

EDUCATION REPORTER

Number 114

The Newspaper of Education Rights

August 1995

National Education Assn. Convention Passes Anti-Parent, Feminist, Pro-Gay Resolutions

The people who control America's public schools gathered in Minneapolis over the Fourth of July weekend and set off their own brand of fireworks. Some 8,544 delegates to the National Education Association's annual Convention approved dozens of resolutions presented by

the professionals who run this highly political union.

At least five resolutions indicate the NEA's antagonism toward parents who make private school or homeschool choices. One resolution attacks homeschooling directly, claiming that it is

tolerable only if parents are licensed by the state and use a curriculum approved by the state education department. The NEA even opposes renting or selling abandoned public schools to a private school.

The NEA passed a strong resolution against what it calls "deleterious programs." Those words do not mean violence on television or in the movies. The "deleterious programs" are "privatization, performance contracting, tax credits, vouchers, and evaluations of public schools by private groups."

The NEA resolutions cater to the NEA Gay and Lesbian Caucus. The Convention passed at least 15 resolutions addressing the sexual orientation issue. The NEA demands "awareness" instruction about diverse sexual orientation "whenever sexuality and/or tolerance of diversity is taught." This means the NEA wants teaching about homosexuality always to be part of sex education, and uses "diversity" as a code word for gay-lesbian teaching.

The NEA supports "ongoing training programs" to identify and eliminate "sexual orientation stereotyping." The NEA demands a "Lesbian and Gay History Month as a means of acknowledging the contributions of lesbians, gays, and bisexuals throughout history."

The NEA demands that gay-lesbian teaching be part of Family Life education, sex education, and AIDS education. The NEA supports the right of teachers who have tested positive for HIV or have been diagnosed as having AIDS to be retained in the classroom and not transferred.

The NEA even wants public school training of pre-kindergartners to include "diversity-based curricula" with "bias-free screening devices." The NEA wants the taxpayers to take on baby-sitting "in the public schools for children from birth through age eight," culminating in "mandatory kindergarten with compulsory attendance."

Several resolutions reiterate that the NEA believes that "every child should have direct and confidential access to comprehensive health, social, and psychological programs, services and care." "Every" means "beginning at the prekindergarten level." "Direct" means in the classroom. "Confidential" means confidential between the school and the child, not between the parent and child. "Comprehensive" means complete with non-judgmental teaching and explicit training in alternate lifestyles, incest, AIDS, suicide, and contraceptives. "Psychological" means counseling by school personnel

who are not licensed psychologists (without parental knowledge or consent).

The NEA demands "school-based family planning clinics that will provide intensive counseling" to children. That means contraceptive distribution and referrals to abortion providers.

The NEA endorses the entire feminist agenda, calling for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, the elimination of "sexism" from the curriculum, abortion funded by the taxpayers, "comparable worth," federally funded and regulated daycare, and "gender-free career awareness" (which means role reversals and censoring out pictures of fulltime homemakers).

This year, the NEA rechristened "global education" with the new name "multicultural education," which it defines as teaching children the "cultural diversity of U.S. citizenry" and "interdependency in sharing the world's resources." "Global" and "interdependent" are code words for teaching children not to be patriotic, "multicultural" means Western Civilization is bad, and "sharing the world's resources" means U.S. taxpayers should finance the rest of the world.

The NEA is enthusiastic about Environmental Education, which is easier to insert into the curriculum than Global or Multicultural. Environmental Ed is a vehicle to promote the ideology of overpopulation, the scarcity of "the earth's finite resources," the problem of endangered species, and interdependence.

The NEA supports socialized medicine (which recognizes "domestic partners" as dependents), statehood for the District of Columbia, gun control, taxpayer benefits to illegal aliens, a national holiday honoring Cesar Chavez, ratification of the UN Treaty on the Rights of the Child, and a "substantial increase" in federal spending on public schools. The NEA deplores current efforts to make English our official language and to cut off taxpayer grants to persons who produce vulgar "art."

In a new resolution called "Freedom of Religion," the NEA opposes schools' scheduling a moment of silence. The NEA even wants the purpose of Thanksgiving to be changed from thanking God to a celebration of "diversity."

