PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
So much has happened in the year since our last annual meeting and Representative Assembly—both good and bad.

A NATION IN CRISIS
As we go to press in early June, our nation is crisis on three fronts.

VICTORIES
NEA's advocacy continues to make a difference for students and educators across the nation.

OTHER ISSUES
More than 100 House-passed bills languish in the Senate's legislative graveyard. That's by design.

The 3 million members of the National Education Association, our nation's largest professional organization, work at every level of education—from pre-school to university graduate programs. Our members also include retired educators and students preparing to become teachers. NEA has affiliates in every state and more than 14,000 communities across the United States.
So much has happened in the year since our last annual meeting and Representative Assembly—both good and bad.

In December, several long-fought battles culminated in legislative victories, all enacted as part of a massive end-of-year funding bill. Among them: permanent repeal of the twice-postponed tax on “high-cost” health plans, a billion-dollar increase in Title I and IDEA funding, healthy increases in funding for a slew of other education programs, and renewal of the Secure Rural Schools program.

But even as we celebrate these victories, today’s ugly realities intrude. In the midst of an unprecedented health and economic crisis—in which the most vulnerable are once again hit hardest—the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and countless unnamed African Americans by police officers fueled a renewed and long overdue push for racial justice.

As we go to press in early June, more than 2 million Americans have tested positive for the coronavirus and more than 115,000 have died from it, including scores of teachers and education support professionals. More than 40 million Americans are jobless. The unemployment rate was nearly 14 percent, the highest since the Great Depression.

We know what happens, far too often, when the economy sours: Educators and other essential public employees are laid off, leading to immense suffering in schools and communities. For a reminder, look back to the Great Recession of 2008, when financially strapped state and local governments cut essential student services and laid off tens of thousands of educators. In some places, schools even shut down for one day a week. More than a decade has passed, and some states and districts still have not fully recovered.

We have known for years that 8 to 12 million students—particularly in African American, Latino, and rural communities—do not have internet access at home. The consequences of this “homework gap” are especially dire at a time like this, putting these students at great risk of falling behind their peers.

Recently released Brookings Institution research is even more alarming: Food insecurity in America has reached a level unprecedented in the modern era—nearly 1 in 5 of our children are not getting enough to eat. Many education support professionals have worked nonstop, often without the personal protective equipment that would keep them safe, to meet this need by preparing school meals and delivering them to students and families.

In short, the coronavirus crisis is a wake-up call, not a passing storm. And like 9/11 and the Great Depression, it is destined to have a lasting impact on our way of life.

I know how difficult this time is for you, not only because you are concerned about the health of yourselves and your loved ones, but because you are worried about your students. Through the uncertainty of COVID-19, educators have risen to every challenge. I am heartened that through our union, we’ve come together virtually from the start to share our concerns, strategize about student learning, and advocate for legislation to help us weather this crisis.

These are my final weeks as NEA’s president. I had imagined ending my tenure by telling you, face to face, how honored I’ve been to serve you and all our members, and to do my part to uplift students, public education, and our professions. While I am disappointed we are not together, I am so proud of the beauty and strength you’ve shown the nation.

America is at a historic crossroads. The road we take will make all the difference—for ourselves and our students. I’m retiring from NEA, but not from the fight to renew America’s promise of equal opportunity and justice for all. It is my privilege to share that mission with NEA members across our great land.

Lily Eskelsen García
President, NEA
June 15, 2020
As we go to press in early June, our nation is in crisis on three fronts. We are witnessing the largest and longest protests in decades, fueled by demands for racial justice and reform of America’s policing practices.

We are confronting an economic downturn that could rival the Great Depression. And we are enduring the COVID-19 pandemic that has profound implications for student learning as well as public health.

PUSH FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

George Floyd struggled for his life for 8 minutes and 46 seconds as a police officer thrust a knee against his neck, maintaining the pressure even as he repeatedly said, “I can’t breathe.” He died, leaving a six-year-old girl fatherless and a world stunned by the what happened next.

Americans saw what happened with their own eyes—bystanders recorded it on their cell phones—and responded with an outpouring of anger and grief. Within days, protests erupted across America and around the world. Against this backdrop, peaceful protesters in Washington, DC had their First Amendment rights violated—at the Attorney General’s direction, police unleashed tear gas and rubber bullets on them to facilitate a presidential photo op.

Outrage over what transpired fueled a renewed, long overdue push for racial justice. For weeks, people of all races and ethnicities protested in all 50 states, the nation’s capital, and hundreds of smaller, lesser-known towns and cities. Now, Americans everywhere are calling for an end to the police brutality and systemic racism that disproportionately kills African American men, women, and children—especially African American men like George Floyd.

NEA supports the Justice in Policing Act, introduced June 8, which would make far-reaching changes in America’s policing practices. But it is no panacea. The bill is but a first step in much-needed reform of the many practices and policies undermining the push for racial justice.

LOOMING CUTS IN SCHOOL BUDGETS

An economic downturn that could rival the Great Depression is upon us, threatening the ability of states and localities to fund public education and related services. Costs are up as they struggle to contain COVID-19 and cope with dramatically rising unemployment. Tax revenues are down as consumers stop spending on virtually everything except groceries and Netflix subscriptions.

The nonpartisan Center for Budget and Policy Priorities warns that FY2021 could bring the worst state budget shortfalls in U.S. history. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, nearly 500,000 education jobs have already been lost—a number that could exceed 2 million by 2022, NEA estimates, unless Congress acts.

COVID-19 State Budget Shortfalls Could be Largest on Record

[Graph showing billions of dollars in state budget shortfalls over time]

Source: Center for Budget and Policy Priorities
**COVID-19 STUNTS STUDENT LEARNING**

Everyone agrees the road to reopening runs through America’s schools. But doing so safely is impossible with massive school budget cuts on the way—and new challenges created by the coronavirus crisis.

To help contain the spread of COVID-19, public schools in nearly every state shut down and abruptly switched to online instruction. McKinsey & Company estimates that African American students could lose the equivalent of 10 months of learning, Hispanic students nine months of learning, and low-income students more than a full year of learning.

To reopen schools safely, we need to take steps to protect students and educators alike—steps that will increase operating costs significantly. We need to provide personal protective equipment (PPE); modify classrooms, cafeterias, and school buses to make social distancing possible; intensify instruction and support for students traumatized by the impact of the coronavirus on their families and communities, and more.

**CONGRESS MUST ACT**

To address the COVID-19 pandemic and fallout from it, in March and April Congress passed four bills providing a total of $3 trillion:

- Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2020—emergency funding for federal agencies
- Families First Coronavirus Response Act—free testing, paid sick and emergency leave (for some), enhanced unemployment insurance, food initiatives, federal support for Medicaid
- CARES Act—payments of up to $1,200 per person and $500 per child, $30.7 billion Education Stabilization Fund, Paycheck Protection Program, expanded unemployment insurance, federal student loan payments suspended for six months, $400 million for election security
- Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act—$25 billion for testing, $75 billion for hospitals; an additional $250 billion for the Paycheck Protection Program

These bills are a good start, but don’t do nearly enough for students and educators—especially in light of the intense strain on state budgets we know is coming. NEA supports the HEROES Act, passed by the House on May 15, which would provide $915 billion in direct relief for state and local governments that can be used to pay educators and other vital workers, plus $90 billion to stabilize education funding. The bill would also prohibit “microgrants” and other voucher schemes introduced by Education Secretary Betsy DeVos even though they have been repeatedly rejected by Congress.

Our top priority is more money for the Education Stabilization Fund the CARES Act created to support K-12 schools and colleges and universities during the COVID-19 national emergency. NEA is calling for an additional $175 billion—the $30.7 billion authorized thus far is not nearly enough. The National Governors Association is calling for even more—an additional $500 billion in direct relief to state and local governments.

The coronavirus has shown a spotlight on a particularly pernicious aspect of the digital divide called the homework gap—the inability to do schoolwork at home due to lack of internet access. Nationally, as many as 12 million students are affected—roughly 1 in 5. A disproportionate share of those students are African American, Hispanic, live in rural areas, or come from low-income families. NEA supports the Emergency Educational Connections Act (S. 3690), which would provide up to $4 billion for a special fund to furnish students with internet connections and devices during the coronavirus crisis; the Federal Communications Commission’s E-Rate program would administer the fund.

In addition, NEA is urging Congress to invest at least $66 million in personal protective equipment (PPE) for educators. Teachers, education support professionals (ESPs), and other school staff interact with students and their families even when school buildings are closed—among them, food service workers who prepare and distribute meals, custodians who clean and disinfect buildings, security officers, and technology specialists.

In a letter led by NEA, more than 30 organizations urged congressional leaders to include student loan debt cancellation in any future COVID-19 relief package. Interest in the issue is sky-high—nearly 2,000 people logged on for an NEA webinar on the issue. The average educator begins a career with about $35,000 in student loan debt. NEA supports cancelling at least $30,000 of outstanding student loan debt per person.

NEA is also advocating for at least $4 billion to help states prepare for the 2020 elections so that voters do not have to choose between protecting their health and casting their votes. We need to expand early in-person voting, vote-by-mail options and protections, and safe and viable in-person options. We also need to educate voters about new practices. Without these steps, many voters, particularly those in marginalized communities, will not have a say in our democracy.
MORE MONEY FOR KEY PROGRAMS

The final funding bill for fiscal year 2020, enacted in December 2019 with strong bipartisan support, included significant increases for programs targeting the students most in need: $450 million more for Title I, $410 million more for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and $550 million more for Head Start.

The same bill expanded funding for full-service community schools by 43 percent, provided the first increase in six years for Title II (professional development and class size reduction), and the first increase in five years for English-language learners. It also included $25 million for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health to conduct research on gun violence as a public health issue—the first time since 1996 that Congress has been able to fund such research.

Another bill enacted in December authorized $255 million per year in permanent funding for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs).

Congress rejected proposals by the Trump administration and Education Secretary Betsy DeVos to slash fiscal year 2020 education funding by $7.4 billion, eliminate scores of programs, and expand voucher schemes that siphon resources from public schools. The Trump/DeVos budget for fiscal year 2021 again proposed deep cuts in education funding, as well as eliminating programs and expanding vouchers.

HEALTH BENEFITS TAX REPEALED

The twice-postponed tax on “high cost” employer-sponsored health plans was permanently repealed by the end-of-year funding bill. Under the Affordable Care Act, the portion of the cost of employer-sponsored health plans above specified thresholds—an estimated $11,200 for individuals and $30,150 for families—would have been taxed at the rate of 40 percent starting in 2022.

Insurance companies would pay the tax, but the burden would be borne by the 180 million Americans with employer-sponsored health coverage—including educators—in the form of benefit reductions, higher deductibles, or both.

INTEGRITY OF 2020 CENSUS PRESERVED

The end-of-year funding bill included $7.6 billion for the Census Bureau to help ensure everyone is counted—even more of a challenge than usual due to delays in collecting and compiling data caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. But the goal remains the same: a complete and accurate count. The 2020 Census will determine how many seats each state gets in the U.S. House of Representatives and how federal funding is distributed for education, children’s health, and other public services.

Earlier in the year, nearly 13,000 NEA members
NEA members Vicente Rodriguez and Karina Alvarez addressed the crowd gathered on the steps of the U.S. Supreme Court as the justices heard oral arguments on Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) on November 12. “We love this country. It’s the only country we’ve known,” Rodriguez said. “We’re asking the court to see us as the Americans we are.” Created by an executive order from President Obama in 2012, DACA protects nearly 700,000 Dreamers from deportation, including an estimated 20,000 educators and aspiring educators. NEA urged the Court to uphold DACA in a legal brief filed earlier this year. The Court will issue its ruling during the current term, which ends June 30.

NEA urged the Commerce Department not to include a citizenship question on the census. The Urban Institute estimated that asking about citizenship would lead to significantly undercounting as many as 4 million individuals—with African Americans, Latinos, and children under age 5 most likely to be missed, especially in California, Florida, Georgia, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, and Texas.

The Supreme Court sided with our members, rejecting Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross’ explanation that he included the question to improve enforcement of the Voting Rights Act. “Several points, taken together, reveal a significant mismatch between the Secretary’s decision and the rationale he provided,” Chief Justice John Roberts wrote.

SECURE RURAL SCHOOLS PROGRAM RENEWED

First enacted in 2000, the Secure Rural Schools (SRS) program supports public education and community services in over 4,400 schools in 770 rural counties located near national forests across the United States. In recent years, funding has lapsed and even been reduced, bringing harsh cuts to schools and other services.

The end-of-year funding bill extended the SRS program for two years. NEA supports making the SRS program permanent by creating an endowment fund to provide stable, reliable funding.

EDUCATORS ON MILITARY BASES MAKE GAINS

The Federal Education Association (FEA), an NEA affiliate, represents educators employed by the Department of Defense Education Activity, which oversees 163 schools serving more than 70,000 students in 11 foreign countries, 7 states, Guam, and Puerto Rico.

This year, we succeeded in reversing a provision of the 2017 tax law that treated the moving expenses of FEA members as taxable income. We also secured 12 weeks of paid parental leave and a 3.1 percent pay increase for FEA members—the same increase other federal civilian employees received.

NEA member Marcie Villanueva, the lead food service worker at Harlan Elementary School in Wilmington, Del., was deeply troubled when she witnessed a cashier take a child’s lunch, throw it away, and replace it with a cheese sandwich, an apple, and milk. “I saw that look of distress come over that child’s face, and the cashier’s face said she was uneasy as well,” Villanueva said. But the employee had to follow district policy: If a child’s meal account balance showed a debt of $10 or more, the meal had to be thrown out and replaced—even though the price of the replacement was added to the child’s debt. Villanueva delivered a straightforward message at a congressional briefing in February: We can do better.
More than 100 House-passed bills languish in the Senate’s legislative graveyard. That’s by design. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) refuses to take up legislation passed by the House even when, like background checks for gun purchases, it has overwhelming support among the American people. He has repeatedly—and proudly—described himself as the personification of death. “Think of me as the Grim Reaper. None of that stuff is going to pass. None of it,” he says.

In stark contrast to his reluctance to move legislation, McConnell has rushed to approve a record number of judicial nominees—many of whom NEA opposed because they are hostile to public education, civil rights, or both. Even COVID-19 has not deterred him. “My motto for the year is ‘leave no vacancy behind.’ The pandemic will not prevent us from achieving that goal,” McConnell said in April, explaining why he reopened the Senate when the rest of the nation’s capital remained shut down.

Many House-passed bills are NEA priorities. Many of the bills McConnell boasts about burying address issues that are priorities for NEA and our members. They include the:

- **American Dream and Promise Act**, which would provide a pathway to citizenship for nearly 2.7 million Dreamers and Temporary Protected Status holders, including an estimated 37,000 educators
- **Bipartisan Background Checks Act**, which would require a background check for every gun sold as well as most transfers
- **Equality Act**, which would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other federal laws to provide explicit, consistent non-discrimination protections that include sexual orientation and gender identity
- **Homeland Security Improvement Act**, which would address the challenges faced by immigrant children and families at our Southern border in a responsible and humane manner
- **Humanitarian Standards for Individuals in Customs and Border Protection Custody Act**, which would set a minimum standard of care for the children, women, and families the U.S. Customs and Border Protection takes into custody
- **Paycheck Fairness Act**, which would close loopholes in current law to ensure women get equal pay for equal work
- **Protecting the Right to Organize Act**, which would strengthen the federal laws that protect workers’ right to organize a union and negotiate higher wages and better benefits
- **Raise the Wage Act**, which would gradually increase the federal minimum wage from the current $7.25 to $15 an hour in 2024, index future minimum wage increases to wage growth, and phase out the subminimum wage for tipped workers, youth workers, and workers with disabilities
- **Voting Rights Advancement Act**, which would once again require states and localities with recent histories of voter discrimination to seek approval from the U.S. Department of Justice before making any changes in their election laws

**OTHER ISSUES**
SOCIAL SECURITY PENALTIES

Social Security’s Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) penalize educators, police officers, and other state and local government employees who dedicate their lives to public service. The WEP affects 1.9 million people while the GPO affects 695,000 people, according to the Congressional Research Service.

The GPO reduces the Social Security spousal or survivor benefits of people not covered by Social Security themselves. The WEP reduces the Social Security benefits of people who work in jobs covered by Social Security and jobs NOT covered by Social Security—for example, educators who take part-time jobs to make ends meet.

NEA supports the Social Security Fairness Act, which would fully repeal both the GPO and WEP. We also support the Public Servants Protection and Fairness Act, which starts to fix problems caused by the WEP. Current retirees would get an extra $150 per month and future retirees $75 more per month on average. No one would get less.

HIGHER EDUCATION ACT REAUTHORIZATION

First passed in 1965 to ensure that every individual has access to higher education, regardless of income or zip code, the Higher Education Act governs student-aid programs, federal aid to colleges, oversight of teacher preparation programs, and more.

NEA supports the College Affordability Act, a comprehensive reauthorization that would expand eligibility for public service loan forgiveness to include adjunct and contingent faculty—a huge victory. The bill would also update teacher preparation programs, enhance access to higher education, and improve campus safety.

