

NEA Convention Delegates Oppose Voucher Bills *Union President calls Florida legislation 'a pure and simple disgrace'*

ORLANDO, FL — At the NEA's annual Representative Assembly (RA), more than 9,600 delegates from all over the country (some 365 fewer than last year) gathered to discuss the direction of their union. While there was no single burning issue comparable to last year's proposed merger with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), which was defeated, the overriding issue that emerged was school choice.

Voucher Legislation

Florida's voucher program was signed into law by Governor Jeb Bush in June (see sidebar, this page). In his keynote speech before the assembly, NEA President Bob Chase called the bill "a pure and simple disgrace." Chase insisted that "giving out vouchers will not improve struggling public schools," and likened them to "applying leeches and bleeding a patient to death." He accused the voucher movement of aiming "to discredit, defund, and eventually destroy, public education."

Chase praised the Florida Teaching Profession-NEA for its fight against the voucher law. The NEA affiliate joined the Florida Coalition for Public Schools,

which also includes the ACLU, the NAACP, the League of Women Voters, the AFT, and Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, in filing a lawsuit against the voucher program.

School Violence

In his remarks on school violence, Chase found a different scapegoat for the actions of the Columbine killers. According to Mike Antonucci, director of the Education Intelligence Agency: "Mr. Chase's sincere anguish about the tragedy did not overcome his impulse to blame the 'run-amok marketplace' as one of the 'broader lessons of Littleton.'"

Chase charged that the marketplace "bombards youth with violent images, preys on them commercially, exploits them sexually, and at every turn, throws acid on their innocence." He quoted Harvard divinity professor Harvey Cox, who said "the market is becoming

more like the Yahweh of the Old Testament, the Supreme Deity . . . whose reign must now be universally accepted . . ."



Buttons worn at the NEA Convention

"And I would add," Chase expounded, "we all know this market god will stop at nothing in the name of money. Yes, the market is eager to grab hold of the public schools. It would love to do to teachers what it did to HMO doctors: turn us into profit centers, profit maximizers."

Antonucci reports that, when the applause died down after Chase's remarks, union Vice President Reg Weaver "resumed the business at hand by reminding delegates of the 'big giveaway' to benefit NEA's political action committee." Antonucci notes that, in past years, the raffle has included prizes such as new cars and vacations. "The irony was hot, but no one seemed inclined to strike," he observed.

While convention delegates offered suggestions for curbing school violence that included hiring more counselors and teachers "so we can make each kid feel important," Mr. Chase announced a program whereby "1,000 school districts will receive free satellite dishes and air time for original programming designed to help school personnel set up school se-

curity measures." The NEA resolution labeled "Freedom of Religion," however, which opposes "the imposition of sectarian practices in the public school program," including "a moment of silence" during the school day, was not rescinded. (See Resolution I-27, page 4.)

NEA Election Victories
In his keynote address, Chase praised Bill Clinton as "the best education president in history" and listed what the union considers its "biggest election victories" in 1998. He commended the NEA's New York affiliate for "helping to defeat Sen. Al D'Amato and replace him with Chuck Schumer, and the North Carolina affiliate for defeating Sen. Lauch Faircloth and replacing him with Jesse Edwards." He vowed that "Jesse Helms is next." He told his audience to "forget the media hype coming out of Minnesota," and bragged that Lieutenant Governor Mae Schunk was "having no trouble handling [Governor] Jesse Ventura."

NEA Resolutions

NEA's election and legislative victories have helped bring about "historic" increases in federal education funding, which have prompted the union to draft resolutions that call for public education programs addressing every conceivable need and targeting every special interest and minority group. These include American Indians, Alaska natives, Hispanics, Asian and Pacific Islanders, Black Americans, left-handed students, migrant workers and their children, incarcerated persons, at-risk students, gifted and talented students, limited English proficiency students, speakers of nonstandard English, students with disabilities, and adolescent parents.

Other resolutions call for school courses in multiculturalism, global education, career and vocational education, family life education, sex education, HIV/AIDS education, environmental education, conflict resolution education, and labor movement education.

