

California School Board Adopts Policy for Videos in Classroom

The Morongo Unified School District in Yucca Valley, California, adopted a policy on October 17 in regard to the showing of videos in the classroom, as a result of four months' work on the part of parents. The policy sets up a procedure for the approval of videos and films which must be complied with prior to classroom use.

The issue emerged when Mrs. Kathy Roden of Yucca Valley discovered that her son had been shown five R-rated films in his high school English class in May. Between May 11 and June 16, seven videos were shown in Mrs. Laura Tuch-Ahmed's English class, with three class sessions devoted to each film. The R-rated videos, which contain graphic sex or violence,

nudity or profanity, were *Robo Cop*, *Aliens*, *The Fly*, *Betrayed*, and *Good Morning Vietnam*. Also shown were one PG and one PG-13 rated film.

Mrs. Roden's son said that the teacher had warned the class that, if the parents found out about the showings, she would not be able to use any more videos. When Mrs. Roden asked her son what else he did in this English class, she discovered that there was no textbook. Instead of following a typical English curriculum, the rest of the semester's course involved reading *USA Today*, writing a few essays (including one on Vietnam), and engaging in class discussions.

Mrs. Roden believed that the showing of the R-rated videos was not only non-academic and

offensive, but also a violation of school policy. Two years earlier, after she had protested the showing of *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* in a math class, the school board had issued a directive prohibiting the classroom use of films for entertainment, the use of films from video stores, and the use of films with ratings other than G.

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NEA Adopts Resolutions, Budget, Legislative Agenda

The National Education Association (NEA), the nation's largest teacher's union with a membership of 1,935,500, held its national convention in July with nearly 9,000 delegates in attendance. The convention approved its usual lengthy list of policy resolutions, including many that show hostility to parents' rights in education and others that show support of a wide variety of "leftwing" causes. (See the text of some of these NEA resolutions on page 4.)

The NEA convention approved financial reports which show actual expenditures of \$118,632,680 for fiscal year 1988. The budget approved for 1989-90 shows anticipated expenditures of \$134,332,605. In addition, the financial report shows that the NEA has taken out a mortgage of \$36,000,000 for renovation of the NEA headquarters building in Washington, D.C. The value of the building was not given, but is presumed to be worth considerably more than the amount of the mortgage. (Incidentally, in describing this loan agreement, the principal of the loan is spelled as principle.)

Lobbying and Political Activities

The 1989-90 NEA budget includes \$7,834,161 to be spent for lobbying and political purposes. (See detail on page 4.)

A booklet distributed at the convention spells out NEA's Legislative Agenda for 1989-90. It closely parallels the NEA resolutions, such as urging total opposition to "choice" in education.

The NEA's current priority legislative issues contain policies adopted in previous years including support of abortion on demand, the Equal Rights Amendment, affirmative action, and opposition to testing school employees for HIV.

Retiring NEA president Mary Futrell, in her speech at the convention, demonstrated her solidarity with the abortion movement by stating: "I am encouraged by the 500,000 women and men who marched in our nation's capital so that women can continue to have the right to reproductive freedom."

NEA Work for Daycare

Reports submitted to the 1989 NEA convention included a self-congratulatory statement that the "NEA is one of the founders of the Alliance for Better Childcare, which promotes such legislation as the Act for Better Childcare Services. NEA keeps current with other advocacy organizations and research in the area."



Continuing, this report stated that the "NEA continues to work with key members of Congress on legislation designed to provide affordable, accessible, high-quality day care services."

The \$7 million sum allocated to lobbying and political activities is exclusive of other large amounts designated as for educational programs such as: "monitors and evaluates various attacks of the radical right-wing on public schools and the NEA and devises appropriate strategies to address these attacks."

The specific item to "Provide information, technical assistance, and training to members to assist them and to ward off increasing censorship efforts and other attacks experienced by public schools" is listed for an expenditure of \$319,845. The item described as "Maintain a clearinghouse of information regarding groups, individuals, and activities/actions whose purpose is to attack and undermine public education and public school employees" is given a budget amount of \$316,402. ■

PAW Reports Parents Win Half of Disputes

Parents and taxpayers are winning nearly half their local curriculum battles to restore responsibility to our nation's public schools, according to the 1988-1989 *Attacks on Freedom to Learn* report recently published by People for the American Way (PAW). The report covers parental school disputes over appropriateness of material for schoolchildren on the basis of content or age level.

PAW reports that "the censors were successful in banning educational materials or restricting their use in nearly half of the challenges to instruction." Observers note that those whom PAW calls "censors" are usually parents who want to supervise what is taught to their own children. Observers maintain that schoolchildren are a captive audience under compulsory school attendance laws and therefore should be given deference regarding mandatory texts which may offend their personal values.

