

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

June 22, 2026

Willie Jett
Commissioner
Minnesota Department of Education
400 NE Stinson Blvd
Minneapolis, MN 55413

Commissioner Jett,

I am writing to express concerns regarding the influence of the Southern Poverty Law Center's (SPLC) Learning for Justice program and related social justice frameworks being integrated into the Rochester Public School District. For years, SPLC's Learning for Justice (LFJ) education program has been able to integrate its far-left content and materials into K-12 schools throughout the country.

The content often pushes or reinforces radical cultural and political ideologies such as leftwing activism, gender ideology and queer theory, white privilege, and transgenderism.¹ LFJ is marketed as a "community education program of the SPLC that cultivates and nurtures dialogue, learning, reflection and civic action from those closest to and harmed most by injustices in the South."²

According to the Rochester School Board's documents, the district's Social Studies curriculum was "informed" by LFJ.³ The district has provided little detail regarding the extent of the influence, but this raises important questions about how LFJ and social justice frameworks may be incorporated into classroom instruction and curriculum.

Our public schools serve families from diverse political, religious, and cultural backgrounds and must remain politically neutral and academically objective. Our public school curriculum should be focused on improving our students' reading and math scores, not indoctrinating them with an ideology that is not approved by their parents. Rochester Public Schools need to respect that the primary role for children's moral education comes from the home.

¹ [SPLC Curriculum in K-12: Learning for Justice/Teaching Tolerance tracker - Defending Education](#)

² <https://www.splcenter.org/learning-for-justice/about/>

³ [View Feb 08, 2022 - Regular Meeting, Immediately following SPECIAL SESSION | Rochester Public Schools](#)

On April 21, 2026, SPLC was indicted by a federal grand jury for wire fraud, false statements, and conspiracy to commit money laundering. The U.S. Department of Justice has alleged that SPLC engaged in a massive fraud operation by allegedly paying the leaders of extremist groups and utilized the funds to have these groups facilitate the commission of state and federal crimes.⁴

The House Committee on the Judiciary has held two separate hearings examining the role that SPLC has played in distorting civil rights policy in recent years. The committee is also reviewing the released information revealing that the SPLC has funneled money to some extremists, raising questions whether the SPLC has been artificially elevating the domestic extremist threat and misleading its donors.⁵

Through these hearings, it has been made abundantly clear that SPLC and their ideologies should hold no place within our public school system and our students' classroom. Parents and communities deserve transparency, and I ask for a clear accounting of SPLC's influence on the educational experience of Rochester students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brad Finstad". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brad Finstad
Member of Congress

⁴ <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/federal-grand-jury-charges-southern-poverty-law-center-wire-fraud-false-statements-and>

⁵ <https://judiciary.house.gov/committee-activity/hearings/southern-poverty-law-center-manufacturing-hate-part-ii>