The NEA opposes standardized testing that compares students, teachers, schools or districts with one another. The NEA even opposes "competency testing" for the hiring, evaluation, placement, or promotion of teachers. ■

NEA Boasts About Victories From NEA Legislative Agenda

The following is quoted verbatim from the NEA booklet "Advancing NEA's Legislative Agenda," July 1995.

In stark contrast to the 104th Congress, the 103rd will be remembered as the most pro-education Congress in more than a decade, best exemplified by the passage of the NEA-supported reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Signed into law by President Clinton on October 20, 1994, the legislation authorizes \$60 billion over five years in aid to public schools. At the same time, the Association lobbied for and won an \$869 million increase in Fiscal Year 1995 funding for programs administered by the Department of Education.

NEA was successful in gaining \$2 billion in grant programs for education, substance abuse and treatment, and jobs programs, as part of the \$30.2 billion violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 signed by President Clinton in September of 1994.

NEA was able to defeat a wide range of attacks on public school, students, and education employees. These included a measure to promote government sponsored prayer in public schools, an amendment to create federal vouchers for private school tuition, and an amendment to place federal limits on instructional materials, instruction, counseling, and other services relating to sexual orientation.

These victories built upon substantial gains made earlier in the 103rd Congress: the enactment of Goals 2000 legislation and the creation of a new school-to-work program.

On January 26, 1995, the House voted to amend the U.S. Constitution to require that Congress pass a balanced federal budget, an extreme step toward eliminating the federal commitment to public education. NEA opposed the measure, which would have forced deep, across-the-board cuts to domestic programs leading to the elimination of education.

There is a common thread running through the Republican leadership's agenda: a commitment to "less." Less government, less perceived "intrusion." NEA continues to battle for funding at the federal and state level.

Congressional Contact Team

Much of NEA's legislative success in the past can be attributed to the effectiveness of the Congressional Contact Team (CCT) network. NEA, with an average of nearly 5,000 members in each of the nation's 435 congressional districts, is in a unique position to use at-home lobbying efforts to advance the cause of public education and improve the status of security of Association members.

The nearly 1,100 CCT members reflect NEA's diverse membership, including elementary and secondary, vocational, postsecondary, and retired education employees. They are trained and briefed at the state, regional, and national levels. CCT members provide a well-informed and dedicated force of grassroots lobbyists who complement the efforts of the full-time Government Relations staff based in Washington, D.C., and elsewhere. NEA's message is delivered to Congress through lobbying efforts on Capitol Hill and at-home contacts with Representatives and Senators.

In addition to their role in advocating NEA's Legislative Program, CCT members are responsible for providing information to and building support among other NEA members and the public.

During the 104th Congress, the CCT program has focused on opposing proposed cuts to education funding, the elimination of the Department of Education, and the federal voucher legislation. From March 27 to 29, 1995, CCT members gathered in Washington, D.C., to advance NEA's position on a continued federal commitment to public education.

Congressmen Who Were Opposed by NEA-PAC Funds

This is a list of some Members of Congress elected in November 1994 supported by Eagle Forum PAC. The list shows the money donated by NEA-PAC in the fall campaign to the OPPONENT of each Member (not counting additional NEA-PAC funds donated in the primaries and additional funds donated by numerous NEA State PACs). In other words, these are the amounts of NEA-PAC funds these Congressmen had to overcome in order to be elected.