PAW is concerned with protecting "academic freedom" for teachers which means, according to PAW, that teachers and librarians should be free to use any type of material in the classroom, in contravention of parental wishes if necessary. This view on academic freedom for teachers is also held by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the National Education Association (NEA), among others.

PAW reports that the subject area with the largest number of complaints during the last year was witchcraft, satanism and the occult. However, parental objections to curricula in these areas were generally not successful. Sample complaints on witchcraft, satanism, and the occult and the school's response to the complaint are listed below. Each entry is from a different school district and is taken from the PAW report.

●Arizona: Parents objected to elementary school use of works by E. L. Konigsburg for "teaching witchcraft and devil worship." [Material retained.]

●California: Parents objected to "Human Interaction," a K-12 curriculum that is "an eclectic mix of New Age teachings with elements of Eastern mysticism." [Pending.]

●Colorado: Parents objected to a curriculum containing "elements of hypnotism and self-hypnosis and new-agey kinds of things." [Parents opted children out of the curriculum or pulled children out of the school system altogether.]

●Colorado: Parents objected to the book

Halloween because of its "satanic overtones." [Book retained.]

●Florida: Parents objected to *Devils and Demons* because it "might lead children to a life of devil worship." [Book retained, but parental permission necessary to check it out of elementary library.]

●Georgia: Parents objected to the excessive number of books in middle school libraries dealing with the occult and satanism. [Books retained.]

●Illinois: Parents objected to the classroom use of *The Charming* because its stories of "demonic power and possession" are unsuitable for sixth graders. [The 15-book "Dark Forces" series including *The Charming* was returned to the classroom.]

●Iowa: Parents objected to middle-school children being given *Unnatural Talent* because it promotes satanism. [Book retained.]

●Kansas: Parents objected to *The Headless Cupid* for "teaching witchcraft." [Book retained.]

●Kansas: Parents objected to *Halloween ABC* because it subjected elementary school pupils to "satanic influences." [Book retained, but moved from the young children's section to the poetry section.]

●Kansas: Parents objected to using *The Witch Goes Up* with elementary school children because it makes "witchcraft look like a viable lifestyle." [Book retained.]

●Maine: Parents filed a complaint against *Stars, Spells, Secrets, and Sorcery* because it features "step-by-step instructions to set up an occult group." [No change.]

●Nevada: Parents objected to second graders being given relaxation tapes that taught New Age and Far Eastern religions and which introduced them to "a white rabbit who is their friend and has the potential to invite a demon into their lives." [Board voted to remove 10 of the 12 tapes.]

●New Hampshire: Parents objected to the use of "Dungeons and Dragons" in a junior high school course because it promotes satanism. [Book retained, but parental consent required for enrollment.]

●New Jersey: Parents complained about *Devils and Demons* because its discussions of witchcraft and satanism are inappropriate for elementary school students. [Book moved to middle school library and is available to elementary students through inter-library loan.]

See PAW, page 3

EDUCATION BRIEFS

Sites for the next public forums to be held by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) on establishing national standards for measuring reading have been announced. They are October 26 in Los Angeles and November 3 in Atlanta. The first national reading test is to be administered by NAEP in 1992. At a public forum held earlier, attendants urged that phonics and literature should be stressed in the new national assessment.

"Teen Drama," a touring dramatic troupe of teenagers, has been performing in high school auditoriums in the Fort Worth area in fictional skits on incest, parental alcoholism, drug use, and teenage pregnancy. A joint production of two United Way agencies — the Panther Boys Club and the Fort Worth Adolescent Pregnancy Board — Teen Drama operates with a \$25,000 budget and a cast of 12 teenagers who do research for their skits such as visiting the Dallas Incest Recovery Association. Several teenage actors told the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* that they are very uncomfortable with their parts. Paul, age 17, said he dislikes acting in the incest skit, and Kristina, age 16, said she dislikes portraying a pregnant teen.

Jesse Jackson announced that his National Rainbow Coalition wants to form parent-teacher groups in Washington, D.C.'s public schools and launched a campaign to have parents accompany their children to the first day of classes. However, Jackson immediately discovered that the local public school establishment does not welcome this kind of parental involvement. Several school board members publicly expressed their annoyance at Jackson's idea and said "we've got to maintain our own integrity, our own turf." Jackson moved to the nation's capital in August.

The U.S. Department of Education will hold three more regional strategy meetings on Choice in Education. The remaining dates of the meetings still to be held are: November 13-14 in Charlotte, NC; November 16-17 in Denver, CO; and November 28-29 in Richmond, CA. Advance registration is required. For information, contact Dr. Linda Varner Mount at 202/732-4039.

Maryland has developed a \$34 million plan to put a full-time nurse in every school in order to help fight drug abuse. A pilot program with 46 schools demonstrated, according to one report, that "nurses, working with counselors and teachers, can be effective in spotting drug abuse and aiding students with medical problems."

