGuard was limited to a single 2018 donation and that it had disavowed the partnership.⁴

That was not true.

The Fair Election Fund's September 2025 report documented that Microsoft continued actively promoting NewsGuard to students as a "reputable" and "objective" organization through its Search Coach tool — embedded in Microsoft Teams for Education and used across millions of classrooms — months after telling your office otherwise.⁵ As The Daily Wire reported, Microsoft only scrubbed references to NewsGuard from its website after our report exposed the deception and public pressure mounted.⁶

Microsoft lied to you. They acted only when caught. Now they want to use Randi Weingarten and the AFT to self-regulate AI for an entire generation of American students.

³ Letter from Ted Cruz, Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Comm. on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, to Satya Nadella, CEO, Microsoft Corp. (Dec. 23, 2024), <https://www.commerce.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/media/doc/2024.12.23%20Sen.%20Cruz%20Letter%20to%20Microsoft%20re%20NewsGuard.pdf>.

⁴ Press Release, U.S. Senate Comm. on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, Sen. Cruz's Investigation Leads Microsoft to Disavow Support for NewsGuard's Biased Indoctrination Tool (Feb. 6, 2025), <https://www.commerce.senate.gov/press/rep/release/sen-cruz-s-investigation-leads-microsoft-to-disavow-support-for-newsguard-s-biased-indoctrination-tool-2025-2/>.

⁵ Press Release, Fair Election Fund, Fair Election Fund Releases Explosive Report on Microsoft's Censorship Practices and National Security Risks to U.S. Election Integrity (Sept. 25, 2025), <https://thefairelectionfund.com/fair-election-fund-releases-explosive-report-on-microsofts-censorship-practices-and-national-security-risks-to-u-s-election-integrity/>.

⁶ Microsoft Told Ted Cruz It Had Nothing to Do with NewsGuard. Then It Scrubbed Its Website., DAILY WIRE (Nov. 11, 2025), <https://www.dailywire.com/news/microsoft-told-ted-cruz-it-had-nothing-to-do-with-newsguard-then-it-scrubbed-its-website>.



Randi Weingarten is Not a Neutral Actor

The partner Microsoft has chosen for this arrangement is the same person who kept schools closed during COVID-19 — lobbying the CDC behind closed doors, with AFT officials suggesting language that was incorporated into the CDC's February 2021 reopening guidance.⁷ A House Republican interim report confirmed that union officials effectively wrote key portions of that guidance, helping keep millions of children out of classrooms longer than the science warranted.⁸

In May 2026, investigations revealed Weingarten tapped over \$1.4 million in union dues to finance her personal political book, *Why Fascists Fear Teachers*.⁹ Her "pro bono" attorney's firm received \$977,000 from the AFT, while her ghostwriter was paid over \$400,000, prompting the House Committee on Education and the Workforce to launch a formal probe into whether union dues financed her personal enrichment.¹⁰

In that very book, and in public appearances, Weingarten routinely brands conservative parents, school choice advocates, and Republicans as "fascists".¹¹

Last month, Weingarten directed the AFT's 1.8 million members to boycott Target during back-to-school season — not over any educational concern, but because the retailer had not publicly condemned ICE enforcement operations.¹²

For every campaign cycle over the last 20 years, 99% of the AFT's political donations have gone to Democratic candidates and aligned groups.¹³ In the 2024 election cycle alone, the AFT donated \$3 million to the Senate Majority PAC, \$1.6 million to the House Majority PAC, and \$445,000 to the Harris Victory Fund. For the 2026 midterm elections, the AFT has contributed the maximum allowable amount to every Democrat on the House Education Committee — and

⁷Exclusive | Powerful Teachers Union Influenced CDC on School Reopenings, Emails Show, N.Y. POST (May 1, 2021), <https://nypost.com/2021/05/01/teachers-union-collaborated-with-cdc-on-school-reopening-emails/>.

⁸HOUSE COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY, INTERIM STAFF REPORT: AFT-CDC INTERFERENCE (Mar. 30, 2022), <https://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/AFT-CDC-Interference-Interim-Report-3-30-2022.pdf>.

⁹Exclusive | AFT Boss Randi Weingarten Tapped Union Resources Worth Over \$1.4M to Write 'Manifesto' Book, N.Y. POST (May 19, 2026), <https://nypost.com/2026/05/19/us-news/aft-boss-randi-weingarten-tapped-union-resources-worth-over-1-4m-to-write-manifesto-book/>.

¹⁰Exclusive | House Probes Union Spending to Help AFT Boss Randi Weingarten Write 'Manifesto' Book, N.Y. POST (July 7, 2026), <https://nypost.com/2026/07/07/us-news/house-probes-union-spending-to-help-boss-randi-weingarten-write-manifesto-book/>.

¹¹Ryan Walters, Opinion, Randi Weingarten Is the Real Threat to Public Education, TOWNHALL (June 5, 2026), <https://townhall.com/columnists/ryan-walters/2026/06/05/randi-weingarten-is-the-real-threat-to-public-education-n2677222>.

¹²American Federation of Teachers Launches Back-to-School Boycott Against Target, Claims Retailer Remained Silent on ICE, FOX NEWS (Aug. 23, 2026), <https://www.foxnews.com/media/american-federation-teachers-launches-boycott-against-target-claims-retailer-remained-silent-ice>.

¹³American Federation of Teachers — Organization Summary, OPENSECRETS, <https://www.opensecrets.org/orgs/american-federation-of-teachers/summary?id=d000000083> (last visited Sept. 12, 2026).



zero to any Republican — while pumping an additional \$2.5 million into Democratic congressional PACs. With over \$270 million in annual dues revenue drawn from taxpayer-funded teacher salaries, the AFT functions as one of the most powerful and purely partisan financial machines in American politics.¹⁴

This is the person now shaping what AI tells your constituents' children and the future voters of America.

Our Request

We urge you to investigate this partnership — specifically, what editorial or content discretion it grants Microsoft and the AFT, and what independent oversight exists to ensure those tools are not filtering what the next generation of voters sees and believes.

A corporation that has already lied to Congress and partnered with a union president who has consistently weaponized her position for political ends should not be trusted to set the terms for how AI shapes young American minds and influences elections.

The Fair Election Fund stands ready to support your office with any additional research or documentation.

Respectfully,

The Fair Election Fund

¹⁴Esther Wickham, Teacher Unions Funnel Funds to Democratic Lawmakers, THE CENTER SQUARE, https://www.thecentersquare.com/national/article_bd5e1221-9cba-4857-86b7-4318ae769e93.html (last visited Sept. 12, 2026).