Salmon (AZ)	\$ 5,000
Shadegg (AZ)	10,000
Hayworth (AZ)	9,500
Dickey (AZ)	10,000
Doolittle (CA)	7,500
Randonovich (CA)	7,500
Seastrand (CA)	5,000
Bono (CA)	10,000
Hunter (CA)	4,000
Scarborough (FL)	10,000
Weldon (FL)	10,000
Collins (GA)	5,000
Barr (GA)	10,000
Chambliss (GA)	5,000
Norwood (GA)	10,000
Chenoweth (ID)	6,400
Flanagan (IL)	10,000
Weller (IL)	5,000
McIntosh (IN)	5,000
Souder (IN)	4,000
Lightfoot (IA)	10,000
Latham (IA)	5,000
Lewis (KY)	5,000
Longley (ME)	10,000
Bartlett (MD)	2,500
Chrysler (MI)	10,000
Gutknecht (MN)	10,000
Wicker (MS)	15,000
Christensen (NE)	10,000
Ensign (NV)	10,000
Forbes (NY)	10,000
Funderburk (NC)	10,000
Burr (NC)	10,000
Myrick (NC)	1,500
Taylor (NC)	10,000
Chabot (OH)	5,500
Creameans (OH)	10,000
Largent (OK)	5,000
Watts (OK)	10,000
Lucas (OK)	5,000
Cooley (OR)	5,000
Fox (PA)	10,000
English (PA)	10,000
Bryant (TN)	5,000
Waldholtz (UT)	10,000
Smith (WA)	10,000
Hastings (WA)	10,000
Tate (WA)	10,000
Roth (WI)	10,000
Cubin (WY)	5,000

NEA Pursues Political Advocacy

The following is quoted verbatim from the NEA booklet "Advancing NEA's Legislative Agenda," July 1995.

NEA's Political Advocacy Program was designed in recognition of the importance of political action – and elected leaders – to the long-term goals of public education employees. To promote the Association's Legislative Program, NEA works with Democratic, Republican, and Independent candidates, elected officials, political parties, and other organizations in support of a pro-education agenda. The Association also conducts a number of activities to promote members' awareness of the issues and involvement in the political process.

To assure that public education employees have a strong voice in Washington, the Association established NEA-PAC – its national political action committee – in 1972. NEA-PAC, supported by the contribution of NEA members, works to ensure that public education issues take a position of prominence in congressional and presidential elections. NEA-PAC contributes to the campaigns of candidates for federal races who support the Association's legislative agenda. And through NEA-PAC, the Association also provides financial assistance to allied organizations as well as NEA members who participate in the national Democratic or Republican party meetings.

Since it was first established in the 1970s, NEA-PAC has been instrumental in bringing education issues to the forefront of American politics and pro-education leaders to positions of power. NEA-PAC's success can be demonstrated by its record of achievement in past elections. **Eighty-four percent of incumbent candidates endorsed by NEA-PAC retained U.S. House and U.S. Senate seats.**

Among the more than 4,000 political action committees nationwide, NEA-PAC ranks among the top 10, in terms of total receipts and expenditures in support of the Association's issue-driven legislative and political agenda. Ironically, the success of NEA-PAC activity in past elections has left a new challenge for NEA.

Government Relations Field Teams

NEA maintains field teams in Washington, D.C., and Denver, Colorado, to work directly with Association members to enhance their effectiveness in the political process. Field team programs include training, strategic planning, and

consultation with state and local affiliates to increase their effective participation in federal and state elections, ballot initiatives affecting public education, and lobbying Congress and state legislatures. Over the past year, NEA field staff have worked closely with state and local affiliates on a number of state legislative and ballot initiative issues ranging from vouchers to limits on collective bargaining rights. In addition, field staff worked to help train and organize members to enhance their effectiveness in school board elections.

Information and Advocacy

The NEA Information Resources and Advocacy program provides a diverse range of information services – including political polling, message development, and professional writing – to help advance the legislative and political advocacy objectives of the Association. Over the past year, Information Resources designed, coordinated, and analyzed a wide range of polls and focus groups relating to legislative and political issues facing states, including private school tuition vouchers, public attitudes toward public education, and public support for affiliate-endorsed candidates. In addition, NEA helps state and local affiliates with information needs that enhance voter registration and participation. The Information Resources' writing staff develops testimony, articles, talking points, pamphlets, and background papers articulating NEA's position on a variety of topics to help Association members effectively advocate those positions on Capitol Hill and elsewhere. In addition, Information Resources provides information to help advance the Legislative Program and NEA Resolutions with elected and appointed public officials and the general public.

Department of Education

The NEA is engaged in a battle to protect the Department of Education, which has come under attack by both freshmen and senior lawmakers in the majority party. NEA was instrumental in the establishment of the Education Department and will continue to fight for the continuation of a Cabinet-level Department and a strong federal commitment to public education.