SCHOOL MODERNIZATION

The average public school building in the United States is 44 years old. The American Society of Civil Engineers gives the condition of America’s 100,000 public school buildings an overall grade of D+. Over 19,000 schools serving 11.6 million students do not have the minimum connectivity necessary for digital learning.

NEA supports the Rebuild America’s Schools Act, which would create a $70 billion grant program and a $30 billion tax-credit bond program that target high-poverty schools, restore Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZABs) eliminated by the 2017 GOP tax bill, and expand access to high-speed broadband. The bill is part of House Democrats’ Moving Forward infrastructure framework.

NEA, AFT, and the Congressional Progressive Caucus sponsored a briefing on the Red for Ed movement that focused on how Congress can help educators and students. Speakers included NEA members Georgia Flowers Lee, a special education teacher at Saturn Street Elementary in Los Angeles; Katherine Mullen, an American government teacher at Dundalk High School in Baltimore County, Md.; and Amber Spradlin, a sixth grade teacher who is president of the Choctaw-Nicoma Park Education Association near Oklahoma City. They each talked about the challenges in their states and how educators, parents, and community groups worked together to make changes that helped students and educators alike.

NEA retired member James Kellar called President Trump’s plan to build a border wall with money appropriated for public schools on military bases “unconscionable” at a press briefing organized by Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI). Kellar spent 36 years teaching at Fort Campbell, Ky., where the president’s plan could cause a middle school to lose $63 million earmarked for long-overdue renovations and repairs. Class sizes doubled at a middle school on the base when another run-down school closed in 2017. A total of $3.6 billion has been diverted from Department of Defense projects to building the wall, including nearly half a billion dollars earmarked for public schools on military bases.

MIDDLE SCHOOL TO LOSE $63 MILLION
NEA members Shaniqua Williams and Maggie Gannon went to Capitol Hill in November to advocate for strengthening and improving the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program. “I want to buy a house, but my student loans are the size of a mortgage,” said Gannon, a second-grade teacher in Culpeper, Va. “The current administration has threatened to take PSLF away. If it does, I’m going to be paying this debt in retirement,” said Williams, a school counselor in Frederick County, Va.

Florida Education Association member Tina Whitaker, a social studies teacher at Arthur & Polly Mays 6-12 Conservatory of Arts in Miami, testified before the House Education and Labor Committee on June 26, 2019, the day before the first anniversary of Janus v. AFSCME, the Supreme Court decision that bars public sector unions from collecting “fair share” or “agency” fees from non-members. Whitaker contrasted her experience in North Carolina, where she had no union or collective bargaining rights, with her experience in Florida, where the union supported her and helped her become a better teacher.

Connecticut Education Association member Michael Brosnan told members of the House Committee on Education and Labor that recruiting and retaining educators is a huge challenge for several reasons—including the cost of higher education, low teacher pay, and insufficient support for beginning teachers. At a July 17 hearing on how federal policy can provide more support for teachers and school leaders, he stressed the need to provide more rigorous student-teaching experiences and strengthen programs like Public Service Loan Forgiveness. A high school history teacher for many years, Brosnan recently took on a new challenge: coordinating programs for first-year teachers in Bridgeport’s public schools.
CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

- **Counseling for Career Choice Act (H.R. 5092) by Rep. Langevin (D-RI):** Strengthen career counseling in middle and high schools.

- **Creating Pathways for Youth Employment Act (S. 1551/H.R. 2844) by Sen. Durbin (D-IL) and Rep. Kelly (D-IL):** Provide funding, on a competitive basis, for summer and year-round employment opportunities for youth ages 14 through 24.

- **Dual Credit Innovation Act (H.R. 4677) by Rep. Taylor (R-TX):** Create a dual-credit award within the U.S. Department of Education’s blue ribbon program, which recognizes private and charter schools as well as public schools and does not require educators to have appropriate credentials.

- **Expanding Access to the Workforce through Dual Enrollment Act (H.R. 653) by Rep. Brown (D-MD):** Provide grants to establish, expand, or support dual or concurrent enrollment programs that offer career and technical education.

- **School to Career Pathways Act (H.R. 3893) by Rep. Harder (D-CA):** Expose students to career options earlier in their academic careers.

- **START Career Pathways Act (H.R. 3892) by Rep. Harder (D-CA):** Provide grants to expand career and technical education programs.

CENSUS 2020

- **Prohibit providing citizenship data (S. 2068/H.R. 4412) by Sen. Booker (D-NJ) and Rep. Butterfield (D-NC):** Prohibit the Census Bureau from giving the states information about citizenship status for use in legislative redistricting.

- **Recognize the importance of the census and encourage people to participate (S. Con. Res. 31) by Sen. Schatz (D-HI):** Ensure a complete, fair, and accurate count.

CHILDREN’S NUTRITION

- **Access to Healthy Foods for Young Children Act (S. 2501) by Sen. Casey (D-PA):** Take a comprehensive approach to improving the Child and Adult Care Food Program and nutrition in early childhood.

- **Anti-Lunch Shaming Act (S. 1119/H.R. 2311) by Sen. Udall (D-NM) and Rep. Haaland (D-NM):** Prohibit stigmatizing children who are unable to pay for school meals.

- **CARE for Kids Act (S. 2760) by Sen. Casey (D-PA):** Expand eligibility for free school meals to include many children living with grandparents, relatives, or other caregivers.

- **Expanding Access to School Meals Act (H.R. 5308) by Rep. Ryan (D-OH):** Broaden access to school meals and make them free.

- **Farm to School Act (S. 2026/H.R. 3562) by Sen. Leahy (D-VT) and Rep. Fudge (D-OH):** Expand and strengthen the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s farm-to-school grant program.

- **Healthy Meal Time Act (H.R. 5463) by Rep. Schrier (D-WA):** Identify best practices for scheduling lunch and recess to ensure students have enough time to eat and reduce food waste.

- **No Shame at School Act (S. 1907/H.R. 3366) by Sen. Smith (D-MN) and Rep. Omar (D-MN):** Improve the process of certifying eligibility for free and reduced-price meals, and provide retroactive funding for children deemed eligible during the school year.

- **Nutrition Coordinators for Local Healthy Youth Act (H.R. 1886) by Rep. Ryan (D-OH):** Appoint qualified professionals to lead nutrition and wellness programs using innovative strategies such as family-style eating to encourage healthy decision making.

- **Stop Child Hunger Act (S. 1941/H.R. 3378) by Sen. Murray (D-WA) and Rep. Susan Davis (D-NM):** Give families with children eligible for free or reduced-price school meals an electronic benefit transfer card to help pay for food during the summer.

- **Summer Meals Act (S. 1908/H.R. 2818) by Sen. Gillibrand (D-NY) and Rep. Young (R-AK):** Provide more meals to more students in low-income communities.

- **Universal School Meals Program Act (S. 2609/H.R. 4684) by Sen. Sanders (I-VT) and Rep. Omar (D-MN):** Make school breakfast and lunch free for all children.
CIVIL RIGHTS


- For the People Act (H.R. 1) by Rep. Sarbanes (D-MD): Ensure that all Americans can freely exercise their constitutional right to vote.

- Voting Rights Advancement Act (S. 561/H.R. 4) by Sen. Leahy (D-VT) and Rep. Sewell (D-AL): Update and reinstate important voter protection provisions undone by Shelby County v. Holder, the 2013 Supreme Court ruling that struck down Section 4(b) of the landmark Voting Rights Act of 1965.

- Washington, D.C. Admission Act (H.R. 51) by Del. Norton (D-DC): Make the District of Columbia a state and give its residents the same rights as the residents of the other 50 states.

COVID-19

- Allow Americans to earn paid sick time (S. 3415/H.R. 6150) by Sen. Murray (D-WA) and Rep. DeLauro (D-CT): Respond to the coronavirus and future public health emergencies by providing 14 emergency paid sick leave days to every worker.


- CARES Act (H.R. 748): Provide $2 trillion to address the coronavirus crisis, including immediate stimulus checks for most households—up to $1,200 per person and $500 per child; a $30.7 billion Education Stabilization Fund to help fill expected state budget gaps, provide more dollars for student and school needs, and prevent educator layoffs; expanded unemployment insurance; six-month suspension of federal student loan payments; tens of billions of dollars to help prevent housing insecurity; and more. Signed into law by President Trump on March 27, 2020.


- COVID-19 Every Worker Protection Act (H.R. 6559) by Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA): Require the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to issue an emergency temporary standard, based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, to protect all workers from exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace.

- Emergency Educational Connections Act (S. 3690/H.R. 6563) by Sen. Markey (D-MA) and Rep. Meng (D-NY): Provide up to $4 billion for an emergency fund, administered through the E-Rate program, for schools and libraries to support distance and remote learning for students without home internet access for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency.


- Families First Coronavirus Response Act (H.R. 6201) by Rep. Lowey (D-NY): Provide free testing, paid sick and emergency leave (for some); bolster unemployment insurance, food initiatives, and federal support for Medicaid. Signed into law by President Trump on March 18, 2020.

- HEROES Act (H.R. 6800) by Rep. Lowey (D-NY): Provide $3 trillion to address the coronavirus crisis, including $915 billion in direct relief for state and local governments that can be used pay educators and other vital workers, $90 billion to stabilize education funding, and $3.6 billion to protect voters’ access to the polls. The bill also takes steps to narrow the digital divide and close the homework gap, furnishes personal protective equipment (PPE) for educators and other frontline workers, and provides relief for student loan borrowers.


- Student Debt Emergency Relief Act (H.R. 6363) by Rep. Pressley (D-MA): Cancel at least $30,000 in outstanding student loan debt per borrower; require the U.S. Department of Education to assume responsibility for borrowers’ monthly payments, and shield borrowers from involuntary collections or garnishments.

- Supporting Students in Response to Coronavirus Act (S. 3489/H.R. 6275) by Sen. Murray (D-WA) and Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA): Provide resources to help schools plan for closures, ensure early childhood programs stay in operation, emergency financial aid for college students in need of food and housing, and more.
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SCHOOLS

- Federal Civilian Workforce Pay Raise Fairness Act (H.R. 790) by Rep. Connolly (D-VA): Bring the 2019 pay increase for civilian federal employees in line with the raise the military received, including educators represented by the Federal Education Association in Department of Defense schools. The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 (S. 1790) gave civilian federal employees a 3.1 percent pay raise—the biggest in a decade for civilians.

- Preserving Teacher Loan Forgiveness for Military Spouses Act (S. 532/H.R. 1229) by Sen. Cardin (D-MD) and Rep. Chabot (R-OH): Waive the teacher loan forgiveness program's five consecutive years of service requirement for military spouses who relocate during the school year due to military orders.

- Relocation Expense Parity Act (S. 841/H.R. 2265) by Sen. Warner (D-VA) and Rep. Luria (D-VA): Close a loophole created by the 2017 GOP tax bill that denies some federal workers full reimbursement for moving expenses. The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 (S. 1790) provided reimbursement for taxes paid on money provided for moving expenses, retroactive to January 1, 2018, and repealed the provision requiring some federal employees, including Federal Education Association members, to pay taxes on compensation for moving expenses.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION


- Universal Child Care and Early Learning Act (S. 1878/H.R. 3315) by Sen. Warren (D-MA) and Rep. Haaland (D-NM): Create a nationwide network of federally funded, locally-run child care centers; ensure that no family spends more than 7 percent of its annual income on child care.


- Universal Prekindergarten and Early Childhood Education Act (H.R. 4213) by Del. Norton (D-DC): Authorize competitive state grants to establish or expand full-day pre-K programs.

EDUCATION FUNDING & BUDGET


- Congressional disapproval of the president’s declaration of a national emergency on February 15, 2019 (S. J. Res. 54/H.J. Res. 46) by Sen. Udall (D-NM) and Rep. Castro (D-TX): President Trump declared a national emergency on our southern border to justify diverting money appropriated by Congress for Department of Defense schools and other purposes to building “the wall.” Both the House and the Senate passed the resolution, but Trump vetoed it.

- Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (H.R. 1865) by Rep. Pascrell (D-NJ): Increase funding for key education programs including Title I, Title II, IDEA, community schools, Pell grants, and more; extend the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act for two years; permanently repeal the Affordable Care Act’s tax on “high cost” health plans; and provide funding for gun violence research and the 2020 Census. Signed into law by President Trump on December 20, 2019.

- IDEA Full Funding Act (S. 866/H.R. 1878) by Sen. Van Hollen (D-MD) and Rep. Huffman (D-CA): Increase the federal share of special education costs from about 14 percent today to the 40 percent Congress promised to provide.


- Public School Emergency Relief Act (H.R. 4316) by Rep. Pete King (R-NY): Provide temporary emergency impact Aid for local educational agencies.

EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

- ESP Family Leave Act (S. 1401) by Sen. Duckworth (D-IL): Establish eligibility requirements for education support professionals under the Family and Medical Leave Act.

- Improving Training for School Food Service Workers Act (S. 2331/H.R. 2651) by Sen. Murray (D-WA) and Rep. Pocan (D-WI): Ensure that food-service professionals receive training during work hours and, if not, that they are notified in advance and compensated for participating.

- Recognizing Achievement in Classified School Employees Act (S. 323/H.R. 276) by Sen. Murray (D-WA) and Rep. Titus (D-NV): Establish the Recognizing Inspiring School Employees (RISE) Award Program for education support professionals who provide exemplary service to students. Signed into law by President Trump on April 12, 2019.

EDUCATOR RECOGNITION


National Teacher Appreciation Week (S. Res. 568/H. Res. 959) by Sen. Collins (D-WA) and Rep. Graves (R-MO): Expression of support for designating May 4-8, 2020, Teacher Appreciation Week.


Teacher Victims’ Family Assistance Act (H.R. 1691) by Rep. Hastings (D-FL): Provide assistance to the immediate family of school staff killed in an act of violence while performing school duties.

FAMILY SUPPORT

FAMILY ACT (S. 463/H.R. 1185) by Sen. Gillibrand (D-NY) and Rep. DeLauro (D-CT): Create a national family and medical leave insurance fund to pay workers a portion of their wages when they are unable to work for health reasons or need to care for a sick family member.

Family Friendly Schools Act (S. 2784) by Sen. Harris (D-CA): Create a pilot program in which schools are open the entire workday during the school year, increase funding for enrichment programs during the summer.

Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act (S. 3083) by Sen. Young (R-IN): Help end homelessness and assist low-income families in finding housing.

Healthy Families Act (S. 840/H.R. 1784) by Sen. Murray (D-WA) and Rep. DeLauro (D-CT): Set a national standard for paid sick days to help meet the needs of working families.

Social Emotional Learning for Families Act (H.R. 4626) by Rep. Ryan (D-OH): Provide grants to increase teachers’ capacity to work with families to develop and support their children’s social and emotional skills and mindsets.

GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Background Check Expansion Act (S. 42) by Sen. Chris Murphy (D-CT): Require a background check for every gun sold, as well as most transfers.

Bipartisan Background Checks Act (H.R. 8) by Rep. Mike Thompson (D-CA): Require a background check for every gun sold, as well as most transfers.

Enhanced Background Checks Act (H.R. 1112) by Rep. Clyburn (D-SC): Extend the initial background-check review period from three to 10 days.

Equal Access to Justice for Victims of Gun Violence Act (S. 1779/H.R. 3214) by Sen. Blumenthal (D-CT) and Rep. Schiff (D-CA): Ensure the gun industry is not shielded from liability if it is negligent or disregards public safety.

Extreme Risk Protection Order Act (S. 506/H.R. 1236) by Sen. Feinstein (D-CA) and Rep. Carbajal (D-CA): Support state, tribal, and local efforts to keep firearms away from individuals who are a danger to themselves or others.

Federal Extreme Risk Protection Order Act (H.R. 3076) by Rep. McBath (D-GA): Empower family members and law enforcement to intervene when someone should not have access to firearms because they are a danger to themselves or others.

Handgun Purchaser Licensing Act (S. 1844/H.R. 3285) by Sen. Van Hollen (D-MD) and Rep. Raskin (D-MD): Create a federal grant program to incentivize state and local governments to require people to get a license or permit before buying a handgun.

High Speed Gunfire Prevention Act (H.R. 3606) by Rep. Cicilline (D-RI): Ban bump stocks and acceleration devices like those used in the Las Vegas massacre where 58 people died.

Keep America Safe Act (S. 447/H.R. 1186) by Sen. Menendez (D-NJ) and Rep. Deutch (D-FL): Ban civilian use of high-capacity magazines and mark magazines with a serial number, similar to firearms themselves.

School Shooting Safety and Preparedness Act (H.R. 4301) by Rep. Gabbard (D-HI): Create an official definition of “school shooting” to alleviate differences in how media organizations, interest groups, and others talk about school shootings.


HEALTH CARE

CARES Act (S. 1365/H.R. 2569) by Sen. Warren (D-MA) and Rep. Cummings (D-MD): Provide $100 billion over 10 years to address the epidemic of opioid and substance abuse.