Observance of "Earth Day 1990," to be held April 22, 1990, is being encouraged by the Council of Chief State School Officers. Earth Day 1990 organizers are concerned about reaching students with lessons about environmental problems and solutions. For more information contact Owen Byrd, Student and Youth Coordinator, Earth Day 1990, P.O. Box AA, Stanford University, Stanford, California 94309, 415/321-1990.

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Video

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Videos Horrify School Board

At the June 20 school board meeting, Mrs. Roden's husband Ray Roden made a 7-minute presentation with a short clip from each of the R-rated videos shown this year. The board members expressed themselves as "horrified," and some members said that the showings were a "blatant violation" of the school's directive on films. However, the school board said that the directive carried no penalty, and members said they would investigate what disciplinary action could be taken. Mrs. Roden also made a presentation and submitted "objection forms" from parents of 87 students which informed the school that they wanted to be notified in advance if the teachers planned to show any R-rated or X-rated films or present any material on abortion, euthanasia, homosexuality, values clarification, or privacy-invading topics in the classroom.

Believing that the showing of R-rated films in school was a violation of California civil law prohibiting the showing of harmful materials to minors and also a violation of California education code prohibiting reproductive organs from being illustrated without prior parental consent, Mrs. Roden asked the district attorney for help. He said that the education code was not under his jurisdiction and that pursuing a complaint under the civil law would bring minimal consequences to the teacher, if that.

Later that summer, Mrs. Roden learned that Mrs. Tuch-Ahmed could not be fired, if that were the action the school board would like to take, because of the California education code. The code protects teachers who are being rehired from dismissal for one year if they do not receive a non-renewal notice from the district before March 11. Mrs. Roden was told that standard disciplinary procedure was to place a letter of reprimand in the teacher's file. The school cannot tell Mrs. Roden if such action has been taken against Mrs. Tuch-Ahmed because of confidentiality rules regarding school personnel.

When school started this fall and no action had yet been taken regarding the parents' objection forms, Mrs. Roden questioned whether the forms were in force. She was told that the school had sent the forms to the school lawyer and that the teachers had been asked to comply with the parents' requests until further notice.

In October, Mrs. Roden's son, a senior, was sent out of his American Government class by the teacher, Mr. Taylor, the day he showed the film, *Mein Kampf*. Her son was told he was being given an alternate assignment to write a composition on the First Amendment and also told he would no longer be able to attend student-directed classes on current events. Mrs. Roden said there was no provocation for this action on the part of the teacher, and she concluded that he was overreacting to and misinterpreting the "objection form" which she had submitted. The objection form does not refer to presentations of history or classroom discussions led by students.

Mrs. Roden called for an appointment with Mr. Taylor and the principal. When she and her husband went to the meeting, the principal and vice principal told the Rodens that Mr. Taylor would not meet with them unless he received an advance copy of the questions they wanted to ask and unless his attorney could be present. The Rodens agreed, but the principal suggested they forgo the meeting and that her son substitute independent study for the American Government course, which is required for graduation.

Teachers Protest to Board

Meanwhile, the school board announced that it had the 1987 film directive under

consideration for adoption as school policy. During the review period, some 20 teachers attended the September 19 school board meeting to protest adoption of the directive as policy. At least nine teachers spoke against the proposed policy, citing as reasons their "First Amendment rights," "academic freedom," and "separation of church and state." One teacher stated that he resented having his "professionalism questioned." Another teacher challenged the school board by asking what action the board would take against teachers who do not obey the policy. She made it clear she would not follow the policy if adopted, according to

observers.

The new policy finally adopted by the school board on October 17 requires that all videos go through an approval process that includes the actual viewing of the material and the designation of "acceptable, good, or excellent" ratings. Teachers must submit their video requests to the principal, indicating the quality rating, an assurance that the video is not to be used for entertainment or reward purposes, the length of the video, the classroom time the video will require, and a justification for the class time to be used. (*Text of Morongo School Board policy below.*) ■

Yucca Valley Video Policy

Policy No. 6161.2(a)

Instruction: Use of Videos and Films

- The following materials are approved:
 - County contract films or videos are approved for classroom use.
 - Videos and films approved by one school are approved for all schools.
- Approval process for new material: All videos or films to be used in the classroom must be approved by a school level process which includes actual viewing of the material by a representative group. The representative group composition will be determined by the school in its procedures. The school level approval process shall include the approved subject area categories, the approved grade level, and a quality rating of acceptable, good, or excellent. Approved videos must be purchased by the school or received as a loan for a minimum of one semester and made available to other teachers. The school shall pay for lost or damaged videotapes. Public libraries, rental or special loan videos must also be approved by this process. Approval procedures shall be filed with the assistant superintendent of educational services and approved by the board of education.
- Videos taped off air: Off-air tapes are approved for classroom use when they have been approved by a school level process and they meet copyright law with regard to time limit, etc.
- Use of videos by individual teachers: Teachers shall submit requests to show approved videos or films. Each principal shall develop request and monitoring procedures for the individual school. The request procedure shall ensure that the video or film to be used is:
 - from a list of district or school approved videos indicating identifying data, grade level, subject, and quality rating.
 - not for entertainment or reward purposes. (Certain exceptions may be made on occasion for special education classes with the approval of the principal.)
 - the request shall indicate consideration of the length of the video and the amount of time to be actually used in the classroom.
 - Additionally, the request should include a justification for the class time to be spent.