Education Reporter (ISSN 0887-0608) is published monthly by Eagle Forum Education & Legal Defense Fund with editorial offices at 7800 Bonhomme Ave., St. Louis, MO 63105, (314) 721-1213. The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the persons quoted and should not be attributed to Eagle Forum Education & Legal Defense Fund. Annual subscription \$25. Back issues available @ \$2. Second Class postage paid at Alton, Illinois.

Steamroller Squelches Debate on Abortion

All Vincent Treacy wanted was a chance to be heard. An NEA delegate from Florida, Treacy had requested, and received, permission to address his fellow delegates on behalf of a proposed change in the wording of the Association's resolution on family planning.

A delegate from Illinois had secured the 50 signatures needed to successfully petition for an opportunity to debate the resolution, which proclaims the NEA's support for "family planning, including the right to reproductive freedom." The petitioners sought to replace the euphemistic expression "reproductive freedom" with a forthright discussion of sexual responsibility.

When debate on the resolution was postponed for a day, Treacy made a point of verifying that he was still on the list of delegates scheduled to speak on the subject. The following day, Treacy stood ready at the microphone, prepared to exhort the delegates to withdraw the NEA's endorsement of "reproductive freedom." Two delegates opposing the proposed change spoke first, however, and one of the two moved to close debate on the subject before Treacy could speak. The motion passed, and the proposed change was voted on and rejected without any argument being heard in favor of it.

A group of NEA delegates calling themselves Educators for Life encountered similar tactics after succeeding in getting a proposed amendment to the Standing Rules accepted for consideration. The amendment instructed the Secretary-Treasurer to ensure "that no General Fund monies are funneled or funded to organizations or associations that support and/or sponsor abortion services and/or abortion lobbying activities."

Delegates were to vote on this and other proposed amendments during their secret balloting for new officers. Two days prior to the voting, the amendment was reworded slightly to increase its chance of passage, but the revision was not recorded in the association's official daily transcript of activities as required. Furthermore, many of the flyers tacked up in the voting booths to inform delegates of the revision were torn down and destroyed before they could be read.

The amendment to cut abortion funding received 2004 affirmative votes out of 6004 cast, and would surely have garnered much greater support had it been given a fair hearing. Clearly, when it comes to pro-life issues, the NEA's liberal leadership doesn't dare to let delegates freely exercise their right to vote.

NEA Resolutions Passed at Annual Convention, Minneapolis, 1995

A-8. 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-11. Federal Financial Support for Education. The Association asserts that a major federal role is to collect basic data to be used in public schools and to engage in research, development, and consultation activities. The Association further believes that funding for federal programs should be substantially increased.

A-13. Basic Financial Support of Public Education. Funds must be provided for programs to alleviate race, gender, and sexual orientation discrimination and to eliminate portrayal of race, gender, and sexual orientation stereotypes in the public schools.

A-27. Deleterious Programs. The National Education Association believes that the following programs and practices are detrimental to public education and must be eliminated: privatization, 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-28. Federally or State-Mandated Choice/Parental Option Plans. The Association opposes federally or state-mandated choice or parental option plans.

A-29. Tuition Tax Credits. 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-30. Voucher Plans. The Association believes that legislation or ballot initiatives/referenda designed to establish or implement prekindergarten through grade 12 voucher plans are detrimental to the public interest and calls upon its affiliates to work for the defeat of such actions.

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 supports a high-quality program of transition from home and/or preschool to the public kindergarten or first grade. The Association further believes that early childhood education programs should include a full continuum of services for parents 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 assist in organizing the implementation of

b. The acceptance of diverse sexual orientation and the awareness of sexual stereotyping whenever sexuality and/or tolerance of diversity is taught,

c. Elimination of sexual orientation name-calling and jokes in the classroom.

d. Support for the celebration of a Lesbian and Gay History Month as a means of acknowledging the contributions of lesbians, gays, and bisexuals throughout history.

