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Presidential Candidates Address NEA Convention

This year's annual Convention of the National Education Association over the Fourth of July in Philadelphia celebrated NEA's 150th anniversary with 9,000 delegates attending. Eager to garner the favor of the 3.2 million-member teachers union, eight 2008 presidential candidates spoke to the NEA delegates about their education ideas and policies.

Sen. Joe Biden: "You've got to be selling drugs or something to work your way through" college, Biden told the crowd. In a statement to the NEA he wrote, "I support moving toward a 16-year public school system where every parent who wants to can send their child to preschool and where every student goes on to at least two years of higher education. There are 4 million 4-year-olds in the U.S. and 4 million 3-year-olds. We should have a preschool system that accommodates them all."

Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton vowed to fight school vouchers "with every breath in my body," saying that such school choice programs would lead to an "erosion of our democracy." Clinton called for universal preschool for four-year-olds.

Sen. Christopher J. Dodd: "Once we have graduated our children from world class public schools, the federal government will ensure that no student is denied their dream of attending college simply because of cost."

Former **Sen. John Edwards:** "When the President of the United States has a plan called No Child Left Behind, and then he doesn't fund it, was it ever intended to leave no child behind? Or was it intended as an excuse to move away from public schools and to move to vouchers?" Edwards proposed that the federal government pay college tuition for all students willing to work ten hours a week.

Rep. Dennis J. Kucinich: "I want to see education not only begin with a

universal prekindergarten, but to fully fund education, all the way through to and including college. The money is there to make sure our children have a fully funded college education, two and four years." Kucinich wrote in a statement to the NEA that he advocates "a universal prekindergarten system, which will provide year-around daycare for children ages 3-5." He wants an "educational system which is based on the whole child, on his or her health, nutrition, and social circumstances." Kucinich also proposed a "Department of Peace and Nonviolence," which "will teach children principles of nonviolent conflict resolution, peer mediation, and mutuality at a very early age."

Sen. Barack Obama: "The arrival of nine little children at a Little Rock school made real the decision that in America, separate could never be equal. And no matter what the Supreme Court said last week, that's still true today. . . . The ideal of a public education has always been at the heart of the American promise. It's why we are committed to fixing and improving our public schools instead of abandoning them and passing out vouchers. . . . In the coming weeks, I'll be laying out the specific details of my plan to invest billions of new dollars into the teaching profession."

Gov. Bill Richardson: "As president, I will work with states to raise teachers' average minimum wage to \$40,000 a year."

Former **Gov. Mike Huckabee:** "If indeed an uneducated population is a form of terror we cannot possibly tolerate, then today I would like to propose that we would unleash weapons of mass instruction." Huckabee, the lone Republican to speak to the NEA, received a surprisingly cordial reception, which the *Philadelphia Daily News* opined was "rooted in part in the novelty of a Re-



Some buttons seen at the 2007 NEA Convention

publican paying his respects."

All candidates criticized No Child Left Behind, agreeing with the ubiquitous NEA T-shirt slogan, "A Child Is More Than a Test Score." Most of the seven Democrats called for the federal government to fully fund NCLB, although they said the law needs to be completely reinvented and rewritten first.

Most candidates panned the recent Supreme Court decision on race as a determining factor in school placement (see brief). Other areas of agreement among

most candidates included raising teacher pay "across the board," funding pre-K education, and helping to control or mitigate the cost of college through federal programs.

All candidates described visions of increasing federal control of and fiscal involvement in public schools. They were running for the NEA's endorsement and support. Although warm toward all candidates, the audience seemed to applaud and photograph Barack Obama most enthusiastically of all.

NEA Supports Illegal Aliens

This year the NEA clarified its position on immigration reform, now stating more clearly than ever that it favors amnesty and free public education for illegal, or "undocumented," immigrants and their children. A new portion of the NEA's legislative program on immigration expresses the Association's support for "comprehensive immigration reform that rejects the criminalization of undocumented immigrants and those who work with them, including educators."

Another portion of the NEA program had previously called for reform that "may include a path to citizenship" for undocumented immigrants who have lived and worked in the United States. That portion now calls for reform that

"includes [not "may include"] a path to permanent residency, citizenship, or asylum" for such immigrants. The Association made interesting changes to a clause that had called for a legal immigration system which "protects national security, human rights, and civil liberties." "National security" fell by the wayside in the 2007 version. The program now calls for a system that "advances and protects the public interest, human rights, civil liberties, and due process."

