

Teachers Unions Timeline and Influence		
Year	Education before and after Teachers Unions	
Late 1700s	Compulsory education was encouraged at the country's birth in the late 1700's for 5 to 14 year olds grew from 55% in 1830 to 78% by 1870 (education was a state issue)	
1830	55% of US children attend public schools	
1845	First teachers association founded in Massachusetts.	
1857	National Teachers Association (NTA) founded in Philadelphia with 76 members. Purpose: "...to elevate the character and advance the interest of the teaching profession, and to promote the cause of popular education in the United States."	
1870	The United States tied for the highest literacy rate in the western world with Sweden at 80% (see graph)	
	NTA becomes the National Education Association (NEA) when they added the National Association of School Superintendents and the American Normal School Association. Purpose: "Worked to further the interests of the education profession as a whole."	
1916	American Federation of Teachers (AFT) is founded in Chicago as a "teachers only" union and was more politically active than the NEA.	
1917	The New York Teachers guild was founded and included John Dewey as a charter member.	
1960s	NEA	AFT
	Continues operating "business as usual"	Multiple teacher strikes push the Fed and states to expand collective bargaining rights to teachers. Membership around 60,000
1965	Passage of Elementary and Secondary Education Act expands teachers unions' influence and union growth is substantial	
1970s	Competition leads to growth in numbers and collective bargaining laws in more than half the states.	AFT grows to 300,000
1972	NEA forms the first political action committee	
1976	NEA endorses Jimmy Carter	AFT opposed
1977	US Supreme Court <i>Aboud v. Detroit Board of Education</i> decisions requires people who opt-out of union membership	

	to pay “agency fees” regardless – strengthens unions substantially.		
1979	NEA credited with influencing Carter to create the US Department of Education		
1983	Reagan’s A Nation at Risk report reveals students falling far behind their international counterparts – unions come under fire.		
	NEA tries to rebrand itself as “champion of quality teaching and quality education” called New Unionism	AFT Calls for a “second revolution” for teachers unions by embracing standards, accountability, public school choice, etc.	
1990s	NEA’s “new unionism” now opposes the Clinton education changes	AFT’s “second revolution” fights federal legislation claiming “unrealistic expectations”	
2000s	NEA grows to 2.3 million	The 2 unions represent nearly ¾ of all public school teachers, 40% of unionized public employees	AFT grows to 900,000
2002	Both unions oppose Bush’s bi-partisan No Child Left Behind		
2009	Both unions oppose Obama’s Race to the Top changes.		
2011	Wisconsin restricts collective bargaining rights resulting in sharp decline in union membership, revenue and assets.		
2012	Michigan Right to Work law results in 18% decline in teacher union membership.		
2014	NEA calls for Obama’s Education Secretary, Arne Duncan, to resign		
2017	NEA grows to 3.1 million	AFT grows to 1.7M	
June 27, 2018	US Supreme Court declares public unions cannot force non-members to pay dues/agency fees.		
2020	NEA pushed to close schools in spring of 2020 due to COVID-19 and keep them closed through the fall	AFT opposed opening schools in fall 2020	
2021	NEA lost 2.3% of members due to COVID during the 2020-21 school year, pushed social media giants to stifle	AFT lost 2.1% of members. Randi Weingarten, AFT President, pushed for universal masking of	

	anti-CRT “propaganda” by “small but violent group of radicalized parents”	students, agreed some parents are “domestic terrorists” and says they are a threat to “our way of life”
	8 republican run states prohibit forced masking of kids.	
	Florida Board of Education allows families to take state education money to the school of their choice if districts force student masking	
2022	Teachers unions push for remote school again due to COVID – parents and Democratic politicians worry	

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