B-20. Educational Programs for Limited English Proficiency Students. The Association urges that those students whose primary language is other than English be placed in bilingual education programs to receive instruction

in their native language from qualified teachers until such time as English proficiency is achieved. The Association believes bilingual education programs should be promoted and supported at the federal, state, and local levels.

B-22. Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenting. The Association recommends that special programs for adolescents be implemented to include –

- Development of positive self-esteem and self concept.
- Establishment of on-site child care services.

B-27. Multicultural/Global Education. The National Education Association believes that multiculturalism is the process of valuing differences and incorporating these values into behavior for the goal of achieving the common good. The Association further 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 cultural legacy. Multicultural/global education develops an awareness of cultures and an appreciation of our interdependency in sharing the world's limited resources.

B-30. Career Education. The career education concept needs to include programs in gender-free career awareness. The Association believes that educational programs for all student should be developed that will enhance self-esteem.

B-34. Family Life Education. The Association recommends that programs be established for both students and parents and supported at all educational levels to promote –

- The development of self-esteem.
- Education in human growth and development.

The Association believes that education in these areas must be presented as part of an antibiased culturally sensitive program.

B-35. 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 urges its affiliates and members to support appropriately established sex education programs, including information on sexual abstinence, birth control and family planning, diversity of culture, diversity of sexual orientation, parenting skills, prenatal care, sexually transmitted diseases, incest, sexual abuse, sexual harassment. 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.

B-36. AIDS Education. The National Education Association recommends that educational institutions establish comprehensive acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) education programs as an integral part of the school curriculum.

B-38. Environmental Education. The Association 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.

The Association urges its affiliates to support environmental programs in school systems.

B-52. Standardized Testing of Students. The National Education Association opposes standardized testing that is mandated by local, state, or national authority. The Association also opposes the use of these tests to compare one student, staff member, school, or district with another.

B-63. Home Schooling. The National Education Association believes that home schooling programs cannot provide the

PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS . FOR THE MOST PART, ARE...



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

B-7. Sexism in Education. The Association endorses the use of nonsexist language by all schools. The Association further believes that sexism and sex discrimination must be eliminated from the curriculum.

B-8. Sexual Orientation Education. The National Education Association recognizes the importance of raising the awareness and increasing the sensitivity of staff, students, parents, and the community to sexual orientation in our society. The Association therefore supports the development of positive plans that lead to effective ongoing training programs for education employees for the purpose of identifying and eliminating sexual orientation stereotyping in the educational setting. Such programs should attend to but not be limited to –

- Accurate portrayal of the roles and contributions of gay, lesbian, and bisexual people throughout history, with acknowledgement of their sexual orientation,

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 immediate family, with all expenses being borne by the parents.

First New B. Diversity. The National Education Association believes that diversity is any combination of similarities and differences of people in community, work places, school systems, or similar environments. Some examples are race, ethnicity, color, national origin, language, geographic location, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, size, and marital, parental, or economic status. The Association further believes that all education employees must recognize and respect diversity that exists among students and all the peoples.

Second New B. Global Education. The National Education Association believes that global education increases respect and awareness of planet earth and its people. Global education imparts information about cultures and an appreciation of our interdependency in sharing the world's resources to meet mutual human needs.

C-1. Health Care for All Children. The National Education Association believes that every child should have direct and confidential access to comprehensive health care. The Association urges its affiliates to support legislation to provide comprehensive health care to all children.

C-7. Day Care. The National Education Association believes that all child care centers should be examined and monitored on a continuous basis, and additional legislation should be sought as necessary to maintain the highest quality child care. The Association encourages school districts and educational institutions to establish on-site child care for preschoolers, students, the children of students, and the children of staff members.

C-23. Comprehensive School Health 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 also believes that programs in the schools should provide a planned sequential, K-12 health education curriculum that integrates various health topics (such as drug abuse, violence, universal precautions, and HIV education). The Association believes that services in

the schools should include –

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

C-24. School Counseling Programs. The National Education Association believes that guidance and counseling programs should be integrated into the entire education system, beginning at the prekindergarten level.