NEA also added a clause calling for legislation to simplify the naturalization process for legal immigrants. The NEA arrived at its new stance "after a lot of internal discussion with our Hispanic Caucus" and "a lot of input," a top NEA lobbyist told the *Washington Times*.

Pro-lifers Challenge the NEA

For the 22nd year in a row, the NEA renewed its Family Planning resolution, I-13, which states: "The National Education Association supports family planning, including the right to reproductive freedom. The Association urges the government to give high priority to making available all methods of family planning to women and men unable to take advantage of private facilities. The Association further urges the implementation of community-operated school-based family planning clinics that will provide intensive counseling by trained personnel."

The NEA further affirmed its support for abortion beginning in 1990, when it passed New Business Item 65 by an overwhelming majority. This item declared strong support for *Roe v. Wade* and opposition to any legislation that would limit the broad abortion license granted by *Roe*.

The NEA has cosponsored pro-abortion rallies with groups such as the ACLU, Planned Parenthood, NARAL, and the National Organization for Women. The

NEA has close ties to Planned Parenthood. For example, Randall Moody, NEA's chief lobbyist, formerly served on the board of Planned Parenthood's political action arm. He is also connected with Republicans for Choice. Like the AFT, the NEA serves on the Leadership Council of the Pro-Choice Public Education Project (PEP), which "consists of pro-choice organizations that can take the message of PEP to each of their constituencies" (PEP: www.protectchoice.org).

In 1992, NEA passed New Business Item 29, establishing an annual fund of \$50,000 in grants to pro-abortion advocates across the nation. The NEA promised to award this amount in grants every year until passage of the Freedom of Choice Act. FOCA has not passed, although it has often surfaced in Congress: most recently after the Supreme Court upheld the ban on Partial Birth Abortion.

The current NEA website tries to deny that it has a pro-abortion policy, but nev-

(See *Pro-Lifers*, page 2)

EDUCATION BRIEFS

The Supreme Court ruled in June that school districts violated the Constitution's equal protection clause by using students' race to determine school placement. The cases involved Seattle and Louisville districts that assigned students to schools partially by race in order to further integrate high school student populations. The NEA and a number of other groups decried the decision, claiming that it undermined the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling. The court's majority opinion, however, took the opposite perspective. "Before *Brown*, school children were told where they could and could not go to school based on the color of their skin," wrote Chief Justice John Roberts. "The school districts in these cases have not carried the heavy burden of demonstrating that we should allow this once again — even for very different reasons. The way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to stop discriminating on the basis of race." One way to view this decision is to say it is a victory for a color-blind society and a defeat for enforced diversity.

In a departure from NEA orthodoxy, Sen. Barack Obama cautiously mentioned his support for merit pay at the NEA convention. Most NEA members oppose merit pay, as does the association. "I'm not going to do this to you, I'm going to do this with you," Obama promised. Even though he reassured the crowd that he would not use "arbitrary tests" to determine teacher merit, his comment was not well received. "He's going to have to come a long way off of that position with us," said the vice president of the NEA-affiliated California Teachers Association. (*Washington Post*, 7-11-07)

The Supreme Court upheld teachers' right to abstain from what the *Wall Street Journal* called "the unions' multimillion-dollar political wargames." The Supreme Court decision upheld a Washington State law that requires unions to ask non-members' consent before using money from their paychecks for political purposes. (www.teachers-vs-union.org)

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NEA's Legislative Program

The following excerpts are from the National Education Association's July 2007 publication, *Advancing NEA's Legislative Program*.

