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## NEA Approves Plan to Advocate for Same-Sex Marriage

This year's National Education Association annual convention, called Representative Assembly, approved an "action plan" for the teachers union's advocacy of same-sex marriage. Adopted in San Diego, California, this action plan indicates that NEA and its state affiliates will aggressively campaign for state-by-state and federal legislation to the end that homosexual couples will receive the same recognition, tax status, adoption opportunities, and other benefits that married, heterosexual couples receive.

NEA's Legislative Program and several of its resolutions already indicated that the union fully approved of same-sex marriage. In its resolution B-14, for example, NEA asserts:

"The Association also believes that these factors [race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identification, disability, ethnicity, immigration status, occupation, and religion] should not affect the legal rights and obligations of the partners in a legally recognized domestic partnership, civil union, or marriage in regard to mat-

ters involving the other partner, such as medical decisions, taxes, inheritance, adoption, and immigration."

NEA added the above statement to its "Resolution on Racism, Sexism, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identification Discrimination" in 2006. The union's resolutions, which delegates tinker with and reapprove each year at the Representative Assembly, make dozens of other references to sexual orientation and homophobia.

According to the new action plan, NEA will now work to "repeal any federal legislation and/or regulations that discriminate against same-sex couples." Commentators observed that this most likely refers to the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) of 1996, which allows states to refuse to recognize homosexual marriages performed in other states. Jeralee Smith, cofounder of NEA's Conservative Educators Caucus, confirmed that the Representative Assembly's discussion of the action plan does indicate that the union planned to target DOMA.

In 2006, when NEA approved the resolution favoring same-sex marriage, reportedly very little discussion was allowed. This year, the assembly voted to end debate on the new action plan while there were still 20 or 30 people lined up to speak on each side of the issue. About five speakers on each side were allowed to contribute. "As soon as [a conservative delegate] mentioned the words 'marriage should be between a man and a woman,' she got booed," reported Jeralee Smith. "The chair stopped the booing and reminded everybody that in a democracy everyone gets to have their say."

Another speaker who opposed the action plan noted first that he was politically liberal and supported "gay rights." He opposed NEA's plans for further advocacy of same-sex marriage, however, because the union was losing members over its involvement in this contentious political issue. When the plan went to a voice vote, about 60% of delegates voted for it and 40% were opposed.

NEA doesn't care what states call the relationship it is trying to enshrine into law, as the teachers union implies in Resolution B-14 and makes explicit in the new action plan. "NEA does not believe that a single term must be used to designate this legally

recognized 'equal treatment' relationship," states the plan. The union obviously believes that whether states call this relationship a "civil union," a "domestic partnership," or a "marriage," the effect will be the same.

The fifth point of the plan declares that "NEA supports the right of religious institutions to refuse to perform or recognize same-sex marriages." A representative from the Gay and Lesbian Caucus spoke against this provision during the debate on the plan, but according to Jeralee Smith, "the Representative Assembly very definitely refused" to omit this caveat. Even if pastors are not forced to actually marry homosexual partners, laws such as those NEA favors could severely limit churches' ability to engage in the public sphere. Adoption, an area in which religious agencies are currently deeply involved, poses the most obvious and glaring problem. Consider the United Kingdom, which in 2004 created same-sex civil partnerships with benefits identical to those of married couples. As of this year, British law also required all adoption agencies to place children with same-sex couples. Half of the United Kingdom's Catholic adoption agencies decided to comply with the law; the fate of the other half, which refuse to comply, is still uncertain.



NEA Conference Logo

## Furor as NEA's General Counsel Blasts 'Right-Wing Bastards'

"Why are these conservative and right-wing bastards picking on NEA and its affiliates?" asked retiring general counsel Bob Chanin in a speech he delivered to the union's Representative Assembly. "I will tell you why: it is the price we pay for success. NEA and its affiliates have been singled out because they are the most effective unions in the U.S."

Chanin, as the union's top attorney, served NEA for 41 years and helped to shape NEA into the organization it is today. Why, according to Chanin, is NEA the nation's most effective union?

"It is not because of creative ideas; it is not because of the merit of our position; it is not because we care about children; it is not because we have a vision of a great public school for every child. NEA and its affiliates are effective advocates because we have power, and we have power because there are more than 3.2 million people who are willing to pay us hundreds of millions of dollars in dues each year, because they believe we are the unions that can most effectively represent them, the unions that can protect their rights and advance their interests as education employees."