Elijah E. Cummings Lower Drug Costs Now Act (H.R. 3) by Rep. Pallone (D-NJ): End the ban on Medicare negotiating directly with drug companies, which would in turn help lower drug prices for all Americans.

End Surprise Billing Act (H.R. 861) by Rep. Doggett (D-TX): Require hospitals to tell patients how much they will be billed for services furnished by out-of-network doctors and other providers.

Exercise and Fitness for All Act (S. 1244/H.R. 4651) by Sen. Duckworth (D-IL) and Rep. DeSaulnier (D-CA): Provide exercise or fitness equipment and instruction accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Increasing Access to Mental Health in Schools Act (S. 1642/H.R. 2958) by Sen. Tester (D-MT) and Rep. Chu (D-CA): Recruit and retain more school-based providers of mental health services in low-income areas.

Medicare for All Act (S. 1129) by Sen. Sanders (I-VT): Create a single-payer health care system that guarantees all American children and adults access to comprehensive, affordable health care.

Medicare for All Act (H.R. 1384) by Rep. Jayapal (D-WA): Create a single-payer health care system that guarantees all American children and adults access to comprehensive, affordable health care.
Mental Health in Schools Excellence Program Act (H.R. 4025) by Rep. Fitzpatrick (R-PA): Help recruit and retain school-based mental health care providers; vague wording gives Education Secretary absolute power that could lead to problems.

Mental Health Services for Students Act (S. 1122/H.R. 1109) by Sen. Smith (D-MN) and Rep. Napolitano (D-CA): Improve access to comprehensive, school-based mental health programs.

Pursuing Equity in Mental Health Act (H.R. 5469) by Rep. Watson Coleman (D-NJ): Research and address health issues for minority youth, particularly the rising suicide rate among black boys.


RISE from Trauma Act (S. 1770/H.R. 3180) by Sen. Durbin (D-IL) and Rep. Danny K. Davis (D-IL): Increase support for children with adverse or traumatic experiences such as witnessing violence, parental addiction, or abuse.

School-Based Health Centers Reauthorization Act (S. 1013/H.R. 2075) by Sen. Stabenow (D-MI) and Rep. Sarbanes (D-MD): Extend the School-Based Health Centers program authorization through 2024.


Student Mental Health Rights Act (H.R. 5204) by Rep. Porter (D-CA): Require study and guidance of mental health conditions and substance abuse at institutions of higher education.


Youth Mental Health Services Act (H.R. 1395) by Rep. Roe (R-TN): Improve mental health services for students.

ZZZ’s to A’s Act (H.R. 1861) by Rep. Lofgren (D-CA): Conduct a study—and make recommendations to Congress—on the relationship between school starting times and adolescent health.

HIGHER EDUCATION—POLICY

Affordable College Textbook Act (S. 1036/H.R. 2107) by Sen. Durbin (D-IL) and Rep. Neguse (D-CO): Create a competitive grant program to support creating and expanding use of open college textbooks.

America’s College Promise Act (S. 2250/H.R. 3933) by Sen. Baldwin (D-MI) and Rep. Andy Levin (D-MI): End tuition and fees at community colleges and cover a significant portion of tuition and fees for low-income students first two years at Minority Serving Institutions.

ASPIRE Act (S. 1855) by Sen. Coons (D-DE): Encourage institutions of higher education to enroll more low-income students, and devote resources to boosting completion rates at schools with disproportionately high numbers of low-income students.

College Affordability Act (H.R. 4674) by Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA): Comprehensive reauthorization of the Higher Education Act that helps make higher education more affordable and accessible, improves teacher preparation, and expands the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program to include adjunct and contingent faculty.

College Transparency Act (S. 800/H.R. 1766) by Sen. Cassidy (R-LA) and Rep. Mitchell (R-MI): Require the National Center for Education Statistics to generate data on student outcomes like graduate earnings and loan repayment.

EATS Act (H.R. 4297) by Rep. Gomez (D-CA): Treat attending an institution of higher education like work when determining eligibility for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Financial Aid Fairness Act (H.R. 4584) by Rep. Bass (D-CA): Repeal provision that strips federal grants, loans, and work study aid from individuals with drug-related offenses.

FUTURE Act (H.R. 5363) by Rep. Adams (D-NC): Permanently reauthorize and provide $255 million in annual mandatory funding for Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority Serving Institutions. The bill also streamlines the federal financial aid process and paperwork for federal student loan borrowers on income-driven repayment plans. Signed into law by President Trump on December 19, 2019.

Higher Education Access and Success for Homeless and Youth Foster Act (S. 789/H.R. 1724) by Sen. Murray (D-WA) and Rep. Clark (D-MA): Remove barriers to making college more affordable and accessible for students who are homeless or living with foster parents.

Higher Education Dream Act (H.R. 1298) by Rep. Lewis (D-GA): Prohibit federally funded colleges and universities from denying students admission or in-state tuition based on their immigration status.

HOPE for FAFSA Act (H.R. 4245) by Rep. McBath (D-CA): Streamline the FAFSA process by creating three pathways that vary with the complexity of the applicant’s finances.

Making Education Affordable and Accessible Act (S. 718/H.R. 3891) by Rep. Harder (D-CA) and Sen. Peters (D-MI): Expand opportunities for students to obtain college credit through dual enrollment courses.

PROTECT Students Act (S. 867/H.R. 3512) by Sen. Hassan (D-NH) and Rep. Susie Lee (D-NV): Make significant reforms to hold non-profit colleges accountable to students and taxpayers.

Second Chance for Students Act (H.R. 4089) by Rep. Foster (D-IL): Allow students convicted of possessing marijuana to remain eligible for financial aid for six months if they complete an approved drug rehabilitation program or pass two unannounced drug tests.

Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Program Act (S. 1198/H.R. 4555) by Sen. Durbin (D-IL) and Rep. Bustos (D-IL): Create a competitive grant program to expand opportunities for students to study abroad.


Understanding the True Cost of College Act (S. 888/H.R. 2321) by Sen. Grassley (R-IA) and Rep. Van Drew (D-NJ): Create a universal financial aid award letter to help students and their families compare offers from different schools.
**HIGHER EDUCATION—STUDENT GRANTS**

- **BETTER TEACH Grants Act (H.R. 4578) by Rep. Frederica Wilson (D-FL):** Increase TEACH grants to $8,000, make early childhood educators eligible for them, and establish an appeals process for grant-to-loan conversions.

- **Consider Teachers Act (S. 1387) by Sen. Braun (R-IN):** Improve administration of the TEACH grant program and resolve problems associated with inadvertently converting grants into loans that must be paid back with interest.

- **DIVERSIFY Act (H.R. 5350) by Rep. Garcia (D-IL):** Increase lifetime TEACH grant from $4,000 to $8,000 per year.

- **Expanding Access to Graduate Education Act (H.R. 3334) by Rep. Kuster (D-NH):** Allow students to use remaining Pell grant eligibility for a first graduate degree.

- **Pell Grant Flexibility Act (H.R. 3803) by Rep. DeSaulnier (D-CA):** Exclude from gross income any amount received as a federal Pell grant.

- **Pell Grant Restoration Act (H.R. 4298) by Rep. Hayes (D-CT):** Give students who are victims of predatory for-profit colleges a second chance at higher education with a full slate of Pell benefits.

- **Pell Grant Sustainability Act (H.R. 4639) by Rep. Casten (D-IL):** Adjust Pell grants for inflation by fiscal year.

- **Pell to Grad Act (H.R. 6033) by Rep. Lawrence (D-MI):** Extend lifetime Pell grant eligibility to 16 semesters and allow students to use their remaining eligibility for a first graduate degree.

- **Strengthening FAFSA Act (H.R. 4216) by Rep. Delgado (D-NY):** Increase lifetime Pell grant eligibility to 14 semesters and the Income Protection Allowance used in financial aid calculations by 35 percent.

- **If It’s Good Enough For the Banks, It’s Good Enough For Students Act (S. 1845) by Sen. Merkley (D-OR):** Allow federal student loans to be refinanced at the same low interest rates banks get from the Federal Reserve.

- **Protecting Access to Student Transcripts Act (H.R. 3761) by Rep. Susie Lee (D-NV):** Ensure students who default on their loans retain access to their transcripts.

- **Protecting JOBS Act (S. 609) by Sen. Rubio (R-FL):** Prevent states from punishing people who fall behind on federal student loan payments by denying them a teaching, professional, or driver’s license.

- **Public Service Appreciation Through Loan Forgiveness Act (H.R. 6087) by Rep. Lipinski (D-IL):** Implement partial loan forgiveness schedule for public service.


- **Student Loan Tax Elimination Act (S. 1696) by Sen. Braun (R-IN):** End student loan origination fees.

- **Teacher Debt Relief Act (H.R. 4647) by Rep. Hayes (D-CA):** Allow educators to qualify for teacher loan forgiveness and public service loan forgiveness simultaneously.

- **What You Can Do for Your Country Act (S.1203/H.R. 2441) by Sen. Gillibrand (D-NY) and Rep. Sarbanes (D-MD):** Improve the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program.

**HIGHER EDUCATION—STUDENT LOANS**

- **Adjunct Faculty Loan Fairness Act (S. 2523) by Sen. Durbin (D-IL):** Make adjunct faculty eligible for Public Service Loan Forgiveness program.

- **Comprehensive CREDIT Act (H.R. 3621) by Rep. Pressley (D-MA):** Protect student loan borrowers from unfair credit reporting practices.

- **Congressional disapproval of the U.S. Department of Education’s revised “borrower defense rule” (S.J. Res. 56/H.J. Res. 76) by Sen. Durbin (D-IL) and Rep. Susie Lee (D-NV):** The revised rule makes it more difficult for students defrauded by unscrupulous colleges to cancel their federal student loan debt. Veterans, older students, students of color, students with disabilities, and students who are the first in their families to attend college are among those most likely to be affected.

- **Employer Participation in Repayment Act (S. 460/H.R. 1043) by Sen. Warner (D-VA) and Rep. Peters (D-CA):** Allow employers to make tax-free contributions to help repay their employees’ student loans.

- **GRADUATE Act (H.R. 4502) by Rep. Casten (D-IL):** Eliminate time-related eligibility requirements for subsidized student loans.

**IMMIGRATION**

American Dream and Promise Act (H.R. 6) by Rep. Roybal-Allard (D-CA): Provide legal status and a path to citizenship for Dreamers brought to this country as minors and people allowed to remain here for humanitarian reasons under the Temporary Protected Status and Deferred Enforced Departure programs.

Dream Act (S. 874) by Sen. Graham (R-SC): Provide legal status and a path to citizenship for Dreamers brought to this country as minors.


NO BAN Act (S. 1123/H.R. 2214) by Sen. Coons (D-DE) and Rep. Chu (D-CA): Repeal all versions of the administration’s Muslim, refugee, and asylum bans, and specifically prohibit discrimination based on religion in the Immigration and Nationality Act.

Protecting Sensitive Locations Act (S. 2097/H.R. 1011) by Sen. Blumenthal (D-CT) and Rep. Espaillat (D-NY): Codify and expand restrictions on where U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement can take action or conduct raids.

RAISE Act (S. 1103/H.R. 2278) by Sen. Cotton (R-AR) and Rep. Rooney (R-FL): Establish a skills-based immigration point system, limit family-sponsored immigration, end the diversity visa lottery, and limit the number of refugees admitted to the United States.

SECURE Act (S. 879) by Sen. Van Hollen (D-MD): Provide legal status and a path to citizenship for people in the Temporary Protected Status and Deferred Enforced Departure programs.

Secure and Protect Act (S. 1494) by Sen. Graham (R-SC): Gut protections provided by the Flores Settlement Agreement, which has governed the detention and treatment of migrant children for more than 20 years.

Stop Cruelty to Migrant Children Act (S. 2113/H.R. 3918) by Sen. Merkley (D-OR) and Rep. Meng (D-NY): End family separations at the border, bolster health and safety protections, and ensure government funds are not used to harm or traumatize asylum seekers.

RETIREMENT SECURITY

Equal Treatment of Public Servants Act (S. 3401/H.R. 3934) by Sen. Cruz (R-TX) and Rep. Brady (R-TX): Repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) that deprives educators and other public servants of Social Security benefits they have earned; the bill does not address the Government Pension Offset (GPO).

Public Servants Protection and Fairness Act (H.R. 4540) by Rep. Neal (D-MA): While the bill does not address the GPO, it increases Social Security benefits for retired educators and others subject to the WEP by $150 per month and benefits for future retirees by $75 per month, on average.

Social Security Fairness Act (S. 521/H.R. 141) by Sen. Brown (D-OH) and Rep. Rodney Davis (R-IL): Fully repeal the GPO and WEP that deprive 2.5 million public servants of Social Security benefits they have earned.

RURAL EDUCATION

Classrooms Reflecting Communities Act (S. 2887) by Sen. Jones (D-AL): Provide grants to eligible partnerships for “grow your own” programs that recruit and support diverse teacher candidates from rural communities.

Forest Management for Rural Stability Act (S. 1643) by Sen. Wyden (D-OR): Make the Secure Rural Schools program permanent by creating an endowment fund to provide stable, increasing, and reliable funding.


SCHOOL MODERNIZATION

21st Century Green High-Performing Public School Facilities Act (H.R. 1457) by Rep. Sean Maloney (D-NY): Make grants to state educational agencies to modernize, renovate, or repair public school facilities.

America Wins Act (H.R. 4142) by Rep. Larson (D-CT): Invest $30 billion over ten years in school construction and rehabilitation.

Get the Lead Out of Schools Act (H.R. 852) by Rep. Lawrence (D-MI): Address lead contamination in school drinking water.

Impact Aid Infrastructure Act (H.R. 3647) by Rep. Young (R-AK): Provide a one-time infusion of funds to address the backlog in the Impact Aid construction program, including Department of Defense and Native American schools.

Leading Infrastructure for Tomorrow’s America Act (H.R. 2741) by Rep. Pallone (D-NJ): Provide $23 billion to retrofit and weatherize buildings to increase energy efficiency, including schools and homes.
■ **Rebuild America’s Schools Act (S. 266/H.R. 865) by Sen. Reed (D-RI) and Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA):** Create $70 billion grant program and $30 billion tax-credit bond program that target high-poverty schools whose facilities pose health and safety risks to students and staff.

■ **Renew America’s Schools Act (S. 1890/H.R. 3322) by Sen. Cortez Masto (D-NV) and Rep. Loebback (D-IA):** Provide grants to improve energy efficiency and use renewable sources of energy in public schools.

### SCHOOL SAFETY

■ **Campus Fire Education Safety Act (S. 3209/H.R. 5647) by Sen. Menendez (D-NJ) and Rep. Pascrell (D-NJ):** Provide grants to heighten college students’ knowledge of safety practices that could mean the difference between life and death.

■ **Enhance School Safety Act (H.R. 4465) by Rep. Tipton (R-CO-3):** Allow local educational agencies to use student support and academic enrichment grants for school security measures.


■ **Safe Schools Improvement Act (S. 2548/H.R. 2653) by Sen. Casey (D-PA) and Rep. Sánchez (D-CA):** Require policies to prevent bullying, harassment, and other conduct that limits students’ participation in school programs or creates a hostile environment.

■ **School Security Enhancement Act (S. 1442/H.R. 4951) by Sen. Cruz (R-TX) and Rep. Carter (R-TX):** Allow Student Support and Academic Enrichment grants awarded to local communities to be used for purposes vaguely defined as school safety technology and infrastructure.

■ **K-12 Cybersecurity Act (S. 3033) Sen. Gary Peters (D-MI):** Require the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to examine cybersecurity risks, develop recommendations, and provide resources for schools.

■ **Stop for School Buses Act (S. 1254/H.R. 2218) by Sen. Young (R-IN) and Rep. Walorski (R-IN):** Review existing laws on passing stopped school buses, analyze their effectiveness, and compile best practices and recommendations.

### STUDENT LEARNING

■ **21st Century STEM for Girls and Underrepresented Minorities Act (S. 1299/H.R. 1591) by Sen. Harris (D-CA) and Rep. Beatty (D-OH):** Provide grants to local educational agencies to encourage girls and under-represented minorities to enter STEM fields.

■ **Alice Cogswell and Anne Sullivan Macy Act (S. 2681/H.R. 4822) by Sen. Markey (D-MA) and Rep. Cartwright (D-PA):** Deliver high-quality instruction and related services that meet the unique needs students who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf and blind.

■ **BEST Act (S. 3328/H.R. 3119) by Sen. Schatz (D-HI) and Rep. Brownley (D-CA):** Award grants to states to establish Seal of Biliteracy programs to recognize high-level student proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in English and a second language.

■ **Building Blocks of STEM Act (S. 737/H.R. 1665) by Sen. Rosen (D-NV) and Rep. Stevens (D-MI):** Direct the National Science Foundation to support STEM education research focused on early childhood; encourage girls to engage in STEM activities, including computer science.