Hillary Clinton Honored with 'Friend of Education' Award *But acceptance speech faux pas silences crowd*

ORLANDO, FL — The NEA honored First Lady Hillary Clinton with its annual "Friend of Education" Award on July 5. The award is presented to individuals whom the union considers to "have raised the level of excellence in American Education."

NEA President Bob Chase praised Mrs. Clinton for having "spoken passionately about the need to reduce class size, fought for expansion of after-school programs and pre-school programs, spearheaded an ambitious effort to increase childhood immunizations, pushed for an expansion of children's health coverage, and raised awareness about the impact of tobacco on children." He commended her as "an ambassador for education and social justice across the globe," and touted her

book, *It Takes a Village*, as "a rallying cry on behalf of children."

During her acceptance speech, the First Lady predictably called for greater support and resources for public education and teachers, and received several standing ovations from the crowd. Her praise for the nation's charter schools, however, was greeted with dead silence. She described the high standards she had seen at a Washington, DC charter school, which requires the children to master Latin, and told the assembly that, despite rigorous requirements, the school has a long waiting list.

Mike Antonucci of the Education Intelligence Agency, who attended the conference, says, "Mrs. Clinton wondered why there aren't more schools like this, and said that she thinks the charter school movement will be recognized as one of the ways 'we will have turned around the entire public school system' in the 1990s."

(See Hillary, page 2)



Hillary Clinton

Florida's Voucher Program at a Glance

The Florida program is part of a state education reform package that includes tougher standards for teachers, students and schools. Under the new law, Florida's public schools receive letter grades (A through F) based on students' performance on state standardized tests in reading, writing and math. Dropout rates, absenteeism, and the percentage of the grade.

The formula for evaluation is the same for all schools. Parents of children attending schools that earn an F twice in four years will be eligible for vouchers to send their children to private schools.

According to the *Orlando Sentinel* (June 25, 1999), the Florida Department of Education gave 78 schools a failing grade in its first statewide report card. Of the state's 2400 public schools, 77% received grade C or below.

NEA's Legislative Program Highlights Victories, Sets Agenda

At its annual July convention, the NEA claimed credit for the federal government's FY 99 education appropriation, which increased funding for public education by \$3.6 billion, or 12%. The NEA cited the \$1.2 billion class-size-reduction funding to begin hiring President Clinton's 100,000 new teachers, and the increased funding for IDEA, Title I, Head Start, and the Safe Schools Initiative, as hallmarks of the FY 99 education budget.

The NEA opposes the FY 2000 budget, however, because it "reduces overall domestic spending and cuts spending for education and related programs by \$200 million from current year levels." The union pledges to fight any education spending cuts and will push for "an overall increase of 15% or \$5 billion for Department of Education programs."

The NEA claimed that the 1998 elections "affirmed [voters'] strong support for maintaining the federal role in public education," and took credit for the "critical victories" of many NEA-backed candidates. (At this year's convention alone, NEA's PAC raised \$797,000, an average of \$83 per delegate.)

The NEA's Legislative Agenda

The union's legislative agenda for the remainder of the 106th Congress and the beginning of the 107th includes continued emphasis on its "Quality Public Schools Agenda," which calls for legislation to advance the union's five goals: safety and order in every school; every school building in good condition; every classroom connected to new technologies; a qualified teacher in every classroom; and, every child "ready to learn." The NEA will concentrate its lobbying on four "key" areas:

- ◆ modernizing school buildings;
- ◆ reauthorizing and improving the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA);
- ◆ advancing teacher quality; and
- ◆ recruiting and training new teachers.

The union will oppose any ESEA reauthorization proposals that include vouchers, which the union labels "a threat to quality public schools." NEA also opposes Title I "portability," which would allow Title I funds to follow individual children to whatever schools they attend, including private schools. The NEA fur-

ther opposes "super Ed-Flex," a plan that would allow states to combine Title I and other ESEA programs into block grants.