Actually, only about 2.7 million of NEA's 3.2 million members send dues money to the national union. It is certainly accurate, however, to say that the money NEA receives from its members make it a political powerhouse. In many states, even portions of non-members' paychecks are withheld and given to the union on the ba-

sis that non-members benefit from NEA's "collective bargaining" activities.

Chanin's speech identified a number of the deplored "conservatives and right wing[ers]" specifically: Fox News, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Forbes* magazine, the Landmark Legal Foundation, the National Right to Work Committee, the Bush admin-

istration's Department of Education and Department of Labor, and the Internal Revenue Service. "We are not paranoid; someone really is after us," said Chanin.

Even though President Bush has left office, Chanin warned that "attacks by conservatives and right-wing troops will continue," because NEA and its state affiliates are still "the nation's leading advocates for public education and the type of liberal social and economic agenda that these groups find unacceptable."

Chanin unapologetically rejected NEA's recently favored "professional organization" or "public servant" image. Chanin instead played up the union's responsibility to represent its members' financial interests: "NEA and its affiliates should never lose sight of the fact that they are unions," he said.

Outside observers who follow NEA closely noted that NEA for the past 25 years has been deemphasizing the fact that it is a union. This year marked a sharp departure from that stance, as numerous delegates as well as Chanin and NEA president Dennis van Roekel proudly proclaimed NEA a union, and a part of the national labor movement.



NEA General Counsel Bob Chanin Says Farewell

## Abortion-Neutral Amendment Fails Again, But 40% Support It

Every year, pro-life delegates to NEA's Representative Assembly introduce a measure proposing that the union retreat from its pro-abortion stance and instead take no official position on abortion. Currently, the union's Resolution I-16, first drafted in 1985 and unchanged since 1986, states:

"The National Education Association supports family planning, including the right to reproductive freedom. The Association urges the government to give high priority to making available all methods of family planning to women and men unable to take advantage of private facilities. The Association also urges the implementation of community-operated, school-based family planning clinics that will provide intensive counseling by trained personnel."

The pro-life delegates' modest proposal usually takes the form of a New Business Item that would insert the phrase, "with no position on abortion," after the phrase in support of family planning. This year, delegates introduced a similar motion as a bylaw amendment instead of as a New Business Item. This meant that the assembly voted on it by secret, written

ballot instead of by voice vote. The proposal never previously received more than about 25% support by voice vote. When delegates were given the opportunity to privately cast their votes on the issue, however, an amazing 39.4% favored the abortion-neutral amendment to the family planning resolution. Supporters of the amendment who spoke during the debate in open forum reminded delegates that the union was losing members over its pro-abortion politics, among other reasons to support the measure.

Retiring general counsel Bob Chanin laid out for delegates the potential consequences of approving the amendment. NEA would have to remain silent on the issue if *Roe v. Wade* were challenged, would not be able to lobby for taxpayer-funded abortions, and would not be able to advocate abortion as a means of ending teen pregnancies.

The union's rejection of the amendment, even though it was by a surprisingly small margin, provides yet more proof that NEA is not neutral on abortion.



## EDUCATION BRIEFS

NEA approved a plan to “zealously advocate for national health care reform that is consistent with the policies, resolutions, and legislative programs of the NEA and its state affiliates.” Annually since 1978, NEA has reaffirmed a resolution in favor of a “single-payer health care plan for all residents of the United States, its territories, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.” The new plan, this year’s New Business Item C, indicates that NEA will throw more political weight behind the push for socialized medicine.

**U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan spoke to NEA and challenged teachers to be “willing to change.”** Duncan spoke favorably of merit pay for teachers, based partly on student performance — a measure the union adamantly opposes. In response to a request which delegates presented in New Business Item 58, NEA president Dennis Van Roekel said he would write to Duncan and ask him to “clarify his remarks about testing and teacher effectiveness.”

NEA members attending the Representative Assembly contributed \$1,625,289 to the union’s PAC at the assembly. NEA will use this money to lobby for items embraced in the union’s legislative agenda.

For the second year in a row, a delegate from the floor of the Representative Assembly moved that NEA ban the Creation Science Educators Caucus from hosting an information table at the convention. The motion failed, with some NEA delegates even clapping when a speaker against the motion asked, “What is this? Christians are now the enemies of the NEA?” (*Baptist Messenger*, 7-6-09)

Delegates voted down New Business Item 66, which would have required the union to make public the salaries and benefits its executive officers receive. The California delegate who introduced the NBI said that when she asked her local and state affiliates to provide this information, they did not respond.