■ **CIVICS Act (S. 313) by Sen. Inhofe (R-OK):** Require American history and civics programs to include the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

■ **Civics Learning Act (H.R. 849) by Rep. Hastings (D-FL):** Expand civics education programs.

■ **Computer Science for All Act (H.R. 1485) by Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA):** Increase pre-K through grade 12 access to computer science education.


■ **Ensuring Linguistic Excellence and Vocational Aptitude by Teaching English Act (S. 2761/H.R. 4943) by Sen. Rubio (R-FL) and Rep. Murphy (D-FL):** Include children who move from Puerto Rico to the United States in state allotments for English Language Acquisition grants.

■ **Esther Martinez Native American Languages Programs Reauthorization Act (S. 256/H.R. 912) by Sen. Udall (D-NM) and Rep. Lujan (D-NM):** Reauthorize grant programs through FY2024 and increase annual authorized appropriations from $5 million to $13 million. Signed into law by President Trump on December 20, 2019.

■ **GAAME Act (S. 885/H.R. 1676) by Sen. Tester (D-MT) and Rep. Velazquez (D-NY):** Expand access to school-wide arts and music programs.

■ **Jumpstart on College Act (S. 2395/H.R. 4108) by Sen. Markey (D-MA) and Rep. Espallat (D-NY):** Award grants to support early college high schools and dual or concurrent enrollment programs.

■ **Never Again Education Act (S. 2085/H.R. 943) by Sen. Rosen (D-NV) and Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY):** Require the U.S. Department of Education to provide the resources and training necessary to teach our nation’s children the important lessons of the Holocaust and the horrific consequences of hate and intolerance.

■ **Signing is Language Act (H.R. 5483) by Rep. Larsen (D-WA):** Expand the legal definition of “English learner” to include individuals whose native language is sign language.

■ **Strength in Diversity Act (S. 1418/H.R. 2639) by Sen. Murphy (D-CT) and Rep. Fudge (D-OH):** Establish the Stronger Together program to increase socioeconomic integration within schools.

■ **Success in the Middle Act (S. 1704/H.R. 3089) by Sen. Whitehouse (D-RI) and Rep. Grijalva (D-AZ):** Create a grant program that will allow middle schools to identify and implement best practices to improve student outcomes and increase high school graduation rates.


STUDENT SUPPORT

ALLERGY Act (H.R. 5414) by Rep. Cartwright (D-PA): Require local educational agencies to implement policies on bullying related to allergies.

Anti-bullying task forces (H.R. 5286) by Rep. Krishnamoorthi (D-IL): Give states grants to study, address, and reduce bullying in elementary and secondary schools.

Cady Housh and Gemesa Thomas Suicide Prevention Act (H.R. 3778) by Rep. Cleaver (D-MO): Authorize the use of federal Garrett Lee Smith grants for training school employees, as well as secondary-school students, in youth suicide awareness and prevention.

CARES Act (H.R. 4220) by Rep. Ryan (D-OH): Allow local educational agencies to use federal funds to address chronic absenteeism.

Cultivating Learning Assistance for Student Success Act (H.R. 1662) by Rep. Marchant (R-TX): Give secondary schools targeted grants for assistive technology devices and services for students with autism or apraxia.


Ending PUSHOUT Act (H.R. 5325) by Rep. Pressley (D-MA): Disrupt the school-to-confinement pipeline by investing in safe and nurturing school environments for all students, especially girls of color.

Nutrition Coordinators for Local Healthy Youth Act (H.R. 1886) by Rep. Ryan (D-OH): Hire nutrition coordinators to oversee nutrition policies in local educational agencies.

Patsy T. Mink and Louise M. Slaughter Gender Equity in Education Act (S. 1964/H.R. 3513) by Sen. Hirono (D-HI) and Rep. Matsui (D-CA): Support educational entities in fully implementing Title IX and reducing and preventing sex discrimination in all areas of education.

Preventing Sexual Abuse of K-12 Students Act (H.R. 1486) by Rep. Lieu (D-CA): Protect students from sexual abuse.


Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act (S. 2916/H.R. 5191) by Sen. Leahy (D-VT) and Rep. Yarmuth (D-KY): Increase funding for maternity group homes, street outreach programs, transitional living programs, and other initiatives.


Student Support Act (H.R. 4525) by Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA): Provide matching grants to encourage states to hire school-based mental health and student service providers.

Supporting Children of the National Guard and Reserve Act (S. 784/H.R. 1896) by Sen. Klobuchar (D-MN) and Rep. Correa (D-CA): Expand the military identifier program to include children whose parents are in the reserves or National Guard.

Transition-to-Success Mentoring Act (H.R. 804) by Rep. Carson (D-IN): Establish a mentoring program to help at-risk students make the transition from middle to high school.

TEACHER TRAINING & SUPPORT


Classrooms Reflecting Communities Act (S. 2887) by Sen. Jones (D-AL): Train teachers in culturally responsive pedagogy; provide incentives for joining the teaching profession.

Combating Implicit Bias in Education Act (H.R. 4776) by Del. Norton (D-DC): Provide grants for training elementary and secondary school teachers, principals, and other school personnel to recognize and address implicit bias.

Educator Preparation Reform Act (S. 969) by Sen. Reed (D-RI): Improve support for professional preparation of teachers, principals, librarians, and other school leaders with a focus on clinical practice.

PREP Act (S. 752) by Sen. Kaine (D-VA): Address teacher and principal shortages, especially in rural areas and high-needs districts.

RETAIN Teachers Act (H.R. 4342) by Rep. Finkenauer (D-IA): Help attract teachers and keep them in the classroom by streamlining burdensome paperwork for programs designed to help teachers finance their education and repay student loans.


Smaller Class Sizes for Students and Educators Act (S. 579) by Sen. Merkley (D-OR): Create a $2 billion grant program to reduce K-3 class sizes to a maximum of 18 students in high-poverty districts.

TAXES

Educators Expense Deduction Modernization Act (H.R. 878) by Rep. Brown (D-MD): Increase the educator tax deduction from $250 to $500, and index it to inflation starting in 2020.

Middle Class Health Benefits Tax Repeal Act (S. 684/H.R. 748) by Sen. Heinrich (D-NM) and Rep. Courtney (D-CT): Repeal the excise tax on “high cost” employer-sponsored health coverage scheduled to take effect in 2022. This bill was incorporated in the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (H.R. 1865) signed into law by President Trump on December 20, 2019.


Teacher Diversity and Retention Act (H.R. 4288) by Rep. Gallego (D-AZ): Help combat our nationwide teacher shortage by increasing recruitment of diverse teachers and improving teacher training and retention programs.

Teacher Education for Computer Science Act (S. 3040/H.R. 3808) by Sen. Rosen (D-NV) and Rep. Kilmer (D-WA): Provide funding for schools to hire and retain faculty to research computer science education, train doctoral students, and prepare students to become computer science teachers.

Teacher Health and Wellness Act (H.R. 4221) by Rep. Ryan (D-OH): Direct the National Institutes of Health to conduct a scientific study of how reducing teacher stress could increase teacher retention and well-being.

Teachers Are Leaders Act (S. 235/H.R. 3108) by Sen. Coons (D-DE) and Rep. Schneider (D-IL): Support the development of programs that allow teachers to assume structured leadership roles within their buildings while remaining in the classroom.

Vouchers


Choices in Education Act (H.R. 771) by Rep. Steve King (R-IA): Distribute federal funds for elementary and secondary education as vouchers for eligible students; repeal a rule on school nutrition standards.


Education Freedom Scholarships and Opportunity Act (S. 634/H.R. 1434) by Sen. Cruz (R-TX) and Rep. Byrne (R-AL): Provide a dollar-for-dollar federal tax credit for donations to organizations that provide vouchers for private and religious schools.

Ending Common Core and Expanding School Choice Act (H.R. 69) by Rep. Biggs (R-AZ): Allow federal funds to follow low-income children to their public, private, or charter school.

Military Education Savings Accounts Act (S. 695/H.R. 1605) by Sen. Sasse (R-NE) and Rep. Banks (R-IN): Create a federally funded voucher program for students with parents on active military duty.

Native American Education Opportunity Act (H.R. 4586) by Rep. Biggs (R-AZ): Create a voucher program for tribal students that robs the public schools attended by the vast majority of students of funding and resources.

Workers’ Rights

Paycheck Fairness Act (S. 270/H.R. 7) by Sen. Murray (D-WA) and Rep. DeLauro (D-CT): Create incentives for employers to follow the Equal Pay Act, empower women to negotiate for equal pay, and strengthen federal outreach and enforcement efforts.


Raise the Wage Act (S. 150/H.R. 582) by Sen. Sanders (I-VT) and Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA): Gradually raise the federal minimum wage to $15 an hour in 2024, and then index it to inflation.

Women’s Rights

Equal Rights Amendment (S.J. Res. 6/H.J. Res. 79) by Sen. Cardin (D-MD) and Rep. Speier (D-CA): Extend the deadline for ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment to guarantee women equality under the Constitution and ban sex-based discrimination in the workplace.


Savanna’s Act (S. 227/H.R. 2733) by Sen. Murkowski (R-AK) and Rep. Torres (D-CA): Curb the tragic epidemic of violence against Native American women and girls.

Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act (H.R. 1585) by Sen. Booker (D-NJ) and Rep.侵犯者 (R-AZ): Protect victims, improve access to safe housing and economic stability, and close the “boyfriend loophole” to keep firearms out of the hands of convicted abusers, stalkers, and people under court-issued restraining orders.

Technology Access

Homework Gap Trust Fund Act (S. 3362) by Sen. Van Hollen (D-MD): Help communities purchase wireless devices to ensure all students have access to the internet.

Save the Internet Act (S. 682/H.R. 1644) by Sen. Markey (D-MA) and Rep. Doyle (D-PA): Nullify Federal Communications Commission rule to restore net neutrality and ensure all students have equal access to internet content at equivalent speeds.

Wi-Fi on school buses (S. 738/H.R. 1693) by Sen. Udall (D-NM) and Rep. Lujan (D-NM): To help narrow the “homework gap,” require the Federal Communications Commission to make E-Rate support contingent on Wi-Fi access on school buses.

WOMEN’S RIGHTS

Equal Rights Amendment (S.J. Res. 6/H.J. Res. 79) by Sen. Cardin (D-MD) and Rep. Speier (D-CA): Extend the deadline for ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment to guarantee women equality under the Constitution and ban sex-based discrimination in the workplace.


Savanna’s Act (S. 227/H.R. 2733) by Sen. Murkowski (R-AK) and Rep. Torres (D-CA): Curb the tragic epidemic of violence against Native American women and girls.

Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act (H.R. 1585) by Rep.侵犯者 (R-AZ): Protect victims, improve access to safe housing and economic stability, and close the “boyfriend loophole” to keep firearms out of the hands of convicted abusers, stalkers, and people under court-issued restraining orders.
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report of the Board Strategic Committee on Legislation</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Line</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Program for the 116th Congress</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preamble</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## I. High Quality Public Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Line</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Student Learning, Growth, and Development</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Child Care and Early Childhood Education Development</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Parental Involvement</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Youth Development</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Safe Schools</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. School Choice</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Education Funding</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Educator Professional Development</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. School Modernization</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. IDEA Special Education</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Postsecondary Education</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. Career and Technical Education</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. English Language Learners</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n. Federal Impacted Areas</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o. Federal Role in Education</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## II. Supporting Student Success

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Line</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Children’s Health</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Children’s Safety</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Children’s Nutrition</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Child Poverty/Homelessness</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Youth Employment</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Substance Abuse/Dependency</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## III. A Voice in the Workplace

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Line</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Public Employee Rights</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Public Employee Retirement Security</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Pension Fund Protection</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. General Employee Rights</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## IV. Good Public Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Line</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Public Health and Well-Being</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Human and Civil Rights</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Fiscal Policy</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REPORT OF THE BOARD STRATEGIC COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION

Given the current federal administration and the realities and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the committee emphasizes the importance of our collective work and the NEA Legislative Program.

The committee in 2019–20 conducted a thorough review of the NEA Legislative Program in light of NBI 5, which requires all NEA governing documents to “incorporate language that is democratically inclusive of all NEA members.” Consequently, the committee voted to amend the program in several places; those changes have been incorporated into the program.

In addition, the committee reviewed the Legislative Program to ensure it is aligned with our Association’s governing documents and reflects NEA’s current needs. Pursuant to recommendations from the Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee and the Women’s Issues Committee, the Legislative Committee voted to amend the program to support free/reduced tuition at postsecondary institutions (EMAC) and to support a holistic approach to women’s health care. In addition, the committee voted to include in the program opposition to any discrimination in health care based on gender, gender identity, race, or ethnicity. The committee also approved amendments opposing vaping products, especially when targeted to individuals ages 18 and younger, and supporting improved security screening procedures for transgender individuals and members of historically marginalized groups at airports and other public facilities. However, given the truncated RA, these amendments will not be raised with the Board until next year and have not been included in the Legislative Program.

The committee piloted a phone app designed for NEA Board members to compile and submit information they gather during Lobby Day visits on Capitol Hill, and provided feedback to the app designer to facilitate optimal use by Board members. The phone app is an example of the committee’s efforts to fulfill Charge 3: to increase lobbying participation by the full NEA Board. We are now planning to roll out the app to the full Board for use during NEA’s next in-person Lobby Day. Similarly, the committee connected with fellow board members to find out whether they were experiencing challenges in making Lobby Day appointments. We will continue to formalize this strategy.

The committee also participated in the February 25 NEA National Leadership Pre-Summit webinar. The chair gave an overview of the Legislative Program and the committee’s mission, and emphasized how all NEA members can engage in this critical work. The Legislative Committee engaged webinar participants by asking them what legislative efforts they were involved in through their affiliates and locals. Examples they gave included: advocating for better funding of public schools; opposing vouchers and other schemes to shift resources from public schools to private schools; decoupling test scores from teacher evaluation; protecting retirement security; and advocating for early career educator engagement and retention programs. This interactive component was praised for the sense of solidarity it helped to build.
LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM FOR THE 116TH CONGRESS

Preamble

NEA works to fulfill the promise of a democratic society by promoting the cause of quality public education; advancing the education profession; expanding the rights and furthering the interests of education and public employees; and advocating human, civil, and economic rights for all.

The NEA Representative Assembly, through adoption of the Legislative Program, sets forth the federal legislative policies that facilitate accomplishment of the strategic objectives in pursuit of the Association’s mission.

and local levels of government. NEA continues to work with its affiliates to advance NEA’s strategic priorities: quality public education for every student; ensuring the highest possible educator quality; supporting school system capacity; building public, parental, and business support for public education; strengthening association capacity building; and providing administrative services and program support.

NEA members are central to educational and public service excellence, and their compensation, status, and personal economic security must be significantly upgraded. NEA seeks provision of federal resources and programs to assist state and local governments with education reform and with their responsibility to enhance educational excellence and to assure equitable educational opportunity as well as to assist in the provision of resources for the maintenance and operation of public schools, colleges, and universities.

NEA also seeks adequate protection and enforcement of civil and human rights, and preservation and advancement of good public policy in pursuit of racial and social justice. NEA supports: federal legislation consistent with its principles in these areas and strongly opposes legislation detrimental to these goals. NEA is engaged in a campaign to preserve and promote public education in the United States. This campaign includes an Action Plan to ensure “Great Public Schools for Every Student.” NEA will advance the Legislative Program to the maximum degree possible and work to improve current laws governing elementary and secondary education.

The Legislative Program has been grouped in the following manner:

I. High Quality Public Education—legislative issues designed to address the many factors that impact the quality of public education directly in the classroom or school

II. Supporting Student Learning, Growth, and Development—legislative issues intended to create the best possible conditions for all children in support of both their development and education

III. A Voice in the Workplace—legislative issues linked directly to some of the most basic employee issues faced by all education and public employees

IV. Good Public Policy—legislative issues related to ongoing concerns of national importance to both NEA members and the rest of the nation
I. HIGH QUALITY PUBLIC EDUCATION

a. Student Learning, Growth, and Development

NEA supports:
- federal programs that provide assistance to public schools to achieve excellence and to meet the needs of students at the pre-K through postsecondary levels, including those who are English Language Learners or who have special needs;
- federal programs to enhance educational programs and improve student performance in all curricular areas;
- a “whole child” approach to learning, teaching, and community engagement that encourages parental and community involvement in all aspects of a child’s education; addressing multiple dimensions such as students’ physical, social, and emotional health and well-being; ensures equity, adequacy, and sustainability in resources and quality among public schools and districts; and ensures that students are actively engaged in a wide variety of experiences and settings within and outside the classroom;
- programs that promote the infusion of the arts and design into student learning of science, technology, engineering, and math as a means of fostering student creativity, innovation, and inventiveness;
- programs that provide all students—pre-kindergarten through graduate school—support in developing advanced critical thinking and information literacy skills, and mastery of new digital tools;
- programs and policies designed to achieve equity in education funding, resources, and opportunities;
- federal programs to assist schools in educational reform and restructuring efforts that include educator, parental, and community engagement;
- programs to provide assistance to local school districts to provide optimum class size;
- federal programs designed to increase the high school graduation rate and to ensure that students remain in school through the completion of high school graduation while ensuring that all pathways to postsecondary learning are developmentally appropriate for individual learners;
- federal programs that promote GED or high school completion for all, including incarcerated individuals;
- federal programs that promote taking college aptitude tests prior to senior year in high school;
- programs that equitably assist schools and communities in rural and urban areas to meet the unique needs of their students;
- education programs that ensure equitable educational opportunities for English Language Learners and migrant students;
- adequate funding for programs and personnel in the overseas schools for the dependents of military personnel;
- broadening the criteria by which pedagogical practices are evaluated and approved for federal funding;
- a nationwide cohesive protocol to expedite the confidential informational exchange/transfer of all student records between education settings;
- including school library/media programs taught by a certified or licensed media specialist (educator/librarian) in the list of core subject areas in any education legislation;
- allowing students who successfully meet the state’s graduation requirements to be counted appropriately for federal accountability purposes as graduates, not drop-outs, if it takes the student more than four years to graduate;
- science education that is based solely on scientific theory, empirically collected evidence, scientific methodology, and/or consensus within the scientific community.
- full-service public community schools that have high-quality teaching and learning; inclusive leadership with a school stakeholder problem-solving team, including a Community School Coordinator; strong and proven culturally relevant curriculum; positive behavior practices which include restorative justice; family and community partnerships; and coordinated and integrated community support services.

