

The ACLU has pursued efforts around academic freedom, school surveillance, freedom of expression, and opposing book bans and anti-critical race theory laws—through a multifaceted approach of litigation, legal letters, and public record requests:

- ACLU of Indiana/January 2024: [opposed HB 1002](#), which would censor student speech and stifle debate on Palestine
- NYCLU/December 2023: sent a [letter](#) to Barnard College President expressing concern over a new policy that requires departments to submit the content of their websites for review and approval by the Office of the Provost
- ACLU National & ACLU of Florida/November 2023: [filed a lawsuit on behalf of the University of Florida chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine](#) in response to Florida state university officials, in coordination with Gov. Ron DeSantis, ordering public universities to deactivate their Students for SJP chapters
- ACLU National/November 2023: released an [open letter to colleges and universities to reject efforts to restrict constitutionally protected speech on campuses](#) (in the context of Israel/Palestine)
- ACLU of Iowa/November 2023: [filed lawsuit](#) to block Senate File 496, a sweeping Iowa law that restricts schools from teaching about LGBTQ topics and requires them to ban books depicting sex acts
- ACLU National/October 2023: released a [report on multi-billion-dollar education technology \(EdTech\) surveillance industry and the harmful impacts on students](#), especially those who are members of the LGBTQ community, students of color, students with disabilities, low-income students, and students who are undocumented or have undocumented family members
- ACLU of Idaho/August 2023: [filed a complaint](#) with the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, Educational Opportunities Section, on behalf of Latina students impacted by the discriminatory dress code and discipline policies and practices of the Nampa School District
- ACLU of Iowa/June 2023: [urged Atlanta School Board not to consider or adopt policies prohibiting student demonstration](#), in response to an Atlantic School Board meeting, where one attendee asked the board to regulate protests
- ACLU of Florida/May 2023: joined coalition [condemning the passage of and calling on Governor DeSantis to veto Senate Bill 226](#), which would stifle academic freedom by placing critical faculty decisions, such as the hiring of faculty and review of tenure, in the hands of political appointees, as well as forbid university and college spending on activities, speakers, events, and clubs that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)
- ACLU of South Carolina/Spring 2023: [opposed Bill H.3728](#), which would prevent public educators from teaching about past and present race and gender inequalities

- ACLU of Nebraska/March 2023: [filed a lawsuit](#) in federal district court against Grand Island Northwest Public Schools and its superintendent, arguing that district officials are violating the First Amendment by shutting down a school newspaper after students covered LGBTQ+ topics
- ACLU National & ACLU of Florida/August 2022: [filed a lawsuit challenging Florida's HB7 \(aka the Stop W.O.K.E. Act\)](#) on behalf of a group of Florida educators and students in higher education
- ACLU of Idaho/July 2022: [sent public record requests](#) to Nampa School District Superintendent Gregg Russell and the Board of Trustees for the Nampa School District seeking any communication related to the removal of 22 books from school libraries and classrooms, including *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini, *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood, and *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison
- NYCLU/June 2022: [joined ad-hoc coalition](#) denouncing censorship that the State Board of Regents and State Education Commissioner Richard Mills is enacting on the statewide English Language Arts exam
- ACLU of Wisconsin/April 2022: [filed an open records request](#) with the School District of Waukesha seeking records about how its ban on political and controversial signage and symbols is being implemented and enforced
- ACLU National and ACLU of Virginia/June 2022: [filed motions](#) in state court, along with several independent bookstores, seeking to dismiss obscenity proceedings against two books, *Gender Queer* and *A Court of Mist and Fury* (A Virginia judge ultimately [rejected the obscenity proceedings](#))
- ACLU of Mississippi/February 2022: sent a [letter](#) that helped reverse a mayor's decision to withhold \$110,000 in funding from a local library until librarians removed LGBTQ literature
- ACLU of Tennessee/February 2022: [sent an open records request](#), seeking information about the school board's decision to remove "Maus", a Pulitzer Prize-winning graphic novel about the Holocaust, from its curriculum
- ACLU of Missouri/February 2022: [filed a lawsuit](#) in the United States District Court, for the Eastern District of Missouri, on behalf of parents of Wentzville school district students, to stop the removal of several books with Black, Hispanic, Asian and LGBTQ main characters from the shelves of its libraries
- ACLU of Montana/February 2022: [filed a public records request](#) after officials in Kalispell, Montana held meetings over whether to ban *Lawn Boy* by Jonathan Evison and *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe (the board dismissed the first potential ban and has delayed a decision regarding the second)

- ACLU National/December 2021: [filed a federal lawsuit](#) challenging a New Hampshire classroom censorship law, contained within state budget bill HB 2, which discourages public school teachers from teaching and talking about race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and gender identity in the classroom
- ACLU National & ACLU of Oklahoma/October 2021: [filed a lawsuit challenging an Oklahoma classroom censorship bill, HB 1775](#), which severely restricts public school teachers and students from learning and talking about race and gender in the classroom
- ACLU of Massachusetts/September 2021: [launched a Student Week of Action](#) to highlight the dangers posed by the use of face surveillance technology in schools
- ACLU of Southern California & ACLU of Northern California/July 2020: [letter to the Greenfield Union School District in Bakersfield](#) over deep concerns over the treatment of seventh-grade English teacher Kei Jackson, whose contract was not renewed after she filed a formal complaint alleging that the district violated staff and students' rights to free speech and expression, and maintained a racially hostile environment
- ACLU of Massachusetts/May 2020: [sent letter](#) to the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education expressing grave concerns about the use of face surveillance in schools and urging the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to ban the use of face surveillance systems in all public schools in Massachusetts
- ACLU of Massachusetts/March 2020: [signed on to letter](#), with the American Federation of Teachers Massachusetts chapter and Massachusetts Teachers Association, to 273 school superintendents calling on them to reject biased, dangerous, and unregulated face surveillance technology
- ACLU of Connecticut/2019: [submitted written testimony](#) in support of Senate Bill 840, An Act Concerning Academic Freedom at Public Institutions of Higher Education, which would protect the freedom of expression of faculty members at public institutions of higher education in their scholarship, research, and teaching, and matters of public interest
- NYCLU/June 2018: In response to a New York school district's plan to utilize facial recognition on students as young as four and five years old, NYCLU sent a [letter to the New York State Education Department](#) urging it to consider students' and teachers' privacy in reviewing the use of surveillance technology by school districts, as well as submitted a freedom of information request to the district seeking details of how and where the technology will be used as well as who will have access to the sensitive data that gets collected
 - June 2020: NYCLU [filed a lawsuit against the New York State Education Department \(NYSED\) for its decision to approve a facial recognition technology system](#) for use in Lockport City Schools, in violation of student data protection laws

- ACLU National & ACLU of Mississippi/September 2009: [filed a federal civil rights lawsuit over the expulsion of a middle school student after an illegal cell phone search](#) that led to the student's expulsion for pictures on the cell phone that constituted "gang-related activity" and "indecent pictures"
- ACLU of Massachusetts/December 2001: [filed a lawsuit](#) against state Department of Education officials for causing the cancellation of a keynote speech by a critic of "high stakes" testing at an education conference