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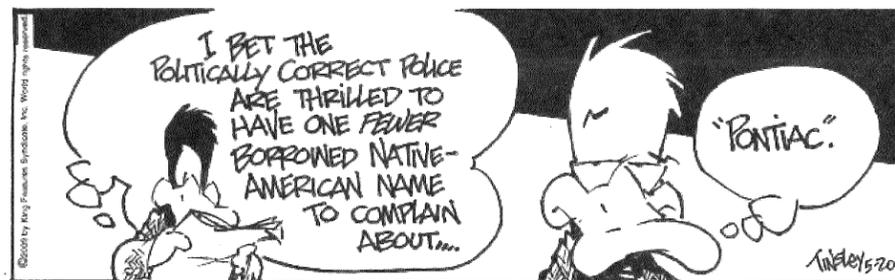
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## Text of NEA’s ‘Action Plan’ for Promoting Same-Sex Marriage

On July 3, NEA approved New Business Item E (NBI E) setting forth NEA’s “action plan” for advocacy of same-sex marriage.

1. NEA will support its affiliates seeking to enact state legislation that guarantees to same-sex couples the right to enter into a legally recognized relationship pursuant to which they have the same rights and benefits as similarly-situated heterosexual couples, including, without limitation, rights and benefits with regard to medical decisions, taxes, inheritance, adoption and immigration.
2. NEA does not believe that a single term must be used to designate this legally recognized “equal treatment” relationship, and recommends that each state decide for itself whether “marriage,” “civil union,” “domestic partnership,” or some other term is most appropriate based upon the cultural, social, and religious values of its citizenry.
3. NEA will support its affiliates in opposing state constitutional and/or statutory provisions that could have the effect of prohibiting the state and its political subdivisions from providing the same rights and benefits to same-sex couples as are provided to similarly-situated heterosexual couples.
4. NEA will take such actions as may be appropriate to support efforts to (a) repeal any federal legislation and/or regulations that discriminate against same-sex couples, and (b) enact federal legislation and/or regulations that treat same-sex couples and similarly-situated heterosexual couples equally with regard to social security, health care, taxation, and other federal rights and benefits.
5. NEA recognizes that the term “marriage” has religious connotations and that same-sex marriages may not be compatible with the beliefs, values, and/or practices of certain religions. Because of its support for the separation of church and state and the right to religious freedom guaranteed by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, NEA supports the right of religious institutions to refuse to perform or recognize same-sex marriages.

### MALLARD FILLMORE / by Jeff Tinsley



## Some Union Affiliates Already Working for Same-Sex Marriage

NEA’s newly approved action plan on same-sex marriage describes quite well what some NEA affiliates have already been busily doing. The union’s California affiliate, the California Teachers Association, donated \$1.25 million of teachers’ dues money to the campaign to defeat Proposition 8 in 2008. Proposition 8, defending traditional marriage between a man and a woman, passed in November and was upheld by the state Supreme Court, but now faces another challenge in federal court.

An analysis by National Public Radio indicated that the union and its members were not of one accord on the issue: teachers, aides, and counselors in California public schools gave about \$450,000 in individual contributions to the effort to pass Proposition 8, and only \$210,000 to the proposition’s opponents.

NPR interviewed Fred Vanderhoof, one 6<sup>th</sup>-grade teacher who contributed to Proposition 8. Vanderhoof was not sur-

prised that teachers opposed gay marriage, while union leaders supported it. “I think that as public school teachers, we are with these young people every day and we see the problems that they have — not understanding their sexual identity and their sexual roles, male and female.” Vanderhoof called same-sex marriage “one more thing happening that is not going to help them.”

On the other side of the issue, NEA stated in a brief it filed: “There can be no question that Proposition 8, if upheld . . . would undermine the very structure and intent of our Constitution to preserve and protect individuals’ inalienable rights despite the vicissitudes of majority sentiment.” (NPR, 7-21-2009)

“I’m disgusted by the ads that say all teachers say No on Prop. 8,” math teacher Brad Barber told the *Orange County Register* during the campaign season (10-31-08). “Even the teachers who are No on Prop. 8 are upset by the money the union is spending on Prop. 8.”



## Book of the Month



**How Lincoln Learned to Read: Twelve Great Americans and the Educations that Made Them**, by Daniel Wolff, Bloomsbury USA, 2009, 346 pps., \$26.00



In *How Lincoln Learned to Read*, the early lives of 12 notable Americans provide 12 ‘snapshots’ of the history of American education. Author Daniel Wolff tells the story of each figure’s formative years, considering not only classroom education, but also experiences at home and elsewhere that shaped each child’s future life and vocation. This is especially appropriate since many of the featured Americans received little or no formal education.