Ref: Policy No. 4117.41 Certificated Personnel, Disciplinary Action. Adopted October 17, 1989.

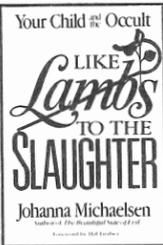
Halloween Dominates Curricula

- Bob Anderson's two sons in an East Providence, Rhode Island elementary school are in the middle of a six week emphasis on Halloween. He objected and eventually aired his concerns to the PTA. The Superintendent suggested that the boys' teachers refrain from using the Halloween theme. The teachers said they would file a grievance with the union if required to do so. The Superintendent then suggested that the boys be excluded from classes whenever the Halloween theme was used. The teachers objected because that would cause the boys to be out of class an "inordinate amount of time." The Andersons are considering homeschooling.

- Parents in Larkspur, Colorado have had a "running battle" with their school district for six years over the emphasis on Halloween. This year, instead of the traditional 2-3 week celebration with witch-decorated hallways and mandatory Halloween-related crafts for children, parents who object may request alternate, fall-related crafts and withdraw their children from the schoolwide celebration on the 31st after checking in with the school and picking up assignments. Some parents requested a Harvest Festival to replace the Halloween Celebration, but they were voted down at the local PTA meeting. These parents are also upset

that the school has such a heavy emphasis on Halloween while refusing to even mention Christmas in the winter program.

- Parents in Highland Park, Texas told their kindergartner's teacher that they did not want their daughter to participate in activities relating to witchcraft. When they asked the teacher why the occult theme was so pervasive in the curriculum, she responded that they were teaching the difference between reality and fantasy. The parents told the teacher that, in their home, they teach that witches and the occult are real and that their children should have nothing to do with them. The teacher suggested they speak to the principal. At the meeting with the principal, the principal agreed that the picture from a 1975 Macmillan book with three "demonic-looking beasts" which were to be labeled as having sad, mad, or happy faces were inappropriate and would no longer be included in the curriculum. The principal went on to say that Halloween used to be a cultural event, but is more and more tied to religion and therefore is no longer appropriate to the public school curriculum. After that meeting, the kindergarten teacher hung a picture of a witch in her classroom. The teacher took it down only after a student told the teacher that the witch bothered her. ■



Book of the Month

Like Lambs to the Slaughter: Your Child and the Occult, by Johanna Michaelsen, Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House Publishers, 1989, 352 pp., \$8.95.

Most metropolitan bookstores have an entire section labeled New Age. If you find that those books are written in an alien vocabulary or use familiar words with apparently unfamiliar meanings, then you would find *Like Lambs to the Slaughter* a useful book. For Christian parents who know nothing about the New Age movement or the widespread current evidence of how too many children are destroyed by satanism and occult practices, Johanna Michaelsen has written a readable and useful primer.

In a breezy, colloquial style, she uses and defines dozens of words which are common parlance to those steeped in New Age ideology, witchcraft, satanism, and the trendy cults of "human potential" and "self-esteem."

The New Age movement was born of a marriage of Western occultism and Eastern mysticism and is now big business. According to a George Gallup poll, one out of every four Americans now believes in reincarnation, and two million Americans report that they've had out-of-body experiences or near-death experiences.

Mrs. Michaelsen gives many examples of how occult and New Age courses are used in the public school classroom. The "Gifted and Talented" classes are particular targets. Schoolchildren have been given assignments to research their astrological sign, to draw a *mandala*, to read books about witchcraft, and to practice Yoga, meditation, and relaxation techniques. They have been taken on trips via guided imagery and visualization. They have been taught to play Dungeons and Dragons.

The New Agers claim to provide children with a spirit guide of their very own who can help the child in contacting his "Higher Self" or "Inner Wisdom." Mrs. Michaelsen shows how some curricula for self-esteem curricula are really manuals for introducing Oriental and New Age occultism into the classroom because they instruct teachers how to lead children through guided imagery and visualization to find their "wise person living within them."

The New Age is the ultimate eclectic religion of self: Whatever *you* decide is right for you is what's right, as long as you don't get narrow-minded and exclusive about it. You don't have to accept Christianity to recognize that these trendy new cults are a religion substitute and have no place in the public school classroom.