ASSESSMENTS

NEA supports:
- truth-in-testing legislation that provides for public release of information regarding the content (questions and answers), validity, reliability, and scoring of state tests required under federal law;
- legislation allowing parents to opt their children out of all standardized tests without penalty for students, parents, educators, or schools.
• legislation that grants all states flexibility to waive required annual testing and to design assessment programs that assess student learning at least once in elementary, once in middle, and once in high school;
• federal legislation for, and implementation of, assessment plans that completely conform to NEA Resolutions;
• appropriate alternative options to standardized testing for measuring individual progress and proficiencies of students with special needs, including the ability to test students at their functioning level rather than their grade level, and/or limited English proficiency;
• allowing students who receive at least half of their instruction in a language other than English to be given the option of testing in the language of instruction; where the assessments do not exist they should be developed;
• legislation that allows assessments that use a sample-based methodology, similar to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), to meet the federal accountability standards.

NEA opposes:
• the use of standardized tests for mandated determination of a student’s future or as an indicator of school success;
• federal requirements to make significant decisions about schools, educators, or students based on students’ test scores, including statistical models of student growth or “value-added” statistical projections;
• narrowing of the curriculum through an emphasis on test preparation;
• mandatory and/or coerced participation of students in the administration of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) exam;
• testing systems that require excessive amounts of time spent by educators on test administration and related activities and not on primary job responsibilities;
• using the word “failing” to label and grade our lowest performing public schools;
• the use of standardized tests as an indicator of equity and opportunity for students.

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;
• mandatory full-day kindergarten attendance for children, and the federal resources necessary to do so;
• early childhood development and education services by certified personnel for all children, with access ensured regardless of income;
• 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;
• federal resources to support early childhood education programs that are school-based, school-linked, or established with formal partnerships with community-based organizations;
• coordination with the public school system of those child care services delivered by nonpublic providers and assurance of standards of excellence, nondiscrimination, and the separation of church and state;
• stringent educational, health, and safety standards to protect and enrich preschool and school-age children, including strict regulation and enforcement to ensure trained and licensed child care and development workers and qualified volunteer personnel;
• incentives for employers to establish quality child care programs at or near the work site.

c. Parental Involvement

NEA supports:
• positive involvement of parents, guardians, or designated caregivers in the schools;
• federal programs to assist parents in gaining parenting skills and in understanding child growth and development;
• programs to provide incentives for appropriate parental and community involvement in schools;
• federal support for developing full-service public community schools and wraparound services that coordinate and integrate the delivery of educational, developmental, family, and health—including mental health—services for students and their families that address trauma and adverse childhood experiences; delivering other comprehensive services through community-based organizations; giving students, families, and communities access to such services; supporting parent, family, and community involvement in schools; and integrating services to ensure that schools function as comprehensive community centers;
• federal programs that assist parents in ensuring their child’s success in school using research-based best practices;
• ensuring student information is distributed to parents in the language the parent understands best.

**NEA opposes:**
• forced conversion of public schools to charter status through “parent trigger” legislation.

**d. Youth Development**

**JUVENILE JUSTICE**

**NEA supports:**
• collaborative community efforts, including programs to increase citizen and business group involvement in assisting and reclaiming youth who display disruptive or violent behavior and/or who have dropped out of school, and support for businesses that employ disadvantaged youth in training programs for more employment opportunities;
• access to effective rehabilitation, support services, and educational programs—including vocational, career, and technical education—for incarcerated juveniles and juvenile offenders;
• improved education programs about the serious effects of participating in any aspect of the illegal drug trade;
• development of a national database about illegal gang-related activities through information from law enforcement agencies, juvenile courts, social services, schools, and community groups for interstate and intrastate use;
• development of collaborative programs among family, school, community, business, social services, and law enforcement agencies in the effort to reduce illegal gang-related activities;
• the separation of juvenile offenders from adults in correctional facilities;
• legislation that requires reporting the over-representation of minority youth in juvenile correctional facilities;
• legislation to eliminate complete solitary confinement as a form of punishment for juvenile offenders incarcerated in juvenile detention facilities;
• policies to expedite the confidential exchange/transfer of all student records between correctional and educational settings.

**NEA opposes:**
• policies that encourage the breakup of families;
• prosecuting, detaining, and imprisoning youth in the adult criminal justice system.

**COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS**

**NEA supports:**
• federal assistance for locally designed, voluntary community service programs that give all youth the opportunity to serve while enhancing their academic experience;
• federal assistance for state review of tort reform or other protective measures to address liability questions facing schools conducting voluntary programs.

**NEA opposes:**
• federally required community service as a qualification for student financial assistance;
• use of community service workers to replace regular employees.

**SCHOOL COUNSELING**

**NEA supports:**
• elementary and secondary school counseling and other pupil services, including school psychology and school social work and school-based student assistance program staff, provided by appropriately certified and/or licensed professionals;
• establishment of administrative structures to facilitate effective integration of counseling into the entire education experience;
• grants to expand and implement counseling programs provided by appropriately certified and/or licensed school counselors;
• school staffing ratios of specialized instructional support personnel to students at the levels recommended by nationally recognized professional organizations.

e. **Safe Schools**

**NEA supports:**

- federal initiatives to prevent and combat violence and drug abuse in schools;
- federal assistance for mental health services to students, including support from social workers, psychologists, nurses, counselors, and other student service professionals as part of a comprehensive program to prevent school violence;
- the establishment and implementation, in consultation with school personnel and parents, by each school district of a well-publicized and uniformly enforced disciplinary code that promotes non-discriminatory practices to provide an orderly learning environment;
- appropriate procedures to ensure the safety of school personnel required by federal programs to make visits to students’ homes;
- removal from the classroom of violent and/or disruptive students, including regular, exceptional, and students with individualized education plans, and placement of those students in an appropriate alternative public school setting that meets their educational needs;
- removal from school buses and other areas of the school property of violent/disruptive students, including regular, exceptional, and students with individualized education plans, with no cessation of educational services;
- federal programs that promote the equitable enforcement of truancy laws;
- disclosure to affected school personnel of relevant information/documentation concerning students who have exhibited violent behavior;
- provision of a school environment that properly protects students and employees from environmental health and/or safety hazards;
- legislation that protects children and educators from “cyber-bullying”;
- facility design and construction practices that promote improved air quality in all school facilities;
- avoidance or reduction of pesticide and other toxic chemical applications in all school facilities and grounds; furthermore, NEA encourages notification of employees and the public of the product used, location, and date of application prior to its use;
- prompt and ongoing federal assistance, through grant and/or loan mechanisms, for school districts to identify and eliminate health and safety hazards and report their findings and activities to the public;
- sufficient training and proper safety protection for school personnel or others charged with identifying and/or removing health and safety hazards;
- establishment of scientifically based nuclear-safe and waste-free zones surrounding schools;
- a ban on the sale to the public of military and auto loading firearms with a capacity of firing 10 rounds or more from a single clip;
- significant penalties for criminal actions involving use of guns or other weapons;
- restrictions, including a mandatory waiting period or instantaneous computer checks to allow universal background checks for felony convictions or mental illness, on the manufacture, distribution, and/or sale of guns in order to ensure a safer school environment;
- federal assistance for the development and implementation of a unified school safety crisis prevention/awareness plan;
- federal legislation to outlaw gun trafficking and “straw purchases”;
- federal assistance to help develop emergency response systems for schools;
- legislation that protects students and staff from bullying, harassment, and intimidation by other students and staff;
- lifting the ban that prevents the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention from conducting research on gun violence in this country;
- protecting an individual from non-consensual invasions of normal expectations of privacy, such as a person knowingly making or recording and sharing a photograph, motion picture, videotape, or other video recording of another person’s intimate areas without the consent of the person being recorded.

**NEA opposes:**

- school discipline policies that apply predetermined consequences without taking into account associated circumstances;
- discriminatory enforcement of school discipline policies;
- legislation mandating arming educational professionals with firearms.
f. School Choice

**NEA supports:**

- charters if all of the following criteria are met:
  - the charter is authorized only by a democratically elected local school board; if there is no local school board, the charter is authorized by a community-based charter authorizer accountable to the local community;
  - there is a full and independent written assessment that is developed with community input and is publicly available for review;
  - the charter is necessary to meet student needs that are not being met and cannot be fulfilled by other improvements in either educational program or school management;
  - the charter will meet those needs in a way that improves, rather than detracts from, the local public school system by negatively impacting:
    - the racial, ethnic, and socio-economic composition of schools and neighborhoods;
    - equitable access to quality services for all district students, including those with special needs and English Language Learners;
    - the district’s operating and capital expenses, programs, and services;
    - facility availability;
    - the charter provides a free, accessible, nonsectarian education for all enrolled students;
    - the charter fully complies with all of the following safeguards in the same manner as public schools:
      - open meetings;
      - public record laws;
      - prohibitions against for-profit operation or profiteering in compliance with conflict of interest, financial disclosure, and auditing requirements;
      - civil rights outlined in all federal and state statutes, which include employment, health, labor, safety, staff qualifications, certification requirements, and students with disabilities protections;
      - collective bargaining rights and agreements in areas covered by collective bargaining rights and agreements;
      - the state oversees and provides adequate resources and training to school districts to ensure high quality school district charter authorization practices and compliance work;
      - the state only considers appeals of a charter denial by a school district on the narrow grounds that the local process for approving a charter was not properly followed or that the approval or denial of a charter was arbitrary or illegal;
      - parents’ right to choose, at their own expense, a nonpublic education for their children;
      - holding all private, nonpublic schools, corporations, companies, and organizations engaged in educating pre-K-12 students under 22 years of age, and that accept any governmental/public funding, accountable under the same provisions of federal law as public schools.

- NEA opposes:
  - the provision of federal funding assistance to private corporations and individuals for the establishment and operation of charter schools for profit;
  - public funding of sectarian schools and public funding that enables nonsectarian pre-K-12 nonpublic schools to provide educational services that are available to students in public schools to which they have reasonable access;
  - tuition tax credits for elementary or secondary schools;
  - the use of vouchers or certificates in education;
  - federally mandated parental option or “choice” in education programs;
  - preferential treatment for nonpublic schools that receive federal funds under current law or concealment of financing, materials, and services received by nonpublic schools from public funds.

__g. Education Funding__

**NEA supports:**

- maintenance of support for public education by exclusion from federal taxation of state and local property, sales, and income taxes, and interest paid on state and local bonds and other debt instruments;
- federal funding for public elementary and secondary education through a program of general aid and categorical assistance;
• adequate funding for school support programs, including aid for the disadvantaged; assistance for English Language Learners; education for individuals with disabilities and for the gifted and talented; career and technical education; immigrant education; migrant education; refugee education; programs for medically fragile students; desegregation assistance; second and subsequent languages and international studies programs; American Indian/Alaska Native education; Native Hawaiian education; developmentally appropriate gender identity and LGBTQ equity education programs; magnet schools; programs for arts in education; child nutrition programs; school-based health programs; mental health and pupil services; technological improvements; school construction, renovation, and repair; impact aid; aid for school libraries; and Gear Up and TRIO programs, including Upward Bound and Talent Search;
• greater funding of federal programs that otherwise reduce state or local resources available for public education;
• use of the latest federal census data available in distributing federal funds;
• a federal census procedure that contributes to a fair and accurate distribution of federal education program funds;
• federal funding for postsecondary education, including programs of institutional, scholar, and student support, and legislation to reduce or eliminate tuition costs in public higher education;
• grants to support vital research functions;
• efforts to:
  - ensure stable, adequate, and equitable funding of public schools historically receiving revenues derived from state and federal lands and natural resources;
  - ensure the sustainable use of these public lands and resources by current and future generations;
• student financial assistance to ensure access and choice for all students who wish to pursue postsecondary education, regardless of personal financial means;
• support for the historically Black colleges and Hispanic serving institutions, Native American and Tribal Colleges, and developing institutions;
• a full partnership role for the federal government in assisting local school districts and postsecondary institutions by redirecting national priorities in order to provide substantial increases in federal education funding.

NEA opposes:
• withholding funds from or otherwise penalizing school districts or education institutions that refuse to cooperate with the U.S. Department of Defense by providing information on or permitting testing of their students;
• provision of federal funding to schools and/or postsecondary institutions that practice discrimination;
• federal control of local schools;
• diverting public funds to nonpublic schools;
• any program or policy that requires the reduction or elimination of due process or job protection rights as a requirement for federal funding;
• any misuse of federal funds by school districts and/or public institutions.

h. Educator Professional Development

EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

NEA supports:
• programs and policies supporting diversity in the education profession;
• programs to encourage and support the recruitment of talented individuals, particularly minorities, to enter and remain in the education profession;
• development and retention, through programs including scholarships and loan forgiveness, of current and future educators for the pursuit of excellence in our nation’s schools and postsecondary institutions;
• provision of financial support during the student teaching process;
• federal support for paid professional practice residency programs for beginning educators;
• federal initiatives to enhance compensation for all public school and postsecondary personnel in order to improve the quality of education and assist in attracting and retaining talented individuals;
• federal initiatives to create affordable housing options for educators and assist educators in accessing such housing;
• federal initiatives that support educators’ ability to live where they work.

NEA opposes:
• the imposition of any new federal criteria that have the effect of limiting eligibility for educator preparation programs, except when those criteria have a demonstrable relationship to candidates’ future effectiveness as educators.

EDUCATOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

NEA supports:
• funding for induction programs for new educators;
• establishment and funding of professional development opportunities designed and directed by educators;
• initiatives to support the development of cultural competence among all educators;
• national efforts to improve the professionalization of education;
• programs that provide adequate opportunities, experiences, and resources for education practitioners to teach and learn from peers;
• opportunities for staff development and in-service training for all education employees;
• access to relevant, high quality, interactive professional development in the integration of digital learning;
• the establishment of state or locally based paraeducator certification programs, coupled with requirements that school districts provide paraeducators with the necessary training and professional development;
• requirements for state credentialing of participating nonpublic school personnel;
• assurance of professional development for all postsecondary members;
• federal initiatives that respect state certification requirements for educators;
• training for pre-service, early career, and experienced educators that defines the school-to-prison pipeline and includes strategies for peer-to-peer, educator-to-parent, educator-to-student, and student-to-educator communication; and that provides an understanding of educational trauma and its impact on a student’s education.

NEA opposes:
• federal programs that would weaken state credential and/or licensure requirements;
• mandating arbitrary education requirements for paraprofessionals.

NATIONAL BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS

NEA supports:
• the continuation of federal funding for the operation of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and, especially, the continuation and enhancement of the specific federal appropriation used to help defray the cost of candidate fees.

EDUCATION RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

NEA supports:
• federally funded independent academic research and development programs;
• participation of educators in research efforts;
• dissemination of research findings to the classroom level;
• collection, through the National Center for Education Statistics, of accurate and timely data for education decision making.

NEA opposes:
• politicization of federal research programs.
i. School Modernization

NEA supports:

- federal assistance for school construction, maintenance, renovation, and repair;
- federal assistance to public schools for the purpose of funding new construction or retrofitting sites to provide safe environments that protect against the impacts of natural forces such as tornadoes, earthquakes, etc.;
- federal assistance to implement sustainable school construction practices that provide healthy, productive, energy-saving, and cost-effective buildings.

EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY, EQUIPMENT, AND MATERIALS

NEA supports:

- direct federal assistance to educational institutions for technology, equipment, accompanying peripherals, and software, including maintenance, service, and training of users of the technology;
- direct federal assistance to enable public schools and colleges to provide broadband Internet access for their students and employees;
- continuation and expansion of the federal E-Rate program to support technology access in public schools;
- requirements that acceptable use policies designed with input from education employees and signed by parents/guardians and students—including, but not limited to, policies addressing Internet safety and security, e.g., access to “social/new media”—be in place in schools before allowing student access to the Internet;
- federal programs and policies that promote equity in the accessibility of technology and telecommunications in urban and rural communities;
- federal assistance to upgrade, service, maintain, and keep in working order all equipment and materials;
- achievement of equity in the distribution of federal funds for technology, equipment, and materials;
- the transfer and transporting of excess materials, supplies, books (if not outdated), and equipment from federal schools that are closing to school systems in American Samoa;
- revision of copyright law to provide that education employees own the copyright to works they create in the course of their employment;
- revision of copyright law to provide a digital age instructional exemption that would allow education employees and students to use copyrighted works in distance education under the same conditions as in traditional education.

NEA opposes:

- revision of the copyright law in a manner that would limit educators’ fair use of copyrighted material or the first-sale provision of copyright law.

j. IDEA Special Education

NEA supports:

- the provision of appropriate educational opportunities within a full continuum of placement and service options for children with disabilities and sufficient resources to achieve these ends, with 100 percent federal funding for federally mandated educational services;
- reduction of class size and case load and the appropriate levels of education support professionals and staff commensurate with the added responsibility of providing appropriate educational services to students with disabilities;
- union representation for education employees who are charged with violations of students’ rights;
- pre-service and in-service training components as well as appropriate financial resources and personnel to support education employees who work with individuals with disabilities;
- teacher certificated-related service providers and parental involvement in the determination of placement of children with disabilities;
- the right, without fear of reprisal, of a teacher or related service employee to refer for diagnosis a student thought to be in need of special education services;
NEA opposes:

- shifting responsibility for financing traditional education-related services from the public sector to private providers, except in those limited circumstances in which the student would not receive necessary, specific services in the absence of contracting out such services that meet the following criteria:
  - hire persons or entities with demonstrated experience and expertise in providing high quality service;
  - use a competitive bidding process that is open to a range of potential vendors, nonprofit organizations, and school employees who are provided with equal information and access to district records;
  - do not receive higher per-pupil allocations than public schools for comparable services;
  - include full financial disclosure of the arrangements between the district and the service provider with guaranteed timely access to financial and other records to the public and subject to independent financial audits as part of the written contract;
  - do not compromise community labor standards (public employee wages and benefits);
  - ensure that employees who work directly for the private person or entity are represented by a collectively bargained contract, if available, or have the same rights provided other public school employees under state law or by local practice;
  - comply with all federal, state, and local laws and policies regarding civil rights, nondiscrimination, and due process.
- the removal of special education professionals from the provision of direct services to students with special needs.

k. Postsecondary Education

NEA supports:

- providing financial assistance sufficient to enable all students to pay for college tuition, textbooks, required technology, and appropriate expenses and to allow all students to remain in college, provided they are making satisfactory progress;
- emphasizing needs-based financial aid through grants, rather than loans;
- full federal funding of financial assistance programs including, but not limited to, Pell grants, including summer and winter sessions;
- direct student loans for college and university students;
• a one-year grace period before students are required to begin repayment of student loans;
• legislation to provide individuals in bankruptcy reasonable options for discharging student loans;
• legislation that creates a 100-percent loan forgiveness program for educators across the nation. This shall include any individual employed in public education;
• legislation that creates a 100-percent loan forgiveness program for public service employees across the nation;
• reduction in the student loan default rate without undue limitation on access to postsecondary education for any qualified student;
• assurance of equitable educational opportunity;
• diversity in enrollments through programs that facilitate minority and other students’ entrance into and completion of postsecondary education, regardless of their immigration status;
• access to higher education and in-state tuition for in-state residents, regardless of immigration status, as well as paths to legalization for undocumented high school graduates;
• federal programs, including provision of resources for instruction, research, and media materials, that enhance effectiveness of and advance excellence in two- and four-year postsecondary education institutions;
• federal programs to enhance educational programs and improve student performance in all curricular areas;
• programs that encourage the recruitment and retention of postsecondary students from ethnic, tribal, and linguistic minorities, as well as those who are not citizens, and programs that address the educational needs of such students;
• promotion of research and development of knowledge, including access to advanced technological resources and teaching;
• assurance of equal treatment for two- and four-year institutions;
• solutions that provide fair and equitable treatment for contingent employees in higher education;
• requiring that 50 percent of courses at postsecondary institutions be offered physically on campus, as opposed to through distance learning;
• retention of the Higher Education Act requirement that for-profit higher education institutions receive at least 10 percent of revenues from sources other than federal student aid funds;
• restoration of the dependents education allowance under Social Security;
• exemption from taxation and/or withdrawal penalties for Individual Retirement Account and 403(b) savings used for an individual’s or his/her dependents’ postsecondary education;
• exemption from taxation of educational scholarships, fellowships, or awards;
• full deductibility of interest on educational loans;
• provision of mental health services and treatment to all students who need it, including the removal of barriers to obtaining such treatment;
• federal funding for the development and implementation of mental health protocols for all faculty and staff involving students in need of mental health services;
• federal funding for programs to assist postsecondary institutions to develop emergency response plans;
• the promotion of articulation agreements between secondary and postsecondary institutions (as well as between different postsecondary institutions) when the content of those agreements has been determined by educators from both sectors;
• abolishing all student loan predatory lending practices;
• terms on federal and private student loans that support the educational and professional goals of lower and middle class borrowers, while protecting them from predatory lending practices, through strong federal regulation of loan products, fair consumer protections, reasonable terms and interest rates, and accommodating repayment options;
• exempting student loan forgiveness amounts from federal income taxation for all public service employees;
• consistent definitions of higher education part-time and contingent faculty work to ensure equality and consistency of protections under the law;
• resumption of and adequate funding for the National Study of Postsecondary Faculty, and inclusion of data collection on both tenure-line and contingent faculty;
• a more comprehensive work supplement from the Bureau of Labor Statistics that would include contingent academic workers and would be conducted at regular intervals beyond the 2017 update;
• transparency about higher education faculty working conditions in order to prompt colleges and universities to accurately disclose to the public the working conditions of all faculty and professional staff, including numbers, compensation, and access to institutional support of part-time contingent faculty.
NEA opposes:

- the use of withdrawal or incomplete grades as a basis for reducing or eliminating financial assistance to students who must interrupt their education for justifiable reasons;
- denying federal student aid funds to college students based on their immigration status or their enrollment in appropriate remedial courses;
- denying federal financial aid to college students who have been convicted of misdemeanor, nonviolent drug offenses;
- the use of draft registration as an eligibility criterion for financial assistance;
- use of dropout rates or completion rates in accountability measures used to qualify institutions for public financial support.

ADULT EDUCATION

NEA supports:

- lifelong learning for adults through public schools and postsecondary institutions;
- special efforts to end illiteracy;
- coordination of adult education efforts with K-12 programs or postsecondary institutions;
- the provision of additional federal funds for adult, continuing, and alternative education programs;
- digital literacy.

l. Career and Technical Education

NEA supports:

- the efficient and effective provision of adequate resources to local career and technical educational authorities, including K-12, secondary, and/or postsecondary institutions to maintain, enhance, and expand quality career and technical education programs;
- federal resources for programs that prepare students effectively for the high-technology environment that will exist throughout their working lives;
- direct federal assistance to secondary education agencies and postsecondary agencies and/or institutions for purchase or lease of up-to-date equipment for career and technical education programs in response to changes in the job market;
- the provision of equity and access to quality career and technical education programs for those underserved in the past, as well as for traditional students, and the use of career and technical education as a tool for eliminating biases in employment opportunities;
- the involvement of educators, parents, and students in development of secondary and postsecondary career and technical education programs;
- coordination of career and technical education programs with other employment and training programs through public education institutions;
- cooperation with the business community in the implementation of career and technical education programs;
- effective school-to-career initiatives;
- lowering Perkins funding allocation base limits to allow smaller school districts to participate in the program.

m. English Language Learners

NEA supports:

- adequately funded and culturally sensitive programs for English Language Learner students that provide meaningful instruction in other curriculum areas through such programs as bilingual education and English language development, and result in functional proficiency in English;
- federal legislation that emphasizes the development of multicultural/multilingual education programs in all public schools receiving federal monies;
- federal programs that help attract and retain a robust pool of clinically prepared bilingual educators through programs that are created in full participation with English Language Learner credentialed and licensed teachers, and implemented and sustained by credentialed and licensed English Language Learner teachers in all public schools receiving federal monies, to identify, counsel, tutor, and nurture bilingual students through their secondary schooling and postsecondary education;
• adequately funding culturally sensitive, ongoing professional development opportunities for educators to help them support
English Language Learners in attaining academic and language proficiency targets;
• federal requirements that any state or local curricular reform is aligned with state-adopted content standards and English
language proficiency standards;
• a second generation of English language proficiency assessments aligned to the new ELP standards;
• accountability systems that implement a growth model approach to measuring the academic progress of English Language
Learner students;
• federal requirements that states develop comprehensive processes and plans for appropriate identification of all English Language
Learners based on a state-approved language assessment; the results of this assessment will also determine eligibility for all tested
subjects in English;
• federal requirements that states develop guidelines to govern use of test accommodations based on scientific research that does
not invalidate the assessment for English Language Learners and students with disabilities.

NEA opposes:
• discipline policies that disproportionately affect English Language Learners by creating a disparate impact on these students and
contributing to the school-to-prison pipeline.

n. Federal Impacted Areas

NEA supports:
• programs for school districts that require special assistance due to federal activity or policy;
• payments to ensure quality education for all children in school districts impacted by federal installations or activities or on
American Indian reservations;
• forward funding of such payments for programs administered by the U.S. Department of Education;
• special standards for severely impacted districts;
• 100 percent of entitlement for school districts whose boundaries are coterminous with a military reservation and for school
districts that are more than 50 percent impacted with federally connected pupils;
• adequate compensation to state and local governments for revenues lost as a result of federal property, presence, activity, or
policy;
• assistance to communities and individuals adversely affected by closures of or cutbacks in federal installations or federally funded
activities.

o. Federal Role in Education

NEA supports:
• separation of church and state in federal education programs;
• continuation of the Cabinet-level U.S. Department of Education;
• direct federal funding to local education agencies for provision of classroom instruction;
• elimination of unnecessary paperwork;
• full federal funding for any state and/or local programs or activities mandated by federal law, while recognizing that the lack of
full funding should not preclude the mandate if it relates to civil rights or other constitutional protections;
• vetting or piloting any new legislation, initiative, program, or mandate as to its additional impact, specifically, but not limited to,
workload impacts.

NEA opposes:
• erosion of the role of the U.S. Department of Education or undermining the appropriate federal role in public education through
legislative, budgetary, regulatory, or other measures;
• federal legislation not related to civil rights or constitutional protections that places mandates on states without full funding.
**BLOCK GRANTS**

NEA supports:
1. adequate funding for block grants to states for appropriate education programs;
2. compliance of block grant programs with health and safety and civil rights laws;
3. fiscal accountability and review for block grant programs;
4. inclusion of educators in the planning process for block grant programs.

NEA opposes:
5. use of block grants as a budget-cutting device;
6. use of block grants as a means of undermining programs to meet specific targeted needs;
7. use of block grants to provide unconstitutional assistance, whether direct or indirect, to nonpublic schools.

**II. SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS**

a. Children’s Health

NEA supports:
1. access to quality prenatal, perinatal, and postnatal care services;
2. development and maintenance of health care programs for children;
3. federal programs that promote childhood obesity prevention and support for healthy lifestyle choices, including fostering good nutrition, fitness, and overall wellness;
4. adequate funding for Medicaid and the Supplemental Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) to ensure health coverage for uninsured children, with the eventual goal of single-payer health care coverage for all residents of the United States age 22 years and under;
5. federal resources to ensure quality, safe health care standards for all children, including strict regulation and enforcement by professional/certified school nurses;
6. the development and enforcement of health and safety standards specifically for children for exposure to hazardous substances;
7. federal funding for local development and delivery of curriculum about the human immunodeficiency virus and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) to empower students to protect themselves;
8. legislation that provides that a licensed professional health care worker is present in every school for the duration of the student school day;
9. legislation that provides for the inclusion of physical education and health education in appropriate federal education programs;
10. programs for the prevention and treatment of perinatally transmitted drug dependency in infants and for remediation of special problems associated with such dependency;
11. label warnings of the detrimental health effects of tobacco and alcohol sold domestically or internationally;
12. label warnings of the detrimental health effects of herbal and/or natural performance enhancing and weight control dietary supplements;
13. legislation requiring warning labels on everyday products that may be misused as inhalants and funding/creating programs to educate the public as to the detrimental health effects of such product misuse;
14. messages about the health and safety implications of alcohol consumption, tobacco use, and substance abuse;
15. elimination of direct and indirect broadcast advertising of alcoholic beverages, and tobacco products;
16. pregnancy-related counseling and support services, including prenatal care, for youth;
17. federal funding for development and delivery of curriculum about blood borne pathogens, thus empowering students to protect themselves from these life-threatening conditions;
18. ensuring the ability of health care professionals and other related education support professionals to communicate with language-minority parents, to the extent practicable, in the language the parent understands best;
19. adequate funding to ensure quality, safe health standards for all learning environments by ensuring proper custodial procedures and staffing.
SCHOOL NURSES

NEA supports:

• federal funds to support safe, quality health care standards by professional/certified school nurses;
• federal programs to help achieve a school nurse-to-student ratio of one school nurse to every 750 or fewer students at each site that is appropriate to provide quality school health care;
• federal programs to enhance school-based health programs;
• establishment and funding of programs to support safe, quality medical practices provided by professional/certified school nurses;
• federal funds to support professional/certified school nurses who can communicate effectively with English Language Learners and their families.

NEA opposes:

• requiring school employees, other than professional/certified school nurses, to perform medical procedures.

b. Children’s Safety

NEA supports:

• establishment and funding of programs and standards to protect children from physical, sexual, or emotional abuse and/or neglect, both domestically and internationally;
• federal legislation mandating a regularly updated tracking system used for identifying and locating registered sex offenders with appropriate safeguards;
• development of collaborative programs among family, school, community, business, social services, and law enforcement agencies in the effort to reduce family/domestic violence, especially as it affects children;
• legislation to assist in developing programs to protect children from danger, ill health, or hunger;
• federal requirements that manufacturers add a bittering agent to all poisonous household products;
• cooperative public and private efforts for the identification, location, and return of missing children;
• federal assistance to schools and communities for implementation of effective staff, youth, and student suicide prevention programs, including professional development for educators in suicide prevention, alertness, intervention, and post-vention programs for pre-kindergarten through higher education;
• minimum standards for youth camps and school bus safety, including school bus capacity guidelines with student safety as the first priority;
• legislation restricting the number of students to be transported to and from school on a school bus to no more than two students per seat and no standees;
• federal funding for technology and training to enhance school bus safety, including products that assist drivers with pre- and post-trip inspection and route planning, and training to prevent and/or respond to safety threats;
• federal legislation mandating a test for drugs and alcohol of any driver involved in an accident while transporting students, within the mandated three-hour timeframe, that is admissible in a criminal prosecution;
• a federal ban on the importation, sale, or distribution in the United States and its territories of video games that promote hatred or violence toward a particular group or groups of people;
• federal regulation on the sale or distribution of games that have gratuitous violence as an integral part of their play;
• legislation that protects children and youth from Internet pornography or computer-generated pornographic images, consistent with First Amendment protections;
• additional support systems and shelters for victims of family violence;
• legislation that requires timely pre-employment criminal background checks for all school employees who work with children in schools and facilitates the interstate sharing of this information while protecting employee due process rights;
• legislation that facilitates the timely interstate sharing of information in appropriate screenings of volunteers who work with children in schools.

NEA opposes:

• the use of corporal punishment in any education agency.
c. Children’s Nutrition

NEA supports:

• federal support for school meal programs that follow age-appropriate guidelines to provide adequate, appetizing, and nutritious foods;
• provision of nutrition assistance to families unable to meet basic nutrition needs;
• legislation that requires examination of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) food safety, and adequate labeling of GMO foods, and private right of action to enforce GMO food labeling requirements.

d. Child Poverty/Homelessness

NEA supports:

• court-assured payment of designated child support;
• total federal assumption of the cost and operation of welfare programs based on standards of human dignity;
• a minimum wage indexed to the cost of living and extended to all employees.

e. Youth Employment

NEA supports:

• federal support for collaborative efforts by education and community leaders to implement appropriate local policies and incentives for exemplary in- and out-of-school programs to prepare youth for meaningful employment;
• paying youth at least the federal minimum wage;
• partnerships of public schools/postsecondary education with government, labor, business, and community-based groups in development and implementation of job training and retraining programs;
• strong, effectively enforced laws governing the employment of minors in order to protect young people’s health and safety as well as their time for education.