The book begins with Benjamin Franklin and ends with Elvis Presley. In between, Wolff covers Abigail Adams, Andrew Jackson, Sojourner Truth, Abraham Lincoln (he learned to read at home, from his mother), Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins, Henry Ford, W.E.B. Dubois, Helen Keller, Rachel Carson, and John F. Kennedy.

These stories demonstrate that public school education as we know it is a recent invention. School attendance became compulsory in most states in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and only a third of 14- to 17-year-olds attended any high school in the 1920s. School days and school years were also much shorter in the past.

Wolff links John Dewey’s socialist vision for schools to these changes, which split the family up each day. In Wolff’s words, “Mr. went off to sell, Mrs. stayed home and did the chores, the kids walked down the hill and spent their day on School Street. . . . [Dewey] believed the responsibility for creating . . . community now fell, to a large part, on the big brick building with the bell up top.”

Wolff seems to take a negative and conventionally liberal attitude toward private schooling and business. The book is full enough of valuable information, however, to interest readers of any political persuasion.

Benjamin Franklin, who completed just two years of formal schooling and half of an apprenticeship, was one of the first to attain the American dream: “Having emerged from the Poverty and Obscurity in which I was born and bred,” he wrote, “to a State of Affluence and some Degree of Reputation in the World,” he humbly considered his story “fit to be imitated.” Horace Mann and others who promoted universal public schooling hoped it would facilitate many more life stories like Franklin’s. These 12 histories raise thought-provoking questions about the purpose and direction of public education. What does every American need to know? How can public schools help children to achieve their potential?

# Some NEA Resolutions Passed at the 2009 Convention in San Diego, California

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**A-25. Voucher Plans and Tuition Tax Credits.** The Association opposes voucher plans, tuition tax credits, or other such funding arrangements that pay for students to attend sectarian schools. The Association also believes that any private school or agency that receives public funding through voucher plans, tax credits, or other funding/financial arrangements must be subject to all accountability measures and regulations required of public schools.

**A-34. Federally or State-Mandated Choice/Parental Option Plans.** The Association believes that federally or state-mandated parental or choice plans compromise free, equitable, universal, and quality public education for every student. Therefore, the Association opposes such federally or state-mandated choice or parental option plans.

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

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

**B-11. 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-12. Diversity.** The National Education Association believes that similarities and differences among races, ethnicity, color, national origin, language, geographic location, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identification, age, physical ability, size, occupation, and marital, parental, or economic status form the fabric of a society. The Association also believes that education should foster the values of appreciation and acceptance of the various qualities that pertain to people as individuals and as members of diverse populations.

**B-13. 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-14. Racism, Sexism, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identification Discrimination.** Discrimination and stereotyping based on such factors as race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identification, disability, ethnicity, immigration status, occupation, and religion must be eliminated. The Association also believes that these factors should not affect the legal rights and obligations of the partners in a legally recognized domestic partnership, civil union, or marriage in regard to matters involving the other partner, such as medical decisions, taxes, inheritance, adoption, and immigration. Plans, activities, and programs must —

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**B-24. Education of Refugee and Undocumented Children and Children of Undocumented Immigrants.** The Association supports access for undocumented students to financial aid and in-state tuition to state colleges and universities. The Association further believes that students who have resided in the United States for at least five years at the time of high school graduation should be granted legal residency status, and allowed to apply for U.S. citizenship.

**B-30. Educational Programs for English Language Learners.** The Association believes that ELL students should be placed in bilingual education programs to receive instruction in their native language from qualified teachers until such time as English proficiency is achieved.

**B-39. Multicultural Education.** The National Education Association believes that multiculturalism is the process of valuing differences and incorporating the values identified into behavior for the goal of achieving the common good. Multicultural education should promote the recognition of individual and group differences and similarities in order to reduce racism, homophobia, ethnic and all other forms of prejudice, and discrimination and to develop self-esteem as well as respect for others.

**B-40. Global Education.** The National Education Association believes that global education imparts an appreciation of our interdependency in sharing the world's resources to meet mutual human needs.

**B-42. School-to-Work/Career Education.** The National Education Association believes that career education must be interwoven into the total educational system and should include programs in gender-free career awareness and exploration to aid students in career course selection.

**B-48. Family Life Education.** The Association believes that programs should be established for both students and parents/guardians and supported at all educational levels to promote —

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

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

**B-49. Environmental Education.** The Association supports educational programs that promote —

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

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

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

**B-51. 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, family planning, diversity of culture and diversity of sexual orientation and gender identification, sexually transmitted diseases, incest, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and homophobia.