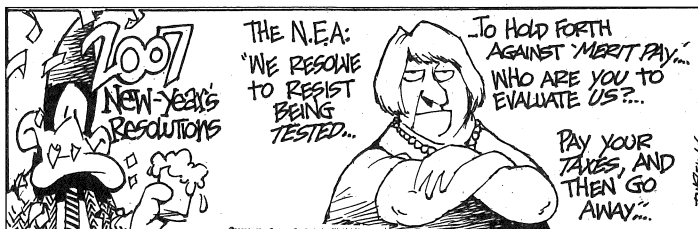
NEA supports:

- administrative structures to facilitate effective integration of guidance and counseling into the entire education experience
- grants to expand and implement guidance and counseling programs
- holding all private, nonpublic schools accountable under the same provisions of federal law as public schools
- repeal of the so-called right-to-work provision of federal labor law
- a national health care policy that will mandate universal coverage
- a tax-supported, single-payer health care plan for all residents of the United States
- coverage for full men's and women's reproductive health care
- federal legislation designed to combat hate crimes
- passage of a federal statute prohibiting employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and expression
- legislation that would prohibit religious organizations that accept federal funds from discriminating in hiring and delivery of services on the basis of race, religion, gender, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or HIV/AIDS status
- the addition of the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution
- reproductive freedom without governmental intervention
- the use of affirmative action to redress historical patterns of discrimination
- statehood for the District of Columbia
- a national holiday honoring César Chávez
- comprehensive immigration reform that rejects the criminalization of undocumented immigrants and includes a path to permanent residency, citizenship, or asylum
- ratification of the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- ratification of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child

NEA opposes:

- tuition tax credits for elementary or secondary schools
- the use of vouchers or certificates in education
- federally mandated parental option or "choice" in education programs
- denying federal student aid funds to college students based on their immigration status or their enrollment in appropriate remedial courses
- denying federal financial aid to college students who have been convicted of misdemeanor, nonviolent drug offenses
- the use of draft registration as an eligibility criterion for financial assistance
- erosion of the role of the U.S. Department of Education or undermining the appropriate federal role in public education
- the testing of teachers as a criterion for job retention, promotion, tenure, or salary increments
- privatization of Social Security
- federal legislation that denies children's access to public education or health care based on their citizen/documentation status
- any legislation or constitutional amendment designating English as the official language of the United States
- the utilization of voter ID cards for the privilege of voting in local, state, and national elections
- any constitutional amendment imposing limitations on taxes or the federal budget

MALLARD FILLMORE / by Jeff Tinsley



Pro-Lifers (Continued from page 1)

ertheless states that the "NEA supports the current protections guaranteed under the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision. This decision allows women to decide for themselves if they should have children — or not have children — and protects the constitutional rights of all women, whether they are pro-choice or anti-abortion." (www.nea.org/topic/truths.html)

At this year's NEA annual meeting, pro-life teachers and area residents gathered to protest the NEA's support of abortion. Pro-Life Educators and Students (PLEAS), a national group, spearheaded the effort. Protesters held signs with slogans such as "Repeal NEA Res. I-13 — Be abortion neutral," "Abortion is a savage act of violence," and "25 abortions = 1 lost class."

"We are not asking the NEA's leadership to reverse their pro-abortion agenda and adopt a pro-life position," said PLEAS National Coordinator Bob Pawson. Instead, PLEAS wants leadership "to totally disengage our union from the abortion

issue, thus making NEA truly neutral and completely non-involved." (*The Bulletin*, 7-2-07) Pro-life activists inside the convention center distributed educational pamphlets with pictures on human development within the womb. The pamphlets contained pictures of weeks-old human embryos as well as facts on embryology.

This year for the first time the pro-lifers were able to get an amendment on the floor to make NEA abortion-neutral. After a 15-minute debate, the amendment was referred to committee, effectively killing it.

Support of abortion is very important to the NEA Women's Caucus. The group's seven goals include the goal to "support, provide and disseminate information regarding a woman's right to choose." The Women's Caucus also strives to promote affirmative action for women, advance Title IX into new areas, and push for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment.

Book of the Month



Courting Failure, Ed. Eric A. Hanushek, Education Next, 2006, 367 pp., \$25.00

This book examines "how school finance lawsuits exploit judges' good intentions and harm



our children." During the past three decades, plaintiffs in 45 states — including schools, school boards, districts and teachers unions — have sued their state governments over school finance, claiming that current funding levels for education are unconstitutionally low. When successful, these suits allow plaintiffs to circumvent the normal democratic process and the legislature's constitutional role in setting the state budget and appropriating money for the schools. Instead, judges directly order increased appropriations for public schools.

Since states' constitutional language is vague about education, these lawsuits ask judges to ascribe a dollar figure to phrases such as "suitable education" or "a system of free common schools." In New York, judges ordered the spending of \$20,000 per student for New York City schools before a non-activist judge finally returned the whole question to the legislature. A Wyoming court interpreted the phrases "complete and uniform" and "thorough and efficient" to require a state education system that would be "visionary and unsurpassed," "the best" available anywhere.

Courting Failure is a collection of articles by different authors who use meticulous logic and solid research to expose the problems inherent in court-mandated funding increases. Two analysts look at high-poverty, high-performance schools and high-spending, low-performing ones. Another examines efficiency in education by comparing public and private schools. Each of these chapters provides valuable insight into the factors that influence educational success or failure.

The chapter "How Can Anyone Say What's Adequate If Nobody Knows How Money Is Spent Now?" highlights a strange aspect of the cases. Plaintiffs have diverted judges' attention away from the question of schools' current levels of efficiency and overall spending. Courts do not, and probably cannot, address the significant issue of how districts spend money, the money they already have, or the money they hope to win by lawsuits.

The schools are full of problems that money alone can't fix. Plaintiffs often argue against straw men, as if opponents of adequacy cases don't want the schools to receive adequate funds. *Courting Failure* persuasively argues that legislators applying the normal appropriations process are much more qualified to determine adequacy than the judicial branch applying information from funding lawsuits.

Some NEA Resolutions Passed at the 2007 Convention in Philadelphia

A-2. Educational Opportunity for All. The Association believes that all schools must be accredited under uniform standards established by the appropriate agencies in collaboration with the Association and its affiliates.

A-11. Use of Closed Public School Buildings. The Association believes that closed public school buildings should be sold or leased only to those organizations that do not provide direct educational services to students and/or are not in direct competition with public schools.

A-14. Financial Support of Public Education. The Association believes that:

- ◆ Funds must be provided for programs to alleviate race, gender, and sexual orientation discrimination and to eliminate portrayal of race, gender, sexual orientation and gender identification stereotypes in the public schools.

- ◆ Full-day, every day kindergarten programs should be fully funded.

- ◆ Federal, state, and, as appropriate, local governments should provide funds sufficient to make pre-kindergarten available for all three- and four-year-old children.

A-15. Federal Financial Support of Public Education. The Association opposes any federal legislation, laws, or regulations that provide funds, goods, or services to sectarian schools.

A-24. Voucher Plans and Tuition Tax Credits. The Association opposes voucher plans, tuition tax credits, or other such funding arrangements that pay for students to attend sectarian schools. The Association also believes that any private school or agency that receives public funding through voucher plans, tax credits, or other funding/financial arrangements must be subject to all accountability measures and regulations required of public schools.

A-33. Federally or State-Mandated Choice/Parental Option Plans. The Association believes that federally or state mandated parental or choice plans compromise free, equitable, universal, and quality public education for every student. Therefore, the Association opposes such federally or state-mandated choice or parental option plans.

B-1. Early Childhood Education. The National Education Association supports early childhood education programs in the public schools for children from birth through age eight. The Association also supports a high-quality program of transition from home and/or preschool to the public kindergarten or first grade. The Association also believes that early childhood education programs should include a full continuum of services for parents/guardians and children, including child care, child development, developmentally appropriate and diversity-based curricula, special education, and appropriate bias-free screening devices. The Association believes that federal legislation should be enacted to as-

ist in organizing the implementation of fully funded early childhood education programs offered through the public schools. These programs must be available to all children on an equal basis and should include mandatory kindergarten with compulsory attendance.

B-8. Class Size. The National Education Association believes that excellence in the classroom can best be attained by small class size. The Association also believes in an optimum class size of fifteen students in regular programs and a proportionately lower number in programs for students with exceptional needs.

B-9. Diversity. The National Education Association believes that similarities and differences among races, ethnicity, color, national origin, language, geographic location, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identification, age, physical ability, size, occupation, and marital, parental, or economic status form the fabric of a society. The Association also believes that education should foster the values of appreciation and acceptance of the various qualities that pertain to people as individuals and as members of diverse populations.

B-10. Racial Diversity Within Student Populations. The Association believes that to achieve or maintain racial diversity that may be necessary for elementary/secondary schools, colleges, and universities to take race into account in making decisions as to student admissions, assignments, and/or transfers.