The book explains some of the trendy new words such as "centering" and "relaxation" which the New Age gurus say "provide a space for listening to the voice within." The author shows the relationship of this to curricula such as "Thinking Skills," "Quieting Reflex," "Success Imagery," and "DUSO."

One defect of the book is that it doesn't have an index and there are so many persons, concepts, and happenings to which the reader would like to refer later. ■

Focus: Smaller Classes Not the Remedy

By Robert Samuelson

A few years ago, sociologist Merry White of Boston University was asked by the head of a large school system in this country about the student-teacher ratio in Japan. As an expert on Japanese education, White replied easily: about 40-to-1.

The news was crushing. The educator had planned to cite Japan as proof that lower student-teacher ratios in his city would improve academic performance.

There lies a lesson: We cannot buy educational excellence. The United States and Japan spend roughly the same amount on schools (almost 7 percent of gross national product). Japan's superiority mostly reflects attitudes and hard work.

Both countries view education as a pathway to personal and societal success. But the Japanese practice what they preach. Their courses are more demanding, and Japanese children — with the active support of their mothers — devote more time to mastering their school work.

In 1986, an astonishing 59 percent of American 11th graders reported they did less than an hour's worth of homework an evening; 33 percent did none.

Most of these students can't get much from school. It's not merely language or mathematical skills that are being neglected. Students are also acquiring bad habits.

By contrast, most Japanese youths learn the importance of perseverance at an early age. "The term *gambaru* (to persist) is frequently invoked by mothers, teachers and peers," White writes in her superb book, *The Japanese Educational Challenge*.

"Thomas Edison's dictum that genius is '99 percent perspiration and 1 percent inspiration' is a precept, like stringent quality control, that seems to work better in Japan though it was coined in the United States."

Aside from large class sizes, White reports other startling aspects (to Americans) of

Japanese schools. For example, there's little conscious effort to promote high-tech skills. The focus is on the basics of language, literature, science, history and mathematics. Computers aren't intensively used as educational aids. Fewer than 5 percent of Japanese junior high schools have computers compared with more than half of American schools.

The quality of Japan's public schools is high. White thinks that the typical high school diploma is the equivalent of a U.S. college degree, and about 94 percent of Japanese students complete high school. In addition, about four-fifths of them go to private tutoring classes (*juku*) in the afternoons or on weekends. Families are ambitious for their children because the school system largely determines who gets the best jobs. The *juku* are intended to provide an extra edge.

Exams play a decisive role in this highly competitive system. Students must apply for admission to different high schools, and exams decide who gets into the best schools. These students stand the best chances of going to the best colleges, where entrance is also determined by rigorous tests. Going to college is the typical ticket for good career jobs in government or business.

Americans can learn from the Japanese experience. As White cautions, the idea is not to try to import the Japanese system — this is *not* Japan, and many of that system's strengths reflect social values that Americans wouldn't want to adopt even if we could.

For example, Japanese mothers are single-mindedly devoted to their children. Careers for women are frowned upon. To follow that model in the United States would mean reversing the influx of mothers into jobs outside the home, something that is probably impossible and certainly undesirable.

Competition is essential in any successful educational system, but most Americans would be uncomfortable with the controlling role played by Japan's exams. "[We] will persist ...

in the notion that nobody's chances in life should be determined by a few hours sitting in an examination room," writes White.

Still, what the Japanese have — and Americans do not — is a consensus about the essential seriousness of education. Teachers in Japan enjoy high status and pay. Teachers' colleges admit only a quarter of their applicants, and much is expected of them. The discipline problems common in American schools are rare in Japan. There's a shared belief among students, teachers and parents that what they're doing matters.

It's encouraging that these simple ideas have begun to creep into the debate over U.S. schools. The "reform" movement of the past decade has emphasized the need for tougher demands on students and teachers. Graduation standards and testing requirements have been toughened; many states have adopted modest entry exams for new teachers. But there remains a superficial air to the debate, as if there were a magic formula to set things right.

There isn't. If, for example, smaller class sizes were the solution, there would be no problem. Class sizes have declined steadily since the early 1960s, as a result of study from the U.S. Department of Education reports. Between 1961 and 1986, the median class size in elementary schools dropped from 30 to 24 students; for high schools, the decrease was from 27 to 22.

Yet during much of this period academic performance deteriorated. Class size doesn't matter if students don't think they have to strive to learn or if teachers aren't competent to teach.

What's most needed to improve U.S. education is a sense of purpose. For too long, Americans merely paid lip service to the importance of education. We will get quality schools only if students and parents are willing to work for them. It's as simple and difficult as that.

Mr. Samuelson writes a column for Newsweek and other major newspapers including The Washington Post. This article originally appeared in the Philadelphia Inquirer, 9-13-88.