The NEA's Lobbying Goals:

- ◆ Federal resources to enhance the availability and quality of public school child care programs, including preschool and before- and after-school programs.
- ◆ Creation of a national database on early childhood care and education programs. Federal programs to assist parents in gaining parenting skills and in understanding child growth and development.
- ◆ Development and implementation of comprehensive, community-based drug and violence prevention programs that link community resources with schools and integrate services involving education, vocational and job skills training and placement, law enforcement, health, mental health, community service, mentoring, and other appropriate services.
- ◆ Effective School-to-Work initiatives.

The NEA will work to:

- ◆ Oppose proposals for Title I funds portability or super Ed-Flex.
- ◆ Continue to align state and local academic standards with assessments, and provide educators with the tools to develop curricula aligned to standards and assessments.
- ◆ Support an FY 2000 class-size reduction appropriation at least equal to President Clinton's request, or preferably, a larger increase of \$400 million to hire 15,000 new teachers.
- ◆ Support key provisions in the Children's Gun Violence Protection Act (S.735/H.R.1342), to protect children from firearm violence.
- ◆ Oppose tax-free IRA withdrawals for private and religious school and home-schooling expenses.
- ◆ Oppose all voucher plans.
- ◆ Support an increase in the minimum wage for all employees, including youth.

Source: *Advancing NEA's Legislative Program*, July 1999.

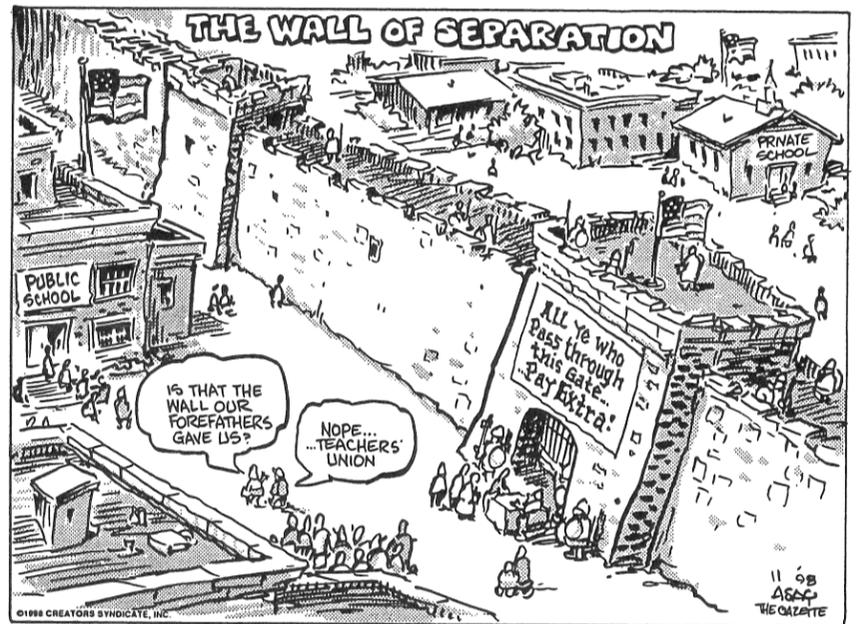
New Business Items *Not* About Education

Many of the 86 New Business Items (NBI) introduced at this year's NEA Representative Assembly had little or nothing to do with education. For example, NBI 16, submitted by 50 delegates, would have pledged the NEA to join with the Congressional Black Caucus, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Amnesty International, Maya Angelou, and others "in calling for a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal," a man accused of murdering a Philadelphia police officer. The sponsoring delegates failed to mention that Mr. Jamal's appeals process has been exhausted.

According to Charlene Haar, President of the Education Policy Institute, another hotly debated item was NBI 20, which called for the NEA to support the closing of the U.S. Army's School of the Americas (SOA). "Delegates were told that the

school trains attendees in how to torture opponents, and that it supports brutal, corrupt regimes, especially in Latin America," Mrs. Haar reports. "Fortunately, one of the delegates was a former army officer who had been trained at SOA, and his refutation led to the defeat of the resolution."

In keeping with the convention's theme of opposition to school choice, NBI 25 was adopted as follows: "That the NEA develop membership training in the issues of vouchers and charter schools, especially targeting ethnic minority communities, so that NEA members can inform all community members of the threat to public education that vouchers and some charter schools present." The rationale was: "Ethnic minority communities are being told that vouchers are best for their children. We must provide them with the truth." ❖



Hillary (Continued from page 1)

Antonucci notes that "not a single cheer or clap emerged from the 15,000 people in the audience" to greet these pronouncements, and that Mrs. Clinton "quickly returned to firmer ground, praising America's public education system as having 'the best schools and the smartest kids.'"

The next day, convention delegates considered New Business Item (NBI) 36, which read in part: "NEA recognizes that the growing experience with charter schools is increasingly negative, that charters have been seized on by right-wing forces as a wedge to break up and re-segregate education and prepare the way for privatization . . . NEA will publicly oppose further extension of charter schools."

Apparently, Hillary Clinton failed to uncover the "right-wing conspiracy" inherent in the charter schools movement.

New Business Item 36 was ruled out of order by Bob Chase on a technicality. According to Antonucci, immediately prior to opening debate on NBI 36, the assembly voted to approve most of this year's resolutions en masse, including

Resolution A-26, which is generally supportive of charter schools (see *Resolutions*, page 3).

"The NEA's rules prevent an NBI from restricting a resolution that has already been approved at that year's assembly," Antonucci explains. "There is no evidence that the agenda was manipulated to achieve this result, but the timing of the resolutions vote certainly helped avoid what could have been a divisive debate about the union's current charter schools policy." ❖

NEA Convention Briefs

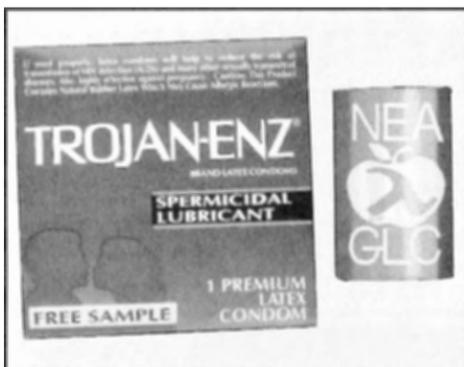
The Gay & Lesbian Caucus (GLC) is a very powerful pressure group within the NEA. Its annual dinner attracts the union's top leaders, including President Bob Chase. Caucus membership has increased from 200+ in 1993 to more than 700 in 1999. The caucus works to introduce public school curricula supportive of gay and lesbian lifestyles, but its agenda is advanced under the guise of

teaching safety, tolerance, and nondiscrimination.

The NEA Health Information Network (HIN) is heavily funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a federal agency. At the HIN convention booth, free condoms were aggressively passed out, sometimes by the box.

NEA Government Relations staffer, Jerry Caruthers, appealed to delegates to "dig deep to support the NEA Political Action Committee." The new name for NEA-PAC is the "NEA Fund for Children and Public Education." Caruthers told delegates at a Democratic Caucus breakfast: "I know that you want to give to the Democratic party, but you have a party also, and that is the NEA." The two-year fundraising goal for NEA-PAC is \$7.7 million.

(At left: NEA Convention giveaways included condoms and GLC erasers.)



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NEA Passes Resolutions at 1999 Convention in Orlando, Florida

A-2. Educational Opportunity for All. The National Education Association believes that each student has the right to a free public education that should be suited to the needs of the individual and guaranteed by state constitutions and the United States Constitution. Education is a lifelong process, and public schools serve a constituency that embraces all age groups. Access and opportunities for postsecondary education should be widely available, and no qualified student should be denied such opportunities because of the cost of tuition and fees. The Association also believes that all schools must be accredited under uniform standards established by the appropriate agencies in collaboration with the Association and its affiliates.

A-10. Public School Buildings. The National Education Association believes that closed public school buildings 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 are not in direct competition with public schools.

A-13. Federal Financial Support for Education. The Association believes that funding for federal programs should be substantially increased, not merely redistributed among states. The Association further believes that there should be federal support for education whereby:

- ♦ The federal government assumes a full partnership role with local school districts by providing significant levels of federal funding for elementary and secondary education
- ♦ Federal education funding is clear and identifiable within the federal budget
- ♦ Categorical funding is assured in areas such as special education, bilingual/English as a second language, and the economically/educationally disadvantaged.

A-15. 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. The Association opposes the use of public revenues for private, parochial, or other nonpublic pre-K through 12 schools.

A-19. Undocumented Immigrants. The National Education Association believes that, regardless of the immigration status of students or their parents, every student has the right to a free public education in an environment free from harassment.

A-26. Charter and Nontraditional Public School Options. The Association believes that when concepts such as charter schools and other nontraditional school

options are proposed, all affected public education employees must be directly involved in the design, implementation, and governance of these programs. The Association further believes that plans should not negatively impact the regular public school program.

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-29. Voucher Plans and Tuition Tax Credits. The National Education Association believes that voucher plans and tuition tax credits or funding formulas that have the same effect — under which pre-K through 12 nonpublic school education is subsidized by tax monies — undermine public education, reduce the support needed to adequately fund public education, and have the potential for racial, economic, and social segregation of children. The Association opposes all attempts to establish and/or implement such plans.

A-33. Urban Development. The National Education Association believes that professional organizations should be concerned about the quality of life in our cities and should advocate policies or programs concerning land use, zoning, urban development, economic growth, plant closings, mass transit, rent subsidy, or other issues vitally affecting patterns of community development.

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/guardians/caregivers, 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 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-7. Diversity. The National Education Association believes that a diverse society enriches all individuals. Similarities and differences among races, ethnicity, color, national origin, language, geographic location, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, size, occupation, and marital, parental, or economic status form the fabric of a society. The Association also believes that education should increase acceptance and foster an appreciation of the various qualities that pertain to people as individuals or members of a group. The Association further believes in the importance of observances, programs and curricula that accurately portray and recognize the roles, contributions, cultures, and history of these diverse groups and individuals.

B-8. Racism, Sexism, and Sexual Orientation Discrimination. The National Education Association believes in the equality of all individuals. Discrimination and stereotyping based on such factors as race, gender, immigration status, physical disabilities, ethnicity, occupation, and sexual orientation must be eliminated. The Association also believes that plans, activities, and programs for education employees, students, parents/guardians/caregivers, and the community should be developed to identify and eliminate discrimination and stereotyping in all educational settings. Such 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, Asian and Pacific Islanders, Blacks, Hispanics, women, gays and lesbians, and people with disabilities
- ♦ Eliminate discrimination and stereotyping in the curriculum, textbooks, resource and instructional materials, activities, etc.
- ♦ Foster the use of nondiscriminatory, nonracist, nonsexist and nonstereotypical language, resources, practices, and activities
- ♦ Eliminate institutional discrimination
- ♦ Integrate an accurate portrayal of the roles and contributions of all groups throughout history across the curriculum, particularly groups who have been underrepresented historically
- ♦ Identify how prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination have limited the roles and contributions of individuals and groups, and how these limitations have challenged and continue to challenge our society
- ♦ Eliminate subtle practices that favor the education of one student over another on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, physical disabilities, or sexual orientation
- ♦ Encourage all members of the educational community to examine assumptions and prejudices that might limit the oppor-

tunities 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.

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

B-20. Educational Programs for Limited English Proficiency Students. The Association believes that LEP 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. The Association values bilingual and multilingual competence and supports programs that assist individuals in attaining and maintaining proficiency in their native language before and after they acquire proficiency in English.

B-33. Vocational-Technical Education. The National Education Association believes that preparation of students for vocational-technical jobs should be the responsibility of secondary and higher education in collaboration with labor and business. Vocational-technical education should provide a comprehensive program of lifelong learning for the training, advancement, and promotion of all students.

B-36. Family Life Education. The Association believes that programs should be established for both students and parents/guardians/caregivers and supported at all educational levels to promote —

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

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

B-37. 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, parenting skills, prenatal care, sexually transmitted diseases, incest, sexual abuse, sexual harassment.

NEA Resolutions *(Continued from page 3)*

B-38. AIDS Education. The National Education Association believes that educational institutions should establish comprehensive acquired human immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) education programs as an integral part of the school curriculum.

