

United States Senate

September 9, 2025

The Honorable Linda McMahon
Secretary
Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary McMahon:

I write to alert you to the Council on American-Islamic Relations's (CAIR) efforts to influence K-12 schools.

It is well documented that CAIR has deep ties to pro-Hamas terrorist organizations and publicly supports Hamas's terrorist activities. As I noted in a previous letter, the Department of Justice listed CAIR as a member of the Muslim Brotherhood's Palestine Committee in the largest terrorism-financing case in U.S. history. Further, CAIR Philadelphia's Executive Director, Ahmet Selim Tekelioglu, stated that Israeli "occupation" was the reason for the October 7th terrorist attack by Hamas in Israel.¹

Such an organization should never have access to our nation's children. On August 26, 2025, CAIR Philadelphia announced plans to partner with schools across Pennsylvania and Delaware to make them "more inclusive." While details of their alleged partnerships are unclear, CAIR's history makes it clear that its influence will be detrimental and possibly illegal.

The organization offers "educational" materials on its website that perpetuate pro-terrorist, anti-Israel rhetoric. CAIR Philadelphia recently issued guidance for educators titled "Remembering and Reflecting: Teaching September 11, 2001, in Diverse Classrooms." The guide directs teachers to avoid using "inaccurate and inflammatory terms such as 'Islamic terrorists,' 'jihadists,' or 'radical Islamic terrorists,'" when describing the September 11 terrorists.² CAIR Philadelphia also offers a lecture titled "American Jews and Political Power" in which students examine "the heated debate inside the Jewish establishment over Israel's occupation of Palestinian lands and learn about the young Jewish activists who are supporting the BDS campaign."³

The U.S. Department of Education must ensure that CAIR is not given an opportunity to push its radical, pro-terrorist, anti-Israel ideology on American schoolchildren.

I look forward to working with you on this matter.

Sincerely,



Tom Cotton
United States Senator

¹ <https://pa.cair.com/media/critique-shapiro-why/>

² <https://pa.cair.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/CAIR-PA-School-Resource-Documents-Teaching-September-11.pdf>

³ <https://pa.cair.com/files/2017-Courses-Workshops.pdf>