NEA opposes:

• the diminution or supplanting of public career and technical education by federally funded public or private training programs.

f. Substance Abuse/Dependency

NEA supports:

• federal assistance to schools and communities for the establishment and funding of education programs that address prevention of substance abuse and rehabilitation of victims;
• development and implementation of comprehensive, community-based drug and violence prevention programs that link community resources with schools and that integrate services involving education, vocational, and job skills training and placement, law enforcement, health, mental health, community service, mentoring, and other appropriate services;
• improved and expanded drug treatment and rehabilitation programs that ensure access to all who need these services;
• education programs to prevent substance abuse;
• education programs to prevent the use and/or misuse of herbal and/or natural performance enhancing and weight control dietary supplements by students;
• standardization of laws prohibiting the production, distribution, and sale of illegal drugs and of the paraphernalia associated with their use;
• repeal of agricultural subsidies for tobacco;
• effective coordination of federal, state, and local enforcement/interdiction efforts;
• federal law to require tobacco-free educational institutions.
III. A VOICE IN THE WORKPLACE

a. Public Employee Rights

*NEA supports:*

- a federal statute that would guarantee meaningful collective bargaining rights to the employees of public schools, colleges, universities, and other postsecondary institutions, and all other public sector workplaces, and that allows for the continued operation of state statutes that meet federally established minimum standards;
- improvement in the federal employment compensation law for public education and other public employees;
- the preservation of educational employees’ rights when working with violent children;
- just cause for public employees for any disciplinary action with guaranteed due process through final and binding arbitration;
- equal protection of public education and other public employees under workers’ compensation;
- amendment of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) to guarantee covered public employees a 15-minute break for each three hours worked and a minimum 30-minute, duty-free lunch period;
- safe, hazard-free working environments for public education and public employees, with inspection and control standards equal or superior to those of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration;
- protection of federal employees’ right to medical treatment of their choice for on-the-job injuries in a workers’ compensation claim;
- protection of public school and public sector labor contracts from capricious cancellation;
- full worker protection rights for school personnel who are federal employees;
- protection against retaliation for government employees who seek to expose financial abuse and fraud in government programs;
- legislation to ensure availability to individuals of adequate insurance coverage at fair rates, affordable liability coverage at fair rates, and affordable liability coverage for public institutions;
- a mutually designed, comprehensive personnel evaluation and accountability system with procedural guarantees and due process in every school system and public sector workplace;
- testing as one of a number of elements for determining original certification;
- expansion of Section 125 of the Internal Revenue Code to include group long-term health care insurance premiums;
- assurance of the welfare and economic security of all postsecondary members;
- employment protection for school employees who act to protect students expressing their First Amendment rights;
- efforts to ensure contingent educational professionals the right to unemployment benefits during breaks between academic terms;
- legislation protecting guest education workers against retaliation for fully participating in protected activity;
- legislation to end the discrimination and harassment of school and public employees based on their accent, language, cultural, and ethnic background;
- legislation that protects the privacy of educators by forbidding the inclusion of personally identifiable information in longitudinal data systems and other publicly available databases that track student performance, evaluations, and other data.

*NEA opposes:*

- denying employees bargaining rights solely because they participate in a site-based decision-making program, a faculty Senate, or other system of collegial governance;
- mandatory testing of school and public employees for HIV/AIDS;
- the sub-contracting or contracting out of public school and public sector services and/or positions when qualified personnel are available;
- restrictions on the political rights of government employees;
- federal initiatives that mandate or promote traditionally defined merit pay or incentive pay schemes or other pay-for-performance systems that link educator compensation to student performance;
- federal legislation giving financial incentives or pay to educators based solely on the subjects or fields in which they work;
- the transfer of school employees into persistently low-performing schools without their consent;
- reduction in workers’ compensation benefits provided to employees as a result of an on-the-job injury;
- any requirement that public employees use leave before becoming eligible for disability or workers’ compensation benefits;
• requirements that education employees identify undocumented immigrant students and/or parents;
• the testing of educators as a criterion for job retention, promotion, tenure, or salary increments;
• use of student test scores as an evaluative measure for education employee performance appraisal, job assignment, job retention, promotion, tenure, and/or school performance, unless such tests are shown to be developmentally appropriate, scientifically valid, and reliable for the purpose of measuring both student learning and an educator’s performance;
• the use of student test scores to determine educator compensation;
• any program or policy that requires the abrogation of collectively bargained contract language as a requirement for federal funding;
• the exclusion of teachers from the minimum salary threshold that applies to salaried workers classified as “learned professionals” under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Parity Between Public and Private Employees

NEA supports:
• fair treatment of public employees, including those in public education, unfettered by governmental attempts to solve governmental economic problems at the expense of such employees;
• treatment of public employees equitable with that of private sector employees.

NEA opposes:
• wage limits or controls on employee or retirement benefits or rights restrictions that single out public over private employees;
• the privatization of public sector jobs designed to reduce employee benefits;
• the privatization of public services and public sector jobs customarily provided in the public sector.

Union Regulation

NEA supports:
• amendment of the federal postal statutes to enable recognized employee organizations to use employer internal mail systems in public school districts, postsecondary institutions, and public sector workplaces;
• amendment of the National Labor Relations Act to prevent the permanent replacement of employees who participate in a strike;
• repeal of the so-called right-to-work provision of federal labor law;
• amendment of the Landrum-Griffin Act to permit required proportional representation of minorities in union governance;
• amendment of the National Labor Relations Act to overturn the Yeshiva decision by specifying that college and university faculty are not managers but are employees with collective bargaining rights under law.

NEA opposes:
• inclusion of labor unions in the Hobbs Act or similar legislation.

b. Public Employee Retirement Security

NEA supports:
• a stable and secure retirement benefit for all education employees as essential to providing and maintaining a high quality education system, and for all public employees as essential to providing and maintaining high quality public services;
• availability of voluntary Social Security coverage to eligible school and public employee groups where initiated by those groups in states in which public employees are not covered by Social Security;
• total repeal of the Social Security Offset/Government Pension Offset as well as proposals that provide incremental steps toward total repeal of the Government Pension Offset, which will establish equity between public and private sector employees as well as restoring to eligible individuals and survivors the full Social Security benefit earned by their spouses;
• total repeal of the Social Security Offset/Windfall Elimination Provision as well as proposals that provide incremental steps toward total repeal of the Windfall Elimination Provision for members who have qualified for retirement or disability benefits from both Social Security and another government pension system;
• adequate federal insurance of state or local retirement and/or deferred compensation plans that are invested in institutions protected by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation;
• portability of pension rights and benefits through retention of retirement rights and assets;
• the right of an individual to transfer tax-sheltered savings to purchase retirement credit without adverse tax consequences;
• equitable retirement credits and/or buy-back rights;
• fiduciary and reporting standards to inform members and to protect assets and earned benefits of retirement systems;
• standards for vesting and portability, ownership, and military or Peace Corps service credit;
• federal legislation ending discriminatory policies of residency requirements for military service credit in state retirement systems;
• protection of members’ retirement income through automatic escalator clauses;
• use of Section 125 plans for retired education personnel and other public employees, with the respective retirement fund designated as the employer;
• reinstatement of the three-year period for recovery of members’ retirement contributions.

**NEA opposes:**

• mandatory coverage of public employees under Social Security for employee groups that have declined coverage;
• merger of Social Security with any other public employee pension plan;
• diminution of retirement income;
• supersession of substantially equivalent or superior state retirement statutes by federal standards.

c. **Pension Fund Protection**

**NEA supports:**

• public employee pension fund protection including, but not limited to, the following principal features:
  - maintenance of accurate minutes of trustee proceedings in order that all funding transactions will be visible to participants and the government;
  - regulation of selection of investment managers, adoption of investment objectives, and monitoring of the manager’s performance;
  - active investment of resources so that funds are fully and productively invested at all times;
  - requirements that investments be socially and fiducially responsible;
  - regulations covering payments to beneficiaries in the proper amount as long as the fund remains solvent;
  - annual audits;
  - actuarial valuation at least every three years;
  - annual reports to the U.S. Department of Labor and to the members of the pension fund;
  - a requirement that employers fully fund all promised retirement benefits, including post-retirement medical benefits;
  - a prohibition on reduction of basic pension benefits, cost-of-living adjustment provisions, or post-retirement medical benefits to employees who have become vested in the plan;
  - an emergency provision that all benefits of a plan that becomes insolvent through fraud or poor investments would be paid by an agency such as the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation (PBGC);
  - the right to hire their own staff, i.e., executive directors, investment officers, and legal counsel;
  - a requirement that retirement boards have at least one retired member elected to the board;
  - a requirement that retirement boards are in charge of investments as well as benefits.
• federal standards to assume that the expected rate of return on pension fund investments is commensurate with the expected risks of the investment;
• eligibility of public employee pension fund representatives for appointment to creditor committees established to settle corporate Chapter 11 bankruptcies;
• public employees’ ability to make pretax contributions to 401(k) and similar pretax plans for retirement savings, in addition to existing retirement plans;
• requiring all member pension plans to have as a basis an adequate and fully funded defined benefit plan;
• strengthening private defined benefit plans through greater funding flexibility, including but not limited to extending the plan funding period in excess of seven years.
NEA opposes:
• taxation of public employee pension benefits;
• taxation of health care benefits provided to retirees;
• mandatory defined contribution plans.

d. General Employee Rights

NEA supports:
• legislation that advances the rights of workers to organize and collectively bargain;
• strengthening occupational health and safety standards and programs with diligent enforcement;
• legislation that provides protection and support for lactating mothers;
• legislation mandating employers to offer short-term disability policies that include maternity leave;
• reducing the hours of service required for educational employees to qualify for the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or any other law that guarantees leave for family or medical reasons.

NEA opposes:
• policies that encourage the replacement of unionized workers by non-represented individuals in welfare-to-work programs;
• policies that diminish employees’ rights to be paid extra compensation for overtime work;
• federal legislation that would have the effect of diminishing, undermining, or circumventing collective bargaining rights.

IV. GOOD PUBLIC POLICY

a. Public Health and Well-Being

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

NEA supports:
• federal support for housing affordable to low- and moderate-income individuals through incentives for construction and rehabilitation and fiscal policies that put fiscally responsible mortgage loans within reach;
• federal initiatives to create affordable rental housing for low- and moderate-income individuals;
• policies that support housing stability for students;
• federal interventions and supports to assist homeowners at risk of losing their homes;
• establishment and funding of support programs for homeless, low-income, or abandoned students, including after-school enrichment programming and required transportation;
• legislation, including programs of assistance, to lessen the problem of homelessness in the United States;
• aligning the current U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) definition of homelessness to that of the U.S. Department of Education definition of homelessness.

CULTURE AND COMMUNICATIONS

NEA supports:
• requirements for increased daily educational programming appropriate for young children, including verbatim highlighted captions in commercials and educational children’s programming as a means to help children learn to read;
• partial reservation of cable television capacity for educational uses;
• funding for the National Endowment for the Arts;
• adequate public financing for public broadcasting;
• equal time requirements, reinstatement of the fairness doctrine, ascertainment, affirmative action in broadcast regulations and the media ownership rules in the Telecommunications Act of 1996;
• federal legislation to preserve historically significant lands and structures;
• community centers that support arts education and foster an appreciation of the arts;
ENERGY

NEA supports:
- development and implementation of a long-range national energy policy that reduces dependence on foreign sources of energy; emphasizes research on, development of, and rapid conversion to environmentally safe energy sources; and encourages conservation of current energy sources.

NEA opposes:
- curtailment or closure of schools as a first resort in energy crises.

ENVIRONMENT

NEA supports:
- protection of the environment and natural resources;
- the establishment and maintenance of federal wilderness areas, recreation areas, refuge areas, and designated local green areas;
- strict regulation of facilities that dispose of, store, or handle medical, toxic, or other hazardous materials;
- financial protection of individuals impaired by hazards;
- reduction in the rate of deterioration of the environment through incentives for product concentration, use of biodegradable packaging materials, decreased volume of original packaging limited to that required by the legitimate dictates of health and safety, waste recycling, and other means as feasible;
- standards and timely enforcement and funding for safeguarding against pollution of the air (e.g., acid rain), water, or food by chemicals or radiation;
- public access to quality water supplies that are free of poisons, toxins, and pollutants that meet EPA requirements;
- stronger federal action in solving the problem of toxic waste dumping;
- legislation to hold all companies completely financially responsible by removing liability caps on compensation for any environmental, social, and economic disruption or destruction for which they are responsible;
- legislation that ensures regular testing of water sources for all schools and communities and timely reporting of results to parents and communities.

NEA opposes:
- weakening of environmental health and safety efforts through underfunding, laxity in regulatory standards, or other means.

HEALTH CARE

NEA supports a national health care policy that will mandate universal coverage with the highest quality health care at the lowest possible cost. Health care reform must:
- Guarantee coverage for the uninsured;
- Control costs so that premiums and health care services are affordable to all, regardless of income or employment status;
- Incorporate provisions and standards related to medical safety and quality;
- Result in comprehensive health care coverage that includes but is not limited to medical, surgical, hospital, behavioral health, prescription drug, dental, vision, hearing, and long-term care services;
- Provide patients with a choice of health care providers;
- Include preventive, wellness, rehabilitative, and disease management programs;
- Make use of health information technology to reduce medical errors and administrative costs;
- Ensure the continued right to maintain employer sponsored health care benefits, including the ability to bargain benefits above any established floor and the exclusion from taxes of the cost and/or value of health care benefits.
In pursuit of this goal, NEA also supports:

- a tax-supported, single-payer health care plan for all residents of the United States, its territories, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, adoption of which shall be supported at whatever level of government is appropriate, as well as steps that would move our nation closer to this goal, so the maximum amount of money is used for benefits (matching Medicare’s low overhead);
- establishment and funding of federal research efforts, including those devoted to health care issues specific to women’s health concerns;
- coverage for full men’s and women’s reproductive health care;
- coverage for audiological services and/or devices, including the diagnosis and treatment of hearing loss and/or devices, including hearing aids;
- a major federal commitment to HIV/AIDS and other blood borne pathogens research to develop a preventive agent, effective treatments, and a cure;
- a national program of long-term care, including home health care for the chronically ill, including those with cognitive or mental impairments;
- strict federal standards for staffing, safety, health care, and nutrition services provided by nursing homes;
- tax exemptions for health insurance premiums and benefits;
- allowing retired state and local government employees to pay health care premiums with pretax dollars;
- parity for mental health coverage;
- expansion of mental health services and the coordination with public schools on the provision of such services;
- Government oversight and regulation of managed care plans—including Preferred Provider Organizations (PPOs), Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs), and other health benefit delivery systems—to ensure that quality, comprehensive, and appropriate services are not limited or denied simply for financial reasons;
- a comprehensive Medicare/Medicaid system with protected benefits, including prescription drug benefits and benefits for home health care, mental health services, medical transportation services, and nonmedical aid;
- Medicare as a social insurance program available on an optional basis to all school and public employee groups or individual active or retired public school and public employees in states in which public school and public employees are not covered by Medicare;
- open enrollment for the purchase of Medigap insurance;
- qualification relief for members who elect into Medicare too late to qualify with the required 40 quarters;
- the provision of low cost, accessible, and high quality prescription drugs for all individuals, including prescription drugs imported/reimported from other countries meeting all applicable safety laws of the United States, as long as such importation/reimportation encourages the utilization of evidence-based medications; and addresses incorrect dosages, sale of expired prescription drugs, and sale of drugs with inadequate usage directions;
- directing the federal government to negotiate prescription drug prices and use subsequent savings to fill the “donut hole” in Medicare Part D.

NEA opposes:

- shifting of health care costs to the insured;
- any means test for Medicare;
- any capping of general fund support for Medicare B;
- any shift of the cost of health care under Medicare/Medicaid to the beneficiary and/or his or her family;
- any new barrier to eligibility for benefits under Medicare;
- mandatory coverage of public employees under Medicare for employee groups that have declined coverage;
- diminishing any health benefits received by active or retired members that have been achieved through state legislation or collective bargaining.

JOBS/ECONOMY

NEA supports:

- full employment, including job training and development programs;
- federal incentives to enhance income security, education, job training and placement, child care, and family support services;
- educational and rehabilitation (jobs) programs for incarcerated individuals;
- legislation that discourages employers from the practice of outsourcing U.S. jobs to other countries.
SENIOR CITIZENS

**NEA supports:**

- increased availability of dependent care for all ages;
- a decent standard of living for the elderly, with support systems to prevent and/or treat physical and mental abuse;
- programs of assistance to lessen problems and concerns of older Americans in the United States;
- programs focused on aging in place to assist older Americans in staying in their homes.

