

NEA Convention Mantra Includes Mandatory Kindergarten and Universal Preschool

Delegates to this year's NEA convention approved a new policy on early childhood education that was developed by a committee formed at last year's convention. The new policy reiterates what NEA resolutions have repeatedly stated, that kindergarten attendance "should be mandatory" and that "NEA supports full-day – as opposed to half-day – kindergarten and pre-kindergarten." The new policy also includes an all-out push for the establishment "in every state" of two years of "universal" pre-kindergarten for all three- and four-year old children . . ."

The NEA's new preschool demand is based on the false assumption that "there is no longer any serious doubt about the



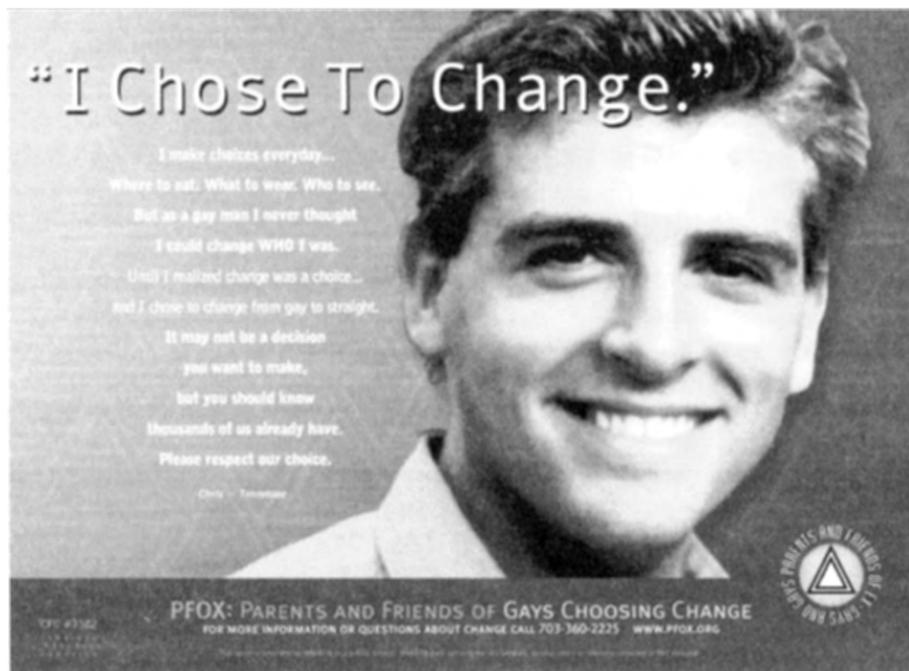
Ready to learn? NEA's new preschool policy, along with its resolution calling for mandatory kindergarten, support the failed national education goal which states: "All children should start school ready to learn."

value of pre-kindergarten." As the Education Intelligence Agency (EIA) reported (7-4-03): "It was accepted without question by all [the delegates] that mandatory full-day kindergarten is a good thing, and that optional, publicly funded, universal preschool for all three- and four-year-olds is also a good thing."

In fact, research *does* raise serious doubts about the validity of the argument for universal preschool. (See *Education Reporter*, March 2003 and November 2002.) An authoritative study recently released by the National Institutes of Health shows that the more hours children spend in daycare (or pre-kindergarten), the higher the incidence and severity of behavior problems such as disobedience, over-aggressiveness, and stress.

NEA delegates were apparently more concerned about "the presence of a single sentence" in the new policy which reads in part: "NEA does not oppose the inclusion in a state's universal pre-kindergarten program of private non-profit and for-

(See *Preschool*, page 2)



PFOX's message of hope and help not welcome at NEA.

NEA Shows Zero Tolerance for Pro-Lifers, Ex-Gays, & Homeschooled Students

NEW ORLEANS, LA – Although the National Education Association incessantly preaches "tolerance" and "diversity," the teachers union displayed a remarkable *intolerance* for all but the most liberal of views at its annual convention in July. Pro-life delegates and those advocating fair treatment of homosexuals who choose to leave the lifestyle incurred the wrath of the NEA leadership and a majority of the convention delegates.

I-12 Challenged

Every year, pro-life delegates attempt to change or delete the NEA's family-planning resolution I-12, which supports "the right to reproductive freedom." This resolution further states: "The Association also urges the implementation of community-operated, school-based family planning clinics that will provide intensive counseling by trained personnel."

According to a report by the Education Intelligence Agency (EIA), this year the pro-lifers offered an amendment that "would have changed the language of I-12 to say explicitly what the NEA claims the current language already means: that the union neither supports nor opposes abortion." The group also submitted other amendments in order to gain additional opportunities to promote its motions.

The *Ohio Daily Standard* (7-18-03) described Ohio 7th-grade teacher Judy Bruns' two-minute speech before 400 convention delegates at a Resolutions Committee hearing on the proposed I-12 changes. Bruns chided the NEA for "taking stands that it shouldn't be taking and not sticking to educational issues." She reminded delegates that the union should be promoting "fair salaries," "benefits,"

and other education-related improvements instead of abortion. She noted that Resolution I-12 was last modified in 1986, asserting that "Few of us would be content with textbook information that is 17 years old."

Despite the efforts of Bruns and other pro-life delegates from several states, the motions to change Resolution I-12 were overwhelmingly rejected.

NBI 15 Hysteria

Pennsylvania 2nd grade teacher Sissy Jochmann got a hysterical reaction from NEA convention delegates when she urged the union to support the right of public school students' *not* to engage in homosexual behavior. Jochmann introduced New Business Item 15, which read: "Whenever the NEA addresses sexual diversity issues (NEA/Health Information Network (HIN) publications, teacher training curricula, etc.), the NEA will uphold the individual's right to self determination and autonomy by presenting, without bias, the full scope of age-appropriate information on sexual diversity, including current research on sexual reparative therapies and sexual reorientation. The NEA will include the term 'ex-gay' or 'those with unwanted same sex attraction' in all policies listing sexually diverse groups and offer unbiased information on resources for sexually confused youth."

Jochmann's rationale for the NBI was that "NEA's diversity policies discriminate against those with unwanted same sex attractions by withholding available information and resources. NEA cannot credibly promote tolerance with this inconsistency."

(See *Tolerance*, page 2)

NEA's Bush Bashing: Sour Grapes Over 'Whine' Comment?

NEW ORLEANS, LA — There was no dearth of Republican-bashing at the 2003 NEA convention. George W. Bush and the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act were favorite targets, perhaps because Mr. Bush will be facing re-election next year and the union defines a pro-education president as a Democrat.

Although the NEA did not originally oppose NCLB and has described the funding bill that followed as a "Legislative Victory," new union president Reg Weaver called the massive education law "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" and "a wolf in sheep's clothing."

During his first keynote speech before convention delegates, Weaver accused federal lawmakers of slashing education funding while pledging to "leave no child behind." He asked his audience of 9,000-plus: "Does it rile you that Washington's latest round of tax cuts will leave no millionaire behind – but will actually leave millions of children behind?"

In fact, the NCLB Act of 2001 represents the largest education-spending bill ever passed and the union's own literature admits that the final education package "did include another significant increase for education." The \$3.2 billion spending hike included increases of nearly \$1.4 billion for both Title I and special education.

Some wonder whether Weaver's ire had less to do with the merits of NCLB than with U.S. Education Secretary Rod Paige's recent characterization of the NEA as "a coalition of the whining." Paige noted that the union is "riled up" for political action against politicians who do not march in lockstep with its agenda.

Whatever the case, NEA convention delegates dutifully refused to allow reality to supersede rhetoric. To protest the law, they approved New Business Item (NBI) 11, which forbids NEA officials and publications to use the name "No Child Left Behind." The union will now be required to refer to NCLB as President Bush's reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

Weaver also used his keynote address to announce that the NEA and its state affiliates in Hawaii, Louisiana, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Utah, are planning to file a federal lawsuit "to challenge [NCLB's] unfunded mandates imposed on states and school districts . . . as contrary to the intent of Congress."

(See *Bush Bashing*, page 2)

NEA's Lobbying Goals for the 108th Congress

Each year, the NEA publishes its legislative agenda for the upcoming congressional session. This year, the union has a new slogan: "Great Public Schools for Every Child." In the NEA's view, more government-funded programs are needed to achieve such schools, and these programs cover a laundry list of perceived needs. Phonics reading programs and traditional mathematics programs that include basic arithmetic instruction, however, are not on the list.

The following are excerpted from *Advancing NEA's Legislative Program, July 2003*:

I. High Quality Public Education

a. Student Achievement

NEA supports

- ◆ programs to provide incentives for effective local schools and for reductions in class size;
 - ◆ programs that equitably assist schools in rural and urban areas to meet the needs of their students to cope with the special strains of their environments;
 - ◆ education programs that assure equal educational opportunities for migrants;
- ### b. Child Care and Early Childhood Education Development

NEA supports

- ◆ federal programs to facilitate and enhance school readiness;
- ◆ federal assistance for early childhood education programs, including Head Start;
- ◆ federal resources to enhance the availability and quality of public school child care and early education programs, including preschool and before- and after-school programs;

d. Youth Development

NEA supports

- ◆ elementary and secondary school guidance and counseling and other pupil services, including school psychology and school social work, provided by appropriately certified and/or licensed professionals through federal/state/local agencies;
- ◆ establishment of administrative structures to facilitate effective integration of guidance and counseling into the entire education experience;

e. Safe Schools

NEA supports

- ◆ federal initiatives to prevent and combat violence and drugs in schools;
- ◆ establishment of scientifically based

nuclear-safe and waste-free zones surrounding schools;

- ◆ a ban on the sale to the public of military and autoloading firearms with a capacity of firing 10 rounds or more from a single clip.

IV. Good Public Policy

b. Human and Civil Rights

NEA supports

- ◆ full equality and opportunity — economic and educational — including the addition of the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution;
- ◆ reproductive freedom without governmental intervention;
- ◆ the use of affirmative action to redress historical patterns of discrimination;
- ◆ confirmation of Supreme Court Justices and federal judges who support civil rights;
- ◆ U.S. participation in and equitable financing of the United Nations and related bodies;
- ◆ ratification of the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women;
- ◆ ratification of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Tolerance

(Continued from page 1)

Rather than consider Jochmann's proposal, the delegates raised a cacophony of boos and jeers during her two-minute address. "I was speaking to over 9,400 people," she told *Agape Press* (7-23-03), "and at one point, it was a thunderous roar. They didn't even want to consider debating the issue."

After the convention, Dr. Warren Throckmorton, Associate Professor of Psychology and Director of College Counseling at Grove City College described Jochmann's proposal as "common sense" and "balanced." He pointed out that "since nearly 26% of teens in one large survey were uncertain about their sexuality, but only about 3 to 4% of the adult population identifies as gay or lesbian, there is much room for premature self-labeling."

Throckmorton also stated that this year the NEA flatly refused to accept an application from the organization Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays and Gays (PFOX) for a booth at the convention. In 2001 and 2002, the NEA also denied exhibit space to PFOX, but did accept the group's application. Later, union officials claimed that all available spaces were sold out while they continued to sell space to other organizations and vendors.

Pettiness Toward Homeschoolers

Homeschoolers were also targeted for intolerance at the convention when a contentious battle broke out among delegates over the word "unfunded" in the NEA's resolution against homeschooling. Resolution B-69 reads: "The Association also believes that unfunded home-schooled students should not participate in any extracurricular activities in the public schools." This sentence was originally included because a small number of public school districts provide funding for homeschoolers to participate in after-school activities.

While some delegates argued vehemently to retain the original language because they personally work with the homeschooled students, a majority eventually voted to delete the word "unfunded," making it clear that the NEA opposes allowing *any* home-schoolers, funded or unfunded, to associate with their public school peers.

NEA Convention Briefs

New Business Item (NBI) 3 would reduce defense budget in favor of more social programs. As originally submitted, this NBI called on the NEA to "have as a key legislative priority the reduction of the United States military budget and the increase in spending on social needs, particularly education. NEA and, when possible, state and local affiliates shall work with other labor, community, religious, and advocacy organizations to further the goal of changing priorities within the national budget." The version adopted

by convention delegates deleted the language specifically targeting the military budget and refers instead to the "national budget."

NBI 31 calls on the NEA to join with other organizations to help the Iraqis build trade unions. This NBI exhorts NEA to assist the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions through the Education International to develop programs and mobilize resources to help Iraqi workers, especially education workers.

Education Intelligence Agency (EIA) reports loss of members among NEA affiliates again in 2002-03. Twenty-four NEA state affiliates lost members in 2001-02, and according to EIA, at least that many lost members this year.

New NEA caucus will work "to save the air." Concerned about the hazards of indoor air as well as outdoor air, NEA



watchdogs will monitor the air inside school buildings for chemicals, adhesives and other materials used in school furnishings. These "mold detectives" will "raise awareness about

indoor air quality (IAQ) and address mold, asbestos, and renovation problems so students and staff can breathe easier." The caucus will also address other health issues, such as nutrition and stress.

Preschool (Continued from page 1)

profit providers that meet specified criteria." According to EIA: "Listening to some delegates, approval of the report with this sentence included would bring about the end of days. Opponents claimed it constituted a retreat from NEA's policy of public funds for public schools alone." In the end however, the only change the delegates made to the policy was to replace the words "for-profit" with "non-sectarian."