B-40. Environmental Education. The Association supports educational programs that promote —

- ♦ The concept of the interdependence of humanity and nature
- ♦ An awareness of the effects of past, present, and future population growth patterns on world civilization, human survival, and the environment
- ♦ The protection of endangered, threatened, and rare species
- ♦ Protection of the earth's finite resources
- ♦ Solutions to such problems as pollution, global warming, ozone depletion, and acid precipitation and deposition
- ♦ The recognition of and participation in such activities as Earth Day, Arbor Day, and Energy Education Day.

B-53. Standardized Testing of 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 inappropriately to compare students, teachers, programs, schools, communities, and states.

B-65. Home Schooling. The National Education Association believes that home schooling programs cannot provide the student with a comprehensive education experience. When a home schooling occurs, students enrolled must meet all state requirements. Home schooling should be limited to the children of the immediate family, with all expenses being borne by the parents/guardians/caregivers. 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.

First New B. Racial Diversity Within Student Populations. The Association believes that a racially diverse student population may not be achieved or maintained in all cases simply by ending discriminatory practices and treating all students equally regardless of race. The Association further believes that, to achieve or maintain racial diversity, it 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.

Second New B. Assessment of Student Learning. The National Education Association supports ongoing comprehensive assessment of student growth. The Association believes that the primary purposes of assessment are as follows:

a. To assist students and their parents/guardians/caregivers in identifying the student's strengths and needs

b. To encourage students to become lifelong learners

c. To measure a program's effectiveness, communicate learning expectations, and provide a basis for determining instructional strategies

d. To develop appropriate learning experiences for students.

All methods of assessment shall be free of cultural, racial, and gender biases.

C-1. Health Care for All Children. The National Education Association believes that legislation should be adopted to provide comprehensive health care to all children.

C-7. 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-14. 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-22. 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 believes that schools should provide —

- ♦ A planned sequential, pre-K through 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 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-23. School Counseling Programs. The National Education Association believes that guidance and counseling programs should be integrated into the entire education system, pre-K through college.

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.

D-20. Testing/Assessment and Teacher 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-3. Selection and Challenges of Materials and Teaching Techniques. The Association deplors prepublishing censorship, book-burning crusades, and attempts to ban books from school libraries/media centers and school curricula.

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. A teacher shall not be fired, transferred, or removed from his or her position for refusing to suppress the free expression rights of students. The Association further believes that legislation and regulations that mandate or permit the teaching of religious doctrines and/or groups that promote antipublic education agendas violate both student and teacher rights. The Association urges its affiliates to seek repeal of these mandates where they exist.

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, or retired 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, or sexual orientation. Affirmative action plans and procedures that will encourage active recruitment and employment of ethnic minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and men in under-represented education categories should be developed and implemented. It may be necessary, therefore, to give preference to men in recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion policies to overcome past discrimination.

F-37. 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-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 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. The Association will support health care reform measures that move the United States closer to this goal.

I-1. Peace and International Relations. The Association urges all nations to develop treaties and disarmament agreements that reduce the possibility of war, provide for the peaceful resolution of conflicts, and guarantee the rights of nations to coexist within safe and secure borders. The Association also believes that such treaties and agreements should prevent the placement of weapons in outer space. The Association further believes that the United Nations (UN) can further world peace and promote the rights of all people by preventing war, racism, and genocide.

I-3. International Court of Justice. The National Education Association recognizes that the International Court of Justice is one instrument to resolve international disputes peacefully. The Association urges participation by the United States in deliberations before the court.

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-27. Freedom of Religion. The Association opposes the imposition of sectarian practices in the public school. The Association also 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 proscriptive regulations are necessary for the manufacture, importation, distribution, sale and resale of handguns and ammunition magazines.

I-43. Hate-Motivated Violence. The National Education Association believes that hate-motivated violence against individuals or groups because of their race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, size, marital status, or economic condition is deplorable.

I-47. English as the Official Language. 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-50. Equal Opportunity for Women. The Association supports an amendment to the U.S. Constitution (such as the Equal Rights Amendment) that guarantees that equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state because of gender.

The above text is excerpted from some of the 1999 NEA Convention resolutions. Words have been deleted but not changed.