PAW

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●Oklahoma: Parents objected to the *Pumsey in Pursuit of Excellence* elementary school counseling program for "humanistic and New Age concepts and undermining parental and church teachings." [Program dropped.]

●Oklahoma: Parents of middle school children objected to *Curses, Hexes and Spells and Servants of the Devil* for containing "satanic material." [Books removed.]

●Oregon: Parents objected to *The Restless Dead* for being "demonic" and "totally preoccupied with the occult." [Book retained.]

●Oregon: Parents complained about *Bumps in the Night* for teaching elementary school pupils about the occult. [Book retained.]

●Oregon: Parent objected to *The Kid Who Only Hit Homers* because of "discussion of astrology, horoscopes, and the occult." [Book retained.]

●Oregon: Parents objected to *The Magic Grandfather* because of its preoccupation with magic and witches. [Book waiting review.]

●Oregon: Parents complained about *The Devil's Piper* because it encourages young minds to "pursue the occult" and to *The Prince in Waiting* because it promotes "positive attitudes toward the occult and ridicule toward Christianity." [Book retained; decision appealed.]

●Texas: Community members objected to the "Invitation to Psychology" text because it "very blatantly teaches transcendental meditation" and promotes "Eastern religion." [Text adopted.]

●Washington: Community members objected to DUSO and other programs because they may indoctrinate children in "New Age spiritualism," "Eastern religion" and occultism. [No action taken.]

●West Virginia: Parents objected to "books on occult in a junior high school library." [32 books removed for review, half have been returned to the library, the remainder are still under review.]

●Wisconsin: Parents objected to the film *Children of the Corn* because it promotes "the occult and rebellion by children." [Film retained, decision appealed.]

Bible Reading Complaints

Another set of incidents reported by PAW concerned Bible reading and prayer. In Arkansas reading of Bible passages in the morning was stopped after the ACLU threatened a lawsuit. In another Arkansas district, voluntary, by parental permission only, "Bible Stories" classes

were retained, but a suit has been filed.

In Connecticut, a citizen group is calling for voluntary oral prayer in schools; school officials refuse to allow prayer in the public schools. In Florida, the school board agreed to hold non-denominational invocations at extracurricular public school events. In another Florida district, Bible readings have been discontinued, but the district continues to hold prayers at public school events. In Mississippi, extra curricular and for-credit Bible classes were objected to by a Pentecostal because they were being taught by a Baptist; the ACLU subsequently filed a complaint which is under investigation.

In Nebraska, the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of an after school Bible study club, granting it permission to meet on school premises; the decision is being appealed. Also in Nebraska, a fifth grader was ordered to stop reading his Bible during silent reading time when children choose their own reading selection; the family filed suit and settled out of court, and the district agreed to pay damages and to "publicize a policy that students are permitted to read religious literature of their choice during free time." In Texas, an experimental Bible class will be offered for credit in the public schools in Corpus Christi.

Other topics receiving widespread attention were sex education, where the report states that pro-family groups "have already scored some damaging victories," homosexuality, creationism, and evolution. ■



Some of the NEA Resolutions for 1989-1990

A-11. Deleterious Programs

The National Education Association believes that the following programs and practices are detrimental to public education and must be eliminated: performance contracting, tax credits for tuition to private and parochial schools, voucher plans (or funding formulas that have the same effect as vouchers), planned program budgeting systems (PPBS), and evaluations by private, profit-making groups.

A-12. Federally or State-Mandated Choice/Parental Option Plans

The National Education Association believes that federally or state-mandated parental option or choice plans compromise the Association's commitment to free, equitable, universal, and quality public education for every student. Therefore, the Association opposes such federally or state-mandated choice or parental option plans. . . .

A-13. Tuition Tax Credits

The National Education Association believes that tuition tax credits — under which pre-K to 12 private school education is subsidized by federal or state tax monies — could lead to racial, economic, and social isolation of children and undermine our commitment to the public school system. Therefore, the Association believes that all federal and state legislation designed to establish or implement plans for prekindergarten through grade 12 tuition tax credits is detrimental to the public interest and urges its affiliates to work for the defeat of such legislation.

A-14. Voucher Plans

The National Education Association believes that voucher plans or funding formulas that have the same effect as vouchers — under which education is financed by federal, state, or local grants to parents, schools, or school systems — could lead to racial, economic, and social isolation of students and weaken or destroy the public school system.

The Association urges the enactment of federal and state legislation prohibiting the establishment of voucher plans and calls upon its affiliates to seek from members of Congress and state legislatures support for this legislation.

A-17. National Health Insurance

The Association believes that access to comprehensive health care is a right of every citizen and that a national health care insurance plan should be supported and funded by the U.S. Congress. The plan should encourage diversity and flexibility in the provision of health care service. This plan must be mandatory and be provided by both public and private agencies that have substantial consumer representation on their governing boards.