With regard to funding the early childhood boondoggle, the NEA is consistent in its recommendations. "States (includ-

ing as appropriate local) governments should be responsible for providing the additional funds necessary to make pre-kindergarten available to all three- and four-year-old children. Both the federal and state governments should use 'new' money [i.e. tax increases] to fund pre-kindergarten — not money taken from other areas of education and childcare which also have important unmet needs."



Bush Bashing (Continued from page 1)

According to the *Washington Times* (7-4-03), this lawsuit "will be based on a provision that states: 'Nothing in this act shall be construed to authorize an officer or employee of the federal government to . . . mandate a program or any subdivision thereof to spend any funds or incur any costs not paid for under this act.'"



Weaver told convention delegates that the union has "launched a full-court legislative press to fix and fund the new federal law."

The bottom line, as the Education Intelligence Agency noted, is that "NCLB is a federal power grab. But it's the first federal power grab NEA has ever found reason to oppose."



Some NEA Resolutions Passed at 2003 Convention in New Orleans

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

A-14. Financial Support of Public Education. Tax revision favorable to public education should be encouraged and continually reviewed at every governmental level. 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 providing any public revenues to sectarian pre-K through 12 schools.

A-15. Federal Financial Support of Public Education. The Association believes that funding for federal programs should be substantially increased, not merely redistributed among states. The Association opposes any federal legislation, laws, or regulations that provide funds, goods, or services to sectarian schools.

A-24. Voucher Plans and Tuition Tax Credits. The National Education Association believes that voucher plans, tuition tax credits, or other funding arrangements that use tax monies to subsidize pre-K through 12 private school education can undermine public education, reduce the support needed to fund public education adequately, weaken the wall of separation between church and state, and cause racial, economic, and social segregation of students. The Association opposes voucher plans, tuition tax credits, or other such funding arrangements that pay for students to attend sectarian schools.

A-31. Federally or State-Mandated Choice/Parental Option Plans. The National Education Association believes that [these] plans compromise free, equitable, universal, and quality public education for every student. Therefore, the Association opposes such federally or state-mandated choice or parental option plans.

B-1. Early Childhood Education. The National Education Association supports early childhood education programs in the

public schools for children from birth through age eight. The Association also supports a high-quality program of transition from home and/or preschool to the public kindergarten or first grade. This transition should include communication and cooperation among parents/guardians, the preschool staff, and the public school staff. The Association also believes that early childhood education programs should include a full continuum of services for parents/guardians and children, including child care, child development, developmentally appropriate and diversity-based curricula, special education, and appropriate bias-free screening devices. The Association believes that federal legislation should be enacted to 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-6. Class Size. The National Education Association believes that excellence in the classroom can best be attained by small class size. The Association also believes in an optimum class size of fifteen students in regular programs and a proportionately lower number in programs for students with exceptional needs.

B-7. Diversity. The National Education Association believes that similarities and differences among races, ethnicity, color, national origin, language, geographic location, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identification, age, physical ability, size, occupation, and marital, parental, or economic status form the fabric of a society. The Association also believes that education should foster the values of appreciation and acceptance of the various qualities that pertain to people as individuals and as members of diverse populations. 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. Racial Diversity Within Student Populations. The Association 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.

B-9. Racism, Sexism, and Sexual Orientation Discrimination. Discrimination and stereotyping based on such factors as race, gender, immigration status, physical disabilities, ethnicity, occupation, and sexual orientations must be eliminated. Plans, activities, and programs must —

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

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

- ◆ Foster the dissemination and use of nondiscriminatory and nonstereotypical language, resources, practices, and activities.

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

- ◆ 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, including, but not limited to, racism, sexism, and homophobia, that might limit the opportunities and growth of students and education employees

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

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

- ◆ Promote a safe and inclusive environment for all.

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

B-17. Education of Refugee Children and Children of 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.

B-22. 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.

B-31. Multicultural Education. The National Education Association believes that multiculturalism is the process of valuing differences and incorporating the values identified into behavior for the goal of achieving the common good. Multicultural education should promote the recognition of individual and group differ-

ences and similarities in order to reduce racism, homophobia, ethnic and all other forms of prejudice and to develop self-esteem as well as respect for others.

B-34. School-to-Work/Career Education. Career education must be interwoven into the total educational system and should include programs in gender-free career awareness and exploration to aid students in career course selection.

B-39. Family Life Education. The Association believes that programs should be established for both students and parents/guardians and supported at all educational levels to promote —

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

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

B-40. 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, homophobia.