B-11. Racism, Sexism, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identification Discrimination. Discrimination and stereotyping based on such factors as race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identification, disability, ethnicity, immigration status, occupation, and religion must be eliminated. The Association also believes that these factors should not affect the legal rights and obligations of the partners in a legally recognized domestic partnership, civil union, or marriage in regard to matters involving the other partner, such as medical decisions, taxes, inheritance, adoption, and immigration. Plans, activities, and programs must —

- ◆ Increase respect, understanding, acceptance, and sensitivity toward individuals and groups in a diverse society composed of such groups as American Indians/Alaska natives, Asians and Pacific Islanders, Blacks, Hispanics, women, gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgendered persons, and people with disabilities

- ◆ Eliminate discrimination and stereotyping in curricula, textbooks, resource and instructional materials, activities, etc.

- ◆ Foster the dissemination and use of non-discriminatory and nonstereotypical language, resources, practices, and activities

- ◆ Integrate an accurate portrayal of the roles and contributions of all groups throughout history across curricula, particularly groups who have been under-represented historically

- ◆ Eliminate subtle practices that favor the education of one student over another on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identification, disability, ethnicity, or religion

- ◆ Encourage all members of the educational community to examine assumptions and prejudices, including, but not limited to, racism, sexism, and homophobia, that might limit the opportunities and growth of students and education employees

- ◆ Offer positive and diverse role models in our society including the recruitment, hiring, and promotion of diverse education employees in our public schools

- ◆ Coordinate with organizations and concerned agencies that promote the contributions, heritage, culture, history, and special health and care needs of diverse population groups

The Association encourages its affiliates to develop and implement training programs on these matters.

B-20. Education of Refugee and Undocumented Children and Children of Undocumented Immigrants. The Association supports access to financial aid and in-state tuition to state colleges and universities. The Association further believes that students who have resided in the United States for at least five years at the time of high school graduation should be granted amnesty by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, granted legal residency status, and allowed to apply for U.S. citizenship.

B-26. Educational Programs for English Language Learners. The Association believes that ELL students should be placed in bilingual education programs to receive instruction in their native language from qualified teachers until such time as English proficiency is achieved.

B-35. Multicultural Education. The National Education Association believes that multiculturalism is the process of valuing differences and incorporating the values identified into behavior for the goal of achieving the common good. Multicultural education should promote the recognition of individual and group differences and similarities in order to reduce racism, homophobia, ethnic and all other forms of prejudice, and discrimination and to develop self-esteem as well as respect for others.

B-36. Global Education. The National Education Association believes that global education imparts an appreciation of our interdependency in sharing the world's resources to meet mutual human needs.

B-38. School-to-Work/Career Education. The National Education Association believes that career education must be interwoven into the total educational system and should include programs in gender-free career awareness and exploration to aid students in career course selection.

B-44. Family Life Education. The Association believes that programs should be established for both students and parents/guardians and supported at all educational levels to promote —

- ◆ The development of self-esteem
- ◆ An understanding of societal issues and problems related to children, spouses, parents/guardians, domestic partners, older generation family members, and other family members.

The Association also believes that education in these areas must be presented as part of an anti-biased, culturally-sensitive program.

B-45. Environmental Education. The Association supports educational programs that promote —

- ◆ An awareness of the effects of past, present, and future population growth patterns on world civilization, human survival, and the environment

- ◆ Solutions to environmental problems such as nonrenewable resource depletion, pollution, global warming, ozone depletion, and acid precipitation and deposition
- ◆ The recognition of and participation in such activities as Earth Day

B-47. Sex Education. The Association recognizes that the public school must assume an increasingly important role in providing the instruction. Teachers and health professionals must be qualified to teach in this area and must be legally protected from censorship and lawsuits. The Association also believes that to facilitate the realization of human potential, it is the right of every individual to live in an environment of freely available information and knowledge about sexuality and encourages affiliates and members to support appropriately established sex education programs. Such programs should include information on sexual abstinence, birth control and family planning, diversity of culture, diversity of sexual orientation and gender identification, parenting skills, prenatal care, sexually transmitted diseases, incest, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, homophobia.