**B-52. HIV/AIDS Education.** The National Education Association believes that educational institutions should establish comprehensive human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) education programs as an integral part of the school curriculum.

**B-60. Education on Peace and International Understanding.** The National Education Association believes that educational strategies for teaching peace and justice issues should include the role of individuals, social movements, international and nongovernmental organizations. The Association also believes that educational materials should include activities dealing with the effects of nuclear weaponry and other weapons of mass

*(Continued on page 4)*

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

**B-66. Standardized Testing of Students.** The National Education Association believes that standardized tests should be used only to improve the quality of education and instruction for students. The Association **opposes** the use of standardized tests when —

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

**B-70. Conflict Resolution Education.** The National Education Association supports the adoption and use, at all educational levels, of proven conflict resolution strategies, materials, and activities by school districts, education employees, students, parents/guardians, and security personnel as well as the school community to encourage nonviolent resolution of interpersonal and societal conflicts.

**B-81. Home Schooling.** The National Education Association believes that home schooling programs based on parental choice cannot provide the student with a comprehensive education experience. When home schooling occurs, students enrolled must meet all state curricular requirements, including the taking and passing of assessments to ensure adequate academic progress. Home schooling should be limited to the children of the immediate family, with all expenses being borne by the parents/guardians. Instruction should be by persons who are licensed by the appropriate state education licensure agency, and a curriculum approved by the state department of education should be used.

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

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

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

- ◆ A planned, sequential health education curriculum for pre-K through adult education that integrates various health top-

ics (such as drug abuse, the dangers of performance-enhancing dietary herbal supplements, violence, safety issues, universal precautions, and HIV education)

- ◆ Counseling programs that provide developmental guidance and broad-based interventions and referrals

- ◆ Comprehensive school-based, community-funded student health care clinics that provide basic physical and mental health, and 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 higher education.

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

**C-29. 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 library media centers and school curricula.

**E-10. Academic and Professional Freedom.** Academic freedom includes the rights of teachers and learners to explore and discuss divergent points of view. A teacher shall not be fired, transferred, re-assigned, removed from his or her position, or disciplined for refusing to suppress the free expression rights of students. Professional freedom includes the teachers' right to evaluate, criticize, and/or advocate their personal point of view

concerning the policies and programs of the schools. Furthermore, teachers must be free to depart from mandated scripted learning programs, pacing charts, and classroom assessments without prejudice or punishment.

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

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

**F-48. Medication and Medical Services in Schools.** The Association believes that education employees who are not licensed medical personnel should be protected from all liability if they are required to administer medication or perform medical services.

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

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

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

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

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

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

**I-9. Global Climate Change.** The Association believes that humans must take steps to change activities that contribute to global climate change.

**I-12. Human Rights.** The National Education Association believes that the governments of all nations must respect and protect equal access to education as embodied in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

**I-16. Family Planning.** The National Education Association supports family planning, including the right to reproductive freedom. The Association also urges the implementation of community-operated, school-based family planning clinics that will provide intensive counseling by trained personnel.

**I-21. Immigration.** The Association opposes any immigration policy that denies educational opportunities to immigrants and their children regardless of their immigration status.

**I-32. Freedom of Religion.** The Association opposes any federal legislation or mandate that would require school districts to schedule a moment of silence.

**I-33. Gun-free Schools and the Regulation of Deadly Weapons.** The Association believes that strict prescriptive regulations are necessary for the manufacture, importation, distribution, sale and resale of handguns and ammunition magazines. A mandatory background check and a mandatory waiting period should occur prior to the sale of all firearms.

**I-45. Elimination of Discrimination.** The National Education Association is committed to the elimination of discrimination based on race, gender, ethnicity, economic status, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identification, age, and all other forms of discrimination. The Association encourages its members and all other members of the educational community to engage in courageous conversations in order to examine assumptions, prejudices, discriminatory practices, and their effects.

**I-50. Hate-Motivated Violence.** The Association believes that federal, state, and local governments and community groups must oppose and eliminate hate-motivated violence.

**I-56. Linguistic Diversity.** The Association believes that efforts to legislate English as the official language disregard cultural pluralism; deprive those in need of education, social services, and employment; and must be challenged.

**I-59. Equal Opportunity for Women.** The Association supports an amendment to the U.S. Constitution (such as the Equal Rights Amendment). The Association urges its affiliates to support ratification of such an amendment. The Association also supports the enactment and full funding of the Women's Educational Equity Act. The Association endorses the use of non-sexist language.

*The above text is excerpted from NEA resolutions adopted at the 2009 NEA Convention. Much language has been omitted, but no words have been changed, added, or put out of order.*