C-29. Student Sexual Orientation. The Association believes that every school district and educational institution should provide counseling and suicide prevention programs by trained personnel for students who are struggling with their sexual/gender orientation.

C-30. Placement of Students with HIV/AIDS. The Association believes that students should not be refused admittance to school or subjected to any other adverse action solely because they have tested positive for HIV or have been diagnosed as having AIDS.

C-31. 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.

C-34. Drug and Alcohol Testing of Students. The National Education Association believes that mandatory drug and alcohol testing of students without probable cause is an unwarranted and unconstitutional invasion of privacy and opposes such testing.

C-40. Gender Equity in Athletic Programs. The National Education Association believes that at all educational levels female and male students must have equal opportunity to participate in athletic programs. The Association urges that athletic funds for facilities, equipment, and remuneration of staff be allocated equally between female and male programs.

D-18. Competency Testing and Evaluation. 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-9. Academic and Professional Freedom. The National Education Association believes that academic freedom is essential to the teaching profession. Academic freedom includes the rights of teachers

and learners to explore and discuss divergent points of view. The Association further believes that legislation and regulations that mandate or permit the teaching of religious doctrines and/or groups that promote anti-public education agendas violate both student and teacher rights. The Association urges its affiliates to seek repeal of these mandates where they exist.

F-4. Affordable Health Care. The Association urges its affiliates to do all they can to enroll our members, their dependents, domestic partners, and retired education employees in comprehensive, affordable health insurance plans.

F-34. Drug and Alcohol Testing. The Association believes that mandatory and/or random drug and alcohol testing of employees and job applicants is an unwarranted and unconstitutional invasion of privacy and opposes such testing.

F-36. Employees with HIV/AIDS. The National Education Association believes that education 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 human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) antibody or have been diagnosed as having HIV/AIDS.

H-6. National Health Care Policy. 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-10. Statehood for the District of Columbia. The Association urges its affiliates to support efforts to achieve statehood for the District of Columbia.

New H. Celebration of Diversity in Thanksgiving. The National Education Association believes that Thanksgiving is the recognition of unity and the rich American diversity that was embodied in the settlement of America. The Association further believes that this national holiday must celebrate the coming together of peoples and the inclusion of all immigrants as a part of this great diverse country.

I-11. Civil Rights. The Association calls upon Americans to eliminate – by statute and practice – barriers of race, color, national origin, religion, philosophical beliefs, political beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, size, marital status, and economic status that prevent some individuals, adult or juvenile, from exercising rights enjoyed by others.

I-13. Family Planning. The National Education Association supports family planning, including the right to reproductive freedom. The Association further 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 policies that deny human rights, civil rights, or educational opportunities to immigrants and their children regardless of their immigration status.

I-22. Freedom of Creative Expression. The National Education Association supports freedom of expression in the creative arts and therefore deplores any efforts by government to suppress, directly or indirectly, such expression. The Association further supports the freedom of publicly funded agencies to exercise judgment in the awarding of grants to individuals and organizations.

I-25. Human Relations in the School. The Association calls for school recruitment and staffing policies that will ensure culturally diverse school employees [and] appropriate classroom and other student-related activities, particularly those that are responsive to the cultural diversity and historical backgrounds of our society.

I-27. Sectarian Practices in the School Program. The National Education Association believes that the constitutional provisions on the establishment of and the free exercise of religion in the First Amendment require that there be no sectarian practices in the public school program.

I-28. Control of Guns. The National Education Association believes that stricter legislation is needed to control guns and other deadly weapons.

I-46. English as the Official Language. The National Education Association recognizes the importance of an individual's native language and culture and the need to promote and preserve them. 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-49. Equal Opportunity for Women. The Association supports the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The Association urges its affiliates to support ratification of such an amendment. Personnel policies must include family leave, maternity leave, paternity leave, leave for adoption of a child, child-care leave, and professional leave. The Association believes that sexism and sex discrimination must be eliminated and endorses the use of nonsexist language.

New I. Freedom of Religion. The Association opposes federal or state legislation or other mandates that would require school districts to schedule a moment of silence. The Association particularly opposes a moment of silence as a condition for receiving federal, state, or other funds.