B-41. HIV/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-43. Environmental Education. The Association supports educational programs that promote —

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

- ◆ Solutions to such problems as pollution, global warming, ozone depletion, and acid precipitation and deposition

- ◆ The recognition of and participation in such activities as Earth Day

(Continued on page 4)

B-49. Education on Peace and International Understanding. The National Education Association believes that educational strategies for teaching peace and justice issues should include the role of individuals, social movements, international and nongovernmental organizations. The Association also believes that educational materials should include activities dealing with the effects of nuclear weaponry and other weapons of mass destruction, strategies for disarmament, and methods to achieve peace. Such materials should also cover major contributing factors to conflict, such as economic disparity, demographic variables, unequal political power and resource distribution, and the indebtedness of the developing world.

B-54. Conflict Resolution Education. The National Education Association supports the adoption and use, at all educational levels, of proven conflict-resolution strategies, materials, and activities by school districts, education employees, students, parents/guardians, and the school community to encourage nonviolent resolution of interpersonal and societal conflicts.

B-57. Standardized Testing of Students. The National Education Association believes that standardized tests should only be used to improve the quality of education and instruction for students. The Association opposes the use of standardized tests when —

- ◆ Used as the criterion for the reduction or withholding of any educational funding
- ◆ Results are used to compare students, teachers, programs, schools, communities, and states.

B-69. Home Schooling. The National Education Association believes that home schooling programs cannot provide the student with a comprehensive education experience. When home schooling 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 also believes that home-schooled students should not participate in any extracurricular activities in the public schools.

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

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

- ◆ A planned sequential, pre-K through 12 health education curriculum that integrates various health topics (such as drug

abuse, the dangers of performance enhancing dietary herbal supplements, violence, safety issues, 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-24. School Guidance and Counseling Programs. The National Education Association believes that guidance and counseling programs should be integrated into the entire education system, pre-K through college.

C-28. Student Sexual Orientation/Gender Identification. The National Education Association believes that all persons, regardless of sexual orientation, should be afforded equal opportunity and guaranteed a safe and inclusive environment within the public education system. The Association also believes that, for students who are struggling with their sexual/gender orientation, every school district and educational institution should provide counseling services and programs that deal with high suicide and dropout rates and the high incidence of teen prostitution.

C-30. Suicide Prevention Programs. The National Education Association believes that suicide prevention programs including prevention, intervention, and postvention must be developed and implemented. The Association urges its affiliates to ensure that these programs are an integral part of the school program.

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

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

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

E-9. Academic and Professional Freedom. Academic freedom includes the rights of teachers and learners to explore and discuss divergent points of view. A teacher shall not be fired, transferred, or removed from his or her position for refusing to suppress the free expression rights of others.

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

F-44. Medication and Medical Services in the Schools. The Association believes that education employees who are not licensed medical personnel should be protected from all liability if they are required to administer medication or perform medical services.

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

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

I-1. Peace and International Relations. The Association urges all nations to develop treaties and disarmament agreements that reduce the possibility of war. The Association also believes that such treaties and agreements should prevent the placement of weapons in outer space. The Association further believes that the United Nations (UN) furthers world peace and promotes the rights of all people by preventing war, racism, and genocide. The Association supports the U.S. Institute of Peace, which provides publications, information, programs, training, and research data in developing peacemaking and conflict resolution skills.

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

I-9. Human Rights. The National Education Association believes that the governments of all nations must respect and protect the basic human and civil rights of every individual, including equal access to education as embodied in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

I-12. Family Planning. The National Education Association supports family planning, including the right to reproductive freedom. The Association also urges the implementation of community-oper-

ated, school-based family planning clinics that will provide intensive counseling by trained personnel.

I-17. Immigration. The Association opposes any immigration policy that denies human and/or civil rights or educational opportunities to immigrants and their children regardless of their immigration status.

I-26. Freedom of Religion. The Association opposes any federal legislation or mandate that would require school districts to schedule a moment of silence.

I-27. 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. A mandatory background check and a mandatory waiting period should occur prior to the sale of all firearms.

I-39. Elimination of Discrimination. The National Education Association is committed to the elimination of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identification, age, and all other forms of discrimination. The Association believes that honest and open conversation is a precursor to change. The Association encourages its members and all other members of the educational community to engage in courageous conversations in order to examine assumptions, prejudices, discriminatory practices, and their effects.

I-43. Hate-Motivated Violence. The Association believes that federal, state, and local governments and community groups must oppose and eliminate hate-motivated violence.

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). The Association also supports the enactment and full funding of the Women's Educational Equity Act. The Association endorses the use of non-sexist language.

The above text is excerpted from NEA resolutions adopted at the 2003 NEA Convention. No words have been changed.

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