A-25. Public School Buildings

The National Education Association believes that closed public school buildings that have been deemed safe can be used effectively for public preschool, day care, job training, and adult education centers. 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-26. Environmental Education

The National Education Association believes that the nation's priorities must include the protection of our environment. It urges the establishment and maintenance of Federal Wilderness Areas, Recreational Areas, Refuge Areas, and designated local green areas. It further urges the development and improvement of educational programs that will —

- Promote the concept of the interdependence of humanity and nature
- Develop an awareness of the effects of past, present, and future population growth patterns on world civilization, human survival, and the environment
- Promote an understanding of the necessity to protect endangered, threatened, and rare species
- Promote an understanding of the necessity to protect the earth's finite resources
- Promote the concept of pollution reduction.

The Association urges its affiliates to support environmental programs in school systems for learners of all ages.

B-12. Sexism in Education

The Association recognizes that many instructional materials portray females and males in sex-stereotyped roles. It urges educators to use instructional materials that portray various careers and personal roles as acceptable and attainable for all individuals.

The Association endorses the use of nonsexist language by all schools. It further believes that sexism and sex discrimination must be eliminated from the curriculum.

C-3. Early Childhood Development and Kindergarten

The National Education Association supports the inclusion of prekindergarten early childhood education programs within the public school system in facilities that are appropriate to the developmental needs of this age group. These programs should include prekindergarten screening, child care, child development, appropriate developmental curriculum, and special education. The Association further supports kindergarten programs that are developmentally appropriate and that adequately prepare the child for transition into first grade. The Association urges that federal legislation be enacted to assist in funding and organizing the implementation of such programs. . . .

The Association advocates the establishment of fully funded, early childhood special education programs. These

programs should be readily accessible, make available those services necessary to assist handicapped children from birth, and be staffed by certified teachers, qualified support staff, and therapists.

The Association urges its affiliates to seek legislation to ensure that early childhood developmental programs offered primarily through the public schools be fully funded and available on an equal basis and culminate in mandatory kindergarten with compulsory attendance. . . .

C-9. Student Health and Personnel Services

The National Education Association believes that every student should have direct and confidential access to health, social, and psychological services within both school and community settings.

The Association also believes that health, social, and psychological services to students must be provided by appropriately licensed and certificated professional personnel in both settings. . . .

These services must include —

- Preventative programs to promote optimum wellness in physical, social, and emotional health to allow for the maximum level of school performance.
- Programs for early identification and diagnosis of health and/or learning disabilities.

guidance and counseling services should be integrated into the entire education system, beginning at the prekindergarten level. Guidance and counseling services should be provided through counselor/student ratios that best support students in realizing their full potential in all areas of growth and achievement.

C-11. Student Sexual Orientation

The National Education Association believes that all persons, regardless of sexual orientation, should be afforded equal opportunity within the public education system. The Association further believes that every school district should provide counseling by trained personnel for students who are struggling with their sexual/gender orientation.

C-12. Student Stress

The National Education Association believes that there are increasing mental, emotional, and environmental pressures upon the children and youth of this nation. These pressures — resulting in increased drug and alcohol abuse, violence, vandalism, dropping out of school, and suicide among children and youth — speak clearly to the waste of human potential.

The Association urges its local and state affiliates to support appropriately accredited and licensed mental health and aftercare programs for students and to provide

The Association believes the goal of multicultural/global education is the recognition of individual and group differences and similarities in developing self-esteem as well as respect for others.

The Association urges its affiliates to develop comprehensive educator training programs for multicultural/global education and to work to secure legislation that would provide adequate funding for effective implementation of such programs.

C-25. Conflict Resolution Education

The National Education Association believes that many television programs, movies, computer games, and other cultural influences condition children and youth to accept interpersonal and societal violence as a means of resolving conflicts.

The Association further believes that such conditioning has a negative impact on the attitudes and behavior of many young people and offers them a socially unacceptable response to conflicts.

The Association supports the development of strategies, instructional materials, and activities that will encourage nonviolent resolution of interpersonal and societal conflicts.

C-27. Family Life Education

The National Education Association believes that the developing child's sexuality is continually and inevitably influenced by daily contacts, including experiences in the school environment. The Association recognizes that sensitive sex education can be a positive force in promoting physical, mental, and social health and that the public school must assume an increasingly important role in providing the instruction. Teachers must be qualified to teach in this area and must be legally protected from censorship and lawsuits.

The Association urges that formal sex education should include parent orientation and be planned and implemented with careful attention to developmental needs, appropriateness to community settings and values, and respect for individual differences.

The Association urges its affiliates and members to support appropriately established sex education programs, including information on sexual abstinence, birth control and family planning, diversity of sexual orientation, parenting skills, prenatal care, sexually transmitted diseases, incest, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, the effects of substance abuse during pregnancy, and problems associated with and resulting from preteen and teenage pregnancies.