SOCIAL SECURITY

**NEA supports:**

- Social Security as social insurance, not welfare or a “means-tested” program;
- improved Social Security benefits for participants, especially low-income workers, dependents, and survivors;
- Social Security benefit equity for men and women through earnings sharing and/or benefit changes;
- guaranteed Social Security survivor/disability benefits for minor surviving children under the care of parents, grandparents, or other custodial adults, and for anyone under the age of 26 who is a full-time student in an accredited institution of higher learning;
- repeal of the Social Security “notch” that reduces benefits for individuals born between 1917 and 1926;
- strengthening the guaranteed benefit formula of the Social Security program by raising the taxable wage base subject to Social Security tax;
- legislation that protects the integrity of the Social Security trust fund, preserving funds for benefits;
- repeal of current taxes on Social Security benefits and exemption from income tax of all Social Security benefits regardless of income;
- protection of the solvency of the Social Security system through an actuarially sound tax base that maintains the integrity of the Social Security trust fund and through the use of general revenues, if necessary;
- maintaining and/or enhancing Social Security benefits;
- full annual cost-of-living protections for Social Security recipients;
- Social Security reform that:
  - maintains or enhances the economic security of current and future generations who contribute to the financing of the Social Security system;
  - guarantees a foundation of retirement income that permits older family members to live in dignity and reduces the economic burden on younger family members caring for older family members;
  - provides a sound base of universal insurance protections to families faced with wage loss due to old age, disability, or the death of the family wage earner;
  - is equitable, nondiscriminatory, and ensures as a minimum standard that individuals covered by Social Security receive at least the same level of economic benefit provided by the existing system;
  - minimizes Social Security fund investment risks;
  - maintains the current, low-level costs of administering Social Security;
  - fulfills Social Security’s existing commitments to covered employees and ensures current non-covered and/or covered state and local government employees their current, expected level of non-Social Security benefits;
  - is integrated with sound, long-run employment and worker training/education policies;
  - recognizes that federal investment in a better educated workforce is sound educational and employment policy that will positively impact the individual’s ability to contribute to the Social Security system;
  - reflects careful deliberation concerning economic growth and labor market issues;
- legislative rather than regulatory determination of the process by which the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and any adjustments resulting from it are calculated;
- the federal government taxing all earned income, not just the first $100,000, for Social Security;
- oversight to prevent fraud, waste and abuse of the Social Security system, Medicare, and Medicaid.
NEA opposes:

- limitations on post-retirement earnings for Social Security recipients;
- adverse effects on active or retired members of any CPI adjustment;
- increases in the Social Security retirement age;
- privatization of Social Security.

b. Human and Civil Rights

FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

NEA supports:

- guaranteeing the right to a high quality, free and appropriate public education to all students;
- rigorous enforcement of civil rights laws, including desegregation activities, Patsy Mink Title IX Act regulations, and programs for American Indians/Alaska Natives, through full funding and appropriate administration actions and reporting requirements;
- federal programs that provide public school educators with resources and materials to combat the influence of hate groups;
- provision of federal funds to school districts for the education of children of undocumented workers, immigrants, refugees, and members of the diplomatic community;
- legislation that forbids using funds appropriated to any nation to assist or support the detention, interrogation, abuse, or ill-treatment of children in violation of international humanitarian law;
- legislation that clarifies the implementation of Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act in the public schools, including appropriate use of 504 plans versus Individualized Education Programs;
- revision of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) to protect the privacy of student information by requiring specific parental or legal guardian consent before releasing student information to military recruiters;
- protection of First Amendment rights for all people, including students, with the right to engage in robust and responsible discussion of issues in school-sponsored student media;
- federal programs that provide information to students to improve understanding about different sexual orientations and gender identity;
- federal funds to expand the capacity of the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, to engage in rigorous investigation and enforcement of Title VI complaints to expand resource equity for all students;
- federal programs that provide public school educators with the resources and materials to implement professional development for all staff on conflict resolution and restorative practices.

NEA opposes:

- any governmental attempts to resegregate public schools;
- efforts to restrict or end federal court jurisdiction in civil rights matters, including restrictions on the use of busing as an available option to achieve desegregation;
- infringement of the principles of religious freedom through the introduction of sectarian practices in the public schools;
- use of economic hardship as grounds to cease implementation of programs designed to achieve racial integration and/or educational equity;
- federal legislation that denies children access to public education or health care based on their citizenship status or documentation;
- reducing or denying families government assistance benefits based on their child’s school attendance.

FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Equal Rights, Non-Discrimination, and Protection from Violence

NEA supports:

- obtaining, preserving, and strengthening basic civil and human rights under law;
- eliminating barriers restricting the individual exercise of rights;
full equality and opportunity—economic and educational—for all, including the addition of the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution;

• legislation that would prohibit religious organizations that accept federal funds from discriminating in hiring and delivery of services on the basis of race, religion, gender, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or HIV/AIDS status;

• the use of affirmative action to redress historical patterns of discrimination;

• federal initiatives to combat racial profiling;

• legislation calling for genetic nondiscrimination in employee hiring and in the issuance of health insurance by employers and health benefits providers;

• passage of a federal statute prohibiting employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and expression;

• federal legislation designed to combat hate crimes, sexual harassment, workplace harassment, and violence against all individuals;

• protection of individuals’ rights against retaliation by superiors or coworkers after participating in due process regarding sexual harassment or workplace harassment;

• federal initiatives to combat stalking;

• legislation to stop “cyber-bullying” in the workplace and among the general public;

• enactment and enforcement of open and fair housing legislation;

• ensuring all legally married people have equal access to federal benefits regardless of their state of residence.

NEA opposes:

• tax benefits to organizations that promote hatred.

SPECIFIC POPULATIONS

NEA supports:

• federal legislation that ensures appropriate accessibility rights for individuals with disabilities;

• equal opportunity and responsibility for women and men in and following military service;

• recognition of the Native Hawaiians as an indigenous people who have a special relationship with the United States and a right to self-determination under federal law;

• protection of American Indian/Alaska Native religious rights and practices;

• full veterans benefits for Filipinos who fought alongside the United States during World War II;

• national observances recognizing the contributions of ethnic-minority groups and women to this nation;

• a national holiday honoring César Chávez;

• federal legislation ensuring representation of migrant workers through collective bargaining by the organization of their choice;

• federal legislation to create a National Museum of Women’s history in Washington, DC;

• repeal of the five-year waiting period for financially eligible legal noncitizens to receive federally funded health care;

• maintenance, enhancement, and expansion of federally guaranteed parental and medical leave covering the birth or adoption of a child, the serious illness of a spouse or dependent family member, or the employee’s own serious illness or injury;

• statehood for the District of Columbia.

NEA opposes:

• infringement of due process rights, including the right of habeas corpus;

• federal legislation that would undermine citizenship rights for all individuals born in or under the jurisdiction of the United States of America;

• immigration or visa restrictions that constitute an attack on labor unions, human rights, or national origin;

• unreasonable constraints on foreign students and their dependents in the name of national security;

• arbitrary restrictions on the civil rights of persons who test positive for HIV/AIDS;

• internment or containment of racially identifiable segments of society;

• execution of juveniles and the mentally disabled.
PRIVACY, FREEDOM OF INFORMATION, AND GOVERNMENTAL INTERVENTION

NEA supports:
- reproductive freedom without governmental intervention;
- prohibiting the government from searching for or seizing media sales records or library records that contain personally identifiable information concerning individuals;
- academic freedom;
- freedom of inquiry and freedom of the press;
- protection of First Amendment rights and privacy issues in telecommunications;
- citizen access to public records under the Freedom of Information and Federal Advisory Committee Act;
- legislation that ensures town hall meetings held by members of Congress in taxpayer funded facilities should be open to any person;
- legislation to protect students’ personally identifiable information and ensure students’ data privacy.

NEA opposes:
- testing of individuals for drug or alcohol abuse without probable cause;
- unwarranted exchange between agencies of confidential information about a citizen without the individual’s knowledge.

SLAVERY AND GENOCIDE

NEA supports:
- action by Congress to support a demand to end slavery, genocide, violence, and atrocities worldwide;
- legislation to study and develop reparations and full repair proposals for descendants of enslaved Africans in the United States to address the past and residual effects of slavery and enslavement in America;
- stringent punishments for traffickers of forced labor and protections for victims.

JUDICIARY

NEA supports:
- full congressional review of Supreme Court nominees and judicial appointments;
- confirmation of Supreme Court justices and federal judges who support civil rights;
- a judicial code of conduct and/or ethics for Supreme Court justices.

INCARCERATION

NEA supports:
- a moratorium on capital punishment at the state and federal levels because capital punishment is being carried out inequitably with regard to social class, race, ethnicity, gender, and other similar factors;
- reallocating funding from prison expansion for the purpose of incarceration of offenders of nonviolent crimes into rehabilitation, education, and other social services, including alternative and rehabilitative educational settings;
- rigorous protection of the rights of those detained in enforcement/interdiction efforts;
- federal initiatives to ensure the safety of those incarcerated in federal, state, and local prisons;
- legislation to reduce mass incarceration.

NEA opposes:
- federal funding and support for privatization of prisons, juvenile detention centers, immigration detention facilities, and other similar facilities at the local, state, and federal level;
- federal funding and support of all aspects of the prison industrial complex and criminal justice system, from arrest through re-entry, by for-profit entities;
NEA supports:

- upgrading the U.S. Institute of Peace into a U.S. Peace Academy with degree-granting authority;
- prioritizing the allocation of federal funds under circumstances of civil emergencies for reconstitution of public services that may have been disrupted, including public education.

NEA opposes:

- any legislation or constitutional amendment designating English as the official language of the United States;
- United States coercion of other nations to accept U.S.-produced tobacco and alcohol as trade items in contravention of these nations’ laws and/or customs.

IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION

NEA supports:

- comprehensive immigration reform that:
  - recognizes the political, economic, and labor issues underlying immigration;
  - promotes a humane, equitable, and orderly system of legal immigration that advances and protects human rights, civil liberties, due process, and the public interest;
  - recognizes the importance of family unity and rejects laws and delays that undermine keeping families intact; and
  - deals justly with undocumented immigrants who have worked and lived in the United States and includes a path to permanent residency, citizenship, or asylum once background checks have been completed.
- legislation to reduce barriers that prevent legal immigrants from successful completion of the naturalization process for U.S. citizenship;
- legislation to eliminate discrimination in the immigration laws by permitting permanent partners of United States citizens and lawful permanent residents to obtain lawful permanent resident status in the same manner as spouses of citizens and lawful permanent residents;
- legislation to end the practice of incarcerating immigrant children by developing humane, equitable, and expedited processes for determining asylum cases and placing children with family and/or sponsors;
- legislation prohibiting separation of immigrant children from their families;
- legislation that requires all children housed for processing be afforded a quality public education equal to that provided to children attending public schools in the local community;
- legislation that provides support for children who experience trauma due to practices implemented during the immigration process;
- legislation that provides access to medical treatment and care by medical professionals for those detained;
- legislation that provides postsecondary education opportunities for children who experience trauma caused by being held in detention; and
- legislation defunding and/or preventing private corporations from profiting from immigrant detention in the United States, especially the detention of immigrant youth.

NEA opposes:

- the incarceration of immigrant children in cages, kennels, warehouses, tents, and other inhumane structures;
- separating immigrant children from their families;
- the criminalization of undocumented immigrants and those who work with them, including educators; and
- privately run immigration detention centers.
NATIVE LANDS

NEA supports:

• legislation to protect existing Alaska Native ownership of Alaska Native Lands Settlement Act lands;
• protection of American Indian/Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian sacred sites;
• legislation to preserve and expand Native Hawaiian land ownership.

UNITED NATIONS

NEA supports:

• world bodies dedicated to the furtherance of peace and human 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;
• ratification of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

VOTING AND ELECTION REFORM

NEA supports:

• election or polling reforms—including simplified voter registration procedures and an adequate number of polling places and functioning voting equipment—that ensure that each member of the electorate, regardless of time zone, may cast a meaningful vote and that encourage citizens to exercise their right and responsibility to register, vote, and participate fully in the political process;
• expansion of safe and secure opportunities for early voting;
• voting reform that allows for the verification of votes cast and has security safeguards;
• full disclosure of all sources of political financing;
• right of all citizens to participate in the election process through political action committees;
• reinstatement of the personal tax credit for political contributions;
• partial public funding of federal election campaigns;
• reauthorization, including extending the full protections, and full enforcement of the Voting Rights Act of 1965;
• equal voter access and enfranchisement;
• appropriate anonymous voting records to be used in disputes or recounts of elections;
• transparent disclosure of voting systems’ vote counting processes;
• transparent, independent, nonpartisan oversight and audits of elections;
• public ownership of voting systems, including the software that records and counts the votes;
• federal election days as holidays;
• an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to enable Congress and the states to regulate the expenditure of funds for political contributions and election-related campaign speech by any corporation, limited liability company, or other corporate entity;
• a fair and reasonable system of campaign disclosure that would increase public accountability for corporations that attempt to influence elections;
• restoration of voting rights for formerly incarcerated American citizens who have served their sentences;
• automatic voter registration and vote-by-mail;
• a constitutional amendment to give full congressional and presidential voting rights to U.S. citizens in the District of Columbia and U.S. territories.

NEA opposes:

• voter identification requirements and other restrictions that have the effect of suppressing participation of citizens in local, state, and national elections.
c. Fiscal Policy

CREDIT UNIONS

NEA supports:
• programs that preserve the independence of credit unions to serve their members’ best interests;
• federal legislation to protect the ability of credit unions to enroll members from multiple groups of employees.

NEA opposes:
• federal legislation that adversely affects credit union members.

EDUCATION AND NATIONAL SECURITY

NEA supports:
• strengthening national security by increasing federal funding for education;
• national security based on a sound economy, a well-educated populace, ratification of and adherence to existing arms control treaties, and a stable world community;
• a mutual, verifiable nuclear freeze with cessation of testing, production, and further deployment of nuclear delivery systems and other destabilizing systems;
• adequate programs for the special needs of veterans;
• legislation requiring a policy of economic conversion to facilitate the orderly redirection of resources from military purposes to alternative civilian uses, including education;
• consideration of caregiver responsibilities in the assignment of members of the armed services;
• legislation to make war profiteering illegal.

NEA opposes:
• military or economic assistance to governments that permit violations of their citizens’ rights;
• federal funding extending the arms race into outer space;
• expenditure of funds on development of nuclear attack “evacuation” plans;
• restrictions on academic research by artificial imposition of the “classified” designation to deny access to non-national security information or censorship of unclassified research;
• legislation or regulations that prevent educators in the United States from teaching or conducting research in any country;
• funding privatized paramilitary organizations with public tax money;
• the use of federal dollars to build a continuous wall along our borders.

TAXATION

NEA supports:
• a progressive tax system based on individual and corporate ability to pay to yield sufficient revenues to address national needs;
• a tax system that provides for education and other social needs while achieving reduction of the national debt;
• equity in taxation rates between married and single tax payers;
• equity in tax policies for spousal benefits and domestic partner benefits;
• deferral of taxation on retirement annuity contributions;
• repeal of Internal Revenue Code provisions that jeopardize the availability or tax exemption of employee benefit plans, including the taxation of negotiated severance payments prior to separation from employment;
• exemption from taxation of employee benefits, including employer paid health and life insurance, legal services, and educational assistance;
• tax exemption for accelerated death benefit payments for life insurance contracts;
• restoring the estate tax for the purpose of funding public education;
• recognition in the tax code for dependent care expenses;
• reduction or elimination of the percentage threshold required before an individual can qualify for an itemized deduction for
certain medical expenses;
• exemption from tax liability for tuition remissions where available;
• exemption status within the tax code for professional business expenses, including continuing education, home office, home
   computers, educational travel, professional and union dues, and designation of such expenditures as “necessary” and “ordinary;”
• full miscellaneous deductions for educational materials purchased by all educators for classroom use.

NEA opposes:
• unfair tax loopholes or giveaways such as tax abatement and foreign trade zones that reduce revenues and shelter corporations
   and high-income individuals from paying taxes;
• any constitutional amendment imposing limitations on taxes or the federal budget;
• shifting responsibility for financing traditional governmental services from a progressive tax structure to taxes disproportionately
   affecting low- and middle-income individuals;
• an extension of the moratorium on Internet taxes;
• federal tax revenue being spent on banking fees charged by for-profit banks.

TRADE

NEA supports:
• public input and congressional consultation during the negotiation and ratification of international trade agreements;
• social charters that guarantee high standards of human rights, environmental, and union protection;
• inclusion of education, human rights, environmental, and labor representatives on all negotiating and administrative bodies;
• systems of checks and balances for any international trade body whose decisions could erode democratic, human rights,
   environmental, or union protection.

NEA opposes:
• any agreement lacking the inclusion of any social charter or other guarantees of high standards of human rights, environmental,
  and union protection;
• any agreement lacking a system of checks and balances on all international trade bodies whose decisions could erode democratic,
  human rights, environmental, or union protection;
• the adoption of Trade Promotion Authority (“fast track”) in Congress.
The 3 million members of the National Education Association, our nation’s largest professional organization, work at every level of education—from pre-school to university graduate programs. Our members also include retired educators and students preparing to become teachers and other public employees. NEA has affiliates in every state and more than 14,000 communities across the United States.

**NEA Officers**
Lily Eskelsen García, President
Rebecