

2025 FORM FOR NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

NBI Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date and Time \_\_\_\_\_  
Remove Curriculum Resources on “The Conflict of the Middle East.”

Delegate Making the Motion Cell Email Association Represented or Retired  
Joanna Honig Watertown

Delegate Seconding the Motion Cell Email Association Represented or Retired  
Brian Shoemaker Newton Public Schools

According to the MTA Standing/Special Rules:  
With the exception of items on the agenda, all substantive motions shall be submitted in writing to the Presiding Officer.

MOTION

MOVED: The MTA will remove the curriculum resources on the “Conflict of the Middle East.”

SUBMITTER’S RATIONALE: The rationale for removing these resources includes:

- 1. **IMPACT:** No matter the intent, the curriculum resources have divided our union, marginalized our Jewish members, and painted a very poor picture of the MTA within the Commonwealth and in the media.
- 2. **BIAS:** The posted curriculum resources are one-sided, biased, and will politicize our classrooms.
- 3. **LACK OF A SYSTEM:** Since the MTA has never posted resources on a geopolitical conflict before, they have no system for choosing resources that ensures that they are inclusive of all of our students - including those from historically marginalized communities.

IMPACT:

While the intent of these curriculum resources was to provide a tool for MA teachers, the impact of the resources the MTA posted has caused great harm. 125 members and nearly 2000 Massachusetts community members wrote a letter to Max Page and MTA leadership to remove the resources. Since the materials were released in December, there have been numerous news articles published about the MTA’s resources. Governor Healy said, “The images on the Massachusetts Teachers Association website were antisemitic, offensive and never should have been shared in the first place.”

In a time when public education is in political peril, it is vital for the MTA to display a united front. The MTA also needs widespread support from Massachusetts government officials and the community at large. These resources have betrayed the public’s trust, divided the union, and put MTA leadership at odds with some legislators. It is time to take down the resources and start to rebuild a strong union that works with our government to make schools better for all Massachusetts teachers and students.

BIAS:

The cover page of the resources says that the “resources **reflect diverse positions** and are meant to aid our own members’ learning pedagogy” It also says that the MTA is “attempting to provide pathways for educators to understand **the various positions of those involved in the conflict.**”

However, this is simply not true. Of the 90 or so original resources posted on the MTA website, **nearly 80% told the Palestinian narrative, demonized Israel or both.** For example, there were 18 films and documentaries – not one painted a favorable picture of Israel or told “Israel’s side.” Instead, the documentaries all supported the Palestinian struggle against Israel – often by **delegitimizing Israel’s existence.** In fact, State Senator John Velis - who is not Jewish said that, “he couldn’t find anything in the MTA materials that presented the Jewish or Israel perspective.”

Even when the MTA began to delete and add resources, the Israel story is still missing. As of late March, almost everything in the MTA resources about Israel or Judaism deals with the Holocaust or antisemitism. The page is missing reputable Israeli authors and historians who document the history of Israel and its struggle with its neighbors.

If the goal of the MTA was to post resources that showed diverse and various positions of those involved in the conflict, they completely missed the mark. Putting one-sided resources into classrooms will politicize our classrooms. These resources teach students what to think, not how to think.

#### **LACK OF A SYSTEM:**

There is no apparent process or protocol that goes into uploading any resources – including the ones on Israel and Gaza - to the MTA website. This is extremely dangerous because it means that resources are chosen based on the subjective opinions of MTA staff and board members. Even the updated “task force’ that was charged with reviewing the materials has no no guardrails against further antisemitic bias.

The MTA must immediately remove the resources and design an equity-based protocol for evaluating resources before posting any in the future. In this instance, Jews, who make up less than 2% of the population were hurt. However, this lack of a system has the potential to hurt other historically marginalized populations in the future. This is critical for teaching with all of our historically-marginalized students in mind.

#### References:

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2025/03/09/opinion/israel-palestinians-history-curriculum-mta/>

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2025/02/19/metro/massachusetts-teachers-association-mta-israel-hamas-antisemitic/>

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2025/02/13/metro/massachusetts-teachers-association-mta-israel-hamas-war-antisemitic/>

#### DUES IMPACT:

None

#### SUBMITTER’S COST & STAFF TIME ESTIMATE:

#### MTA COST & STAFF TIME ESTIMATE (For MTA use only):

\$0; 1 hour