To facilitate the realization of human potential, it is the right of every individual to live in an environment of freely available information, knowledge, and wisdom about sexuality.

C-35. Home Schooling

The National Education Association believes that home schooling programs cannot provide the student with a comprehensive education experience.

The Association believes that, if parental preference home schooling study occurs, students enrolled must meet all state requirements. 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 further believes that such home schooling programs should be limited to the children of the immediate family, with all expenses being borne by the parents.

F-21. 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, or retired because of race, color, national origin, religious beliefs, residence, physical disability, political activities, professional association activity, age, marital status, family relationship, sex, or sexual orientation.

To address societal needs, however, the Association urges the development and implementation of affirmative action plans and procedures that will encourage active recruitment and employment of women, minorities, and men in underrepresented education categories.

It may be necessary, therefore, to give preference in recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion policies to certain ethnic-minority groups or women or men to overcome past discrimination.

F-42. Drug and Alcohol Testing

The National Education Association believes that mandatory drug and alcohol testing of employees and job applicants is an unwarranted and unconstitutional invasion of privacy and opposes such testing.

F-43. AIDS/HIV Testing of Educational Employees

The National Education Association opposes mandatory/involuntary acquired immunodeficiency syndrome/human immunodeficiency virus (AIDS/HIV) testing of school employees or school employment applicants.

F-44. Employees with AIDS

The National Education Association believes that educational employees shall not be fired, nonrenewed, suspended (with or without pay), transferred, or subjected to any other adverse employment action solely because they have tested positive for the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome/human immunodeficiency virus (AIDS/HIV) antibody or have been diagnosed as having AIDS or AIDS-related complex (ARC). ■

NEA 1989-90 budget for designated lobbying and political purposes:

Lobby members of Congress, their staffs, and key committees in support of NEA legislative goals.	\$1,175,740
Coordinate NEA activities with governmental agencies, state associations, and other national organizations, to achieve implementation of objectives of NEA.	\$831,758
Provide support for a grassroots NEA member lobby program of at least two Congressional Contact Team members per congressional district to achieve support for NEA's legislative program.	\$586,016
Communicate Government Relations reports to affiliates, members, Congressional Contact Team coordinators, and regional staff.	\$154,091
Administer the affairs of the NEA Political Action Committee, implement candidate endorsement process.	\$615,012
Maintain political data systems and services, including maintenance of Lobby-by-Mail system, that support all levels of the Association in efforts to elect friends of education and to insure positive outcomes of initiative/ballot issues and support federal and state legislative lobbying on issues.	\$888,314
Assist affiliates in organizing and training members for political activity within the Democratic and Republican Parties, in order to achieve the NEA's legislative program.	\$461,455
Secure membership support for NEA-PAC endorsed congressional candidates; gather survey information for potential candidate support; and support local and state membership programs for political action.	\$875,757
Participate in Democratic and Republican party meetings and activities to establish education as a significant platform issue and to secure national party support for the NEA legislative program.	\$38,205
Provide field support and coordination of NEA's national legislative and political action programs.	\$2,207,813
TOTAL	\$7,834,161

c. Programs — such as direct services within the schools and referrals to and coordination with community and local governmental agencies — that work to resolve identified disabilities.

d. Programs that promote health awareness for students, school employees, parents, and community.

e. Programs taught by specialists that include health education and physical education commensurate with maturation levels of students.

f. Comprehensive school-based, community-funded student health care clinics that provide basic health care services (which may include diagnosis and treatment) to supplement, but not supplant, school nurses.

The Association urges that, if deemed appropriate by local choice, these health care services include family-planning counseling, and access to birth control methods and instruction in their use, and that school nurses be integrally involved in the design, development, and implementation of the clinic, serving as the nursing professional in the school-based clinic model.

The Association further believes that schools must assume an advocacy role for those students affected by circumstances that prevent them from functioning adequately in educational settings.

C-10. School Counseling Services

The National Education Association believes that

staff development workshops for personnel in direct contact with these students.

C-13. Suicide Prevention Programs

The National Education Association believes that the increasing rate of child and adolescent suicide is a national tragedy. The Association further believes that suicide prevention programs should be an integral part of the school program.

The Association urges its affiliates to ensure that such programs, which should include prevention, intervention, and post-vention, are established and implemented within their districts.

C-21. Multicultural/Global Education

The National Education Association believes that multicultural/global education is a way of helping students perceive the cultural diversity of U.S. citizenry so that they may develop pride in their own cultural legacy, awaken to the ideals embodied in the cultures of their neighbors, and develop an appreciation of the common humanity shared by all peoples of the earth.

Multicultural/global education develops an awareness of cultures and an appreciation of our interdependency in sharing the world's limited resources to meet mutual human needs through the mastery of communication skills (including foreign languages) and cooperation among the diverse groups in our nation and world.