B-48. HIV/AIDS Education. The National Education Association believes that educational institutions should establish comprehensive human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) education programs as an integral part of the school curriculum.

B-55. Education on Peace and International Understanding. The National Education Association believes that educational strategies for teaching peace and justice issues should include the role of individuals, social movements, international and nongovernmental organizations. The Association also believes that educational materials should include activities dealing with the effects of nuclear weaponry and other weapons of mass

(Continued on page 4)

destruction, strategies for disarmament, methods to achieve peace. Such curricular materials should also cover major contributing factors to conflict, such as economic disparity, demographic variables, unequal political power and resource distribution, and the indebtedness of the developing world.

B-60. Conflict Resolution Education. The National Education Association supports the adoption and use, at all educational levels, of proven conflict-resolution strategies, materials, and activities by school districts, education employees, students, parents/guardians, and security personnel as well as the school community to encourage nonviolent resolution of interpersonal and societal conflicts.

B-63. Standardized Testing of Students. The National Education Association believes that standardized tests should be used only to improve the quality of education and instruction for students. The Association **opposes** the use of standardized tests when —

- ◆ Used as the criterion for the reduction or withholding of any educational funding
- ◆ Results are used to compare students, teachers, programs, schools, communities, and states
- ◆ Scores are used to track students
- ◆ Students with special needs or limited English proficiency are required to take the same tests as regular education students without modifications and/or accommodations.

B-75. Home Schooling. The National Education Association believes that home schooling programs based on parental choice cannot provide the student with a comprehensive education experience. When home schooling occurs, students enrolled must meet all state curricular requirements, including the taking of assessments to ensure adequate academic progress. Home schooling should be limited to the children of the immediate family, with all expenses being born by the parents/guardians. Instruction should be by persons who are licensed by the appropriate state education licensure agency, and a curriculum approved by the state department of education should be used.

The Association also believes that home-schooled students should not participate in any extracurricular activities in the public schools.

C-15. Extremist Groups. The National Education Association condemns the philosophy and practices of extremist groups and urges active opposition to all such movements that are inimical to the ideals of the Association.

C-23. Comprehensive School Health, Social and Psychological Programs and Services. The National Education Association believes that every child should have direct and confidential access to comprehensive health, social, and psychological programs and services. The Association believes that programs in the schools should provide —

- ◆ A planned sequential, pre-K through 12 health education curriculum that integrates various health topics (such as drug abuse, the dangers of performance enhancing dietary herbal supplements, vio-

lence, safety issues, universal precautions, and HIV education)

- ◆ Counseling programs that provide developmental guidance and broad-based interventions and referrals
- ◆ Comprehensive school-based, community-funded student health care clinics that provide basic health care services (which may include diagnosis and treatment)
- ◆ If deemed appropriate by local choice, family-planning counseling and access to birth control methods with instruction in their use.

C-24. School Guidance and Counseling Programs. The National Education Association believes that guidance and counseling programs should be integrated into the entire education system, pre-kindergarten through higher education.

C-27. Student Sexual Orientation and Gender Identification. The National Education Association believes that all persons, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identification, should be afforded equal opportunity and guaranteed a safe and inclusive environment within the public education system. The Association also believes that, for students who are struggling with their sexual orientation or gender identification, every school district and educational institution should provide counseling services and programs that deal with high suicide and dropout rates and the high incidence of teen prostitution.

C-28. Suicide Prevention Programs. The National Education Association believes that suicide prevention programs including prevention, intervention, and postvention must be developed and implemented. The Association urges its affiliates to ensure that these programs are an integral part of the school program.

D-8. Hiring Policies and Practices for Teaching Positions. The National Education Association believes that hiring policies and practices must be nondiscriminatory and include provisions for the recruitment of a diverse teaching staff.

D-21. Competency Testing of Licensed Teachers. The National Education Association believes that competency testing must not be used as a condition of employment, license retention, evaluation, placement, ranking, or promotion of licensed teachers.

E-3. Selection and Challenges of Materials and Teaching Techniques. The Association deplores prepublishing censorship, book-burning crusades, and attempts to ban books from school libraries/media centers and school curricula.

E-10. Academic and Professional Freedom. Academic freedom includes the rights of teachers and learners to explore and discuss divergent points of view. A teacher shall not be fired, transferred, or removed from his or her position for refusing to suppress the free expression rights of students. Professional freedom includes the teachers' right to evaluate, criticize, and/or advocate their personal point of view concerning the policies and programs of the schools. Furthermore, teachers must be free to depart from mandated scripted learning programs and pacing charts without prejudice or punishment.

F-1. Nondiscriminatory Personnel Policies/Affirmative Action. The National Education Association believes that personnel policies and practices must guarantee that no person be employed, retained, paid, dismissed, suspended, demoted, transferred, retired or harassed because of race, color, national origin, cultural diversity, accent, religious beliefs, residence, physical disability, political activities, professional association activity, age, size, marital status, family relationship, gender, sexual orientation or gender identification. Affirmative action plans and procedures that encourage active recruitment and employment of ethnic minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and men in under-represented education categories should be developed and implemented.

F-2. Pay Equity/Comparable Worth. The "market value" means of establishing pay cannot be the final determinant of pay scales since it too frequently reflects the race and sex bias in our society.

F-46. Medication and Medical Services in the Schools. The Association believes that education employees who are not licensed medical personnel should be protected from all liability if they are required to administer medication or perform medical services.

H-1. The Education Employee as a Citizen. The Association urges its members to become politically involved and to support the political action committees of the Association and its affiliates.

H-7. National Health Care Policy. The National Education Association believes that affordable, comprehensive health care, including prescription drug coverage, is the right of every resident. The Association supports the adoption of a single-payer health care plan for all residents of the United States, its territories, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

H-11. Statehood for the District of Columbia. The Association supports efforts to achieve statehood for the District of Columbia.

I-1. Peace and International Relations. The Association urges all nations to develop treaties and disarmament agreements that reduce the possibility of war. The Association also believes that such treaties and agreements should prevent the placement of weapons in outer space. The Association believes that the United Nations furthers world peace and promotes the rights of all people by preventing war, racism, and genocide.

I-2. International Court of Justice. The Association urges participation by the United States in deliberations before the court.

I-3. International Criminal Court. The Association believes that the United States should ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and recognize and support its authority and jurisdiction.

I-10. Human Rights. The National Education Association believes that the governments of all nations must respect and protect the basic human and civil rights of every individual, including equal access to education as embodied in the United Nations Universal Decla-

ration of Human Rights.

I-13. Family Planning. The National Education Association supports family planning, including the right to reproductive freedom. The Association also urges the implementation of community-operated, school-based family planning clinics that will provide intensive counseling by trained personnel.

I-18. Immigration. The Association opposes any immigration policy that denies educational opportunities to immigrants and their children regardless of their immigration status.

I-28. Freedom of Religion. The Association opposes any federal legislation or mandate that would require school districts to schedule a moment of silence.

I-29. Gun-free Schools and the Regulation of Deadly Weapons. The Association believes that strict prescriptive regulations are necessary for the manufacture, importation, distribution, sale and resale of handguns and ammunition magazines. A mandatory background check and a mandatory waiting period should occur prior to the sale of all firearms.

I-41. Elimination of Discrimination. The National Education Association is committed to the elimination of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, economic status, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identification, age, and all other forms of discrimination. The Association encourages its members and all other members of the educational community to engage in courageous conversations in order to examine assumptions, prejudices, discriminatory practices, and their effects.

I-45. Hate-Motivated Violence. The Association believes that federal, state, and local governments and community groups must oppose and eliminate hate-motivated violence.

I-49. Linguistic Diversity. The Association believes that efforts to legislate English as the official language disregard cultural pluralism; deprive those in need of education, social services, and employment; and must be challenged.

I-52. Equal Opportunity for Women. The Association supports an amendment to the U.S. Constitution (such as the Equal Rights Amendment). The Association urges its affiliates to support ratification of such an amendment. The Association also supports the enactment and full funding of the Women's Educational Equity Act. The Association endorses the use of non-sexist language.

New I. Global Warming. The National Education Association believes that global warming causes significant measurable damage to the earth and its inhabitants. The Association also believes that humans must take steps to change activities that contribute to global warming. The Association supports environmentally sound practices that abate global warming and its effects.

The above text is excerpted from NEA resolutions adopted at the 2007 NEA Convention. Much language has been omitted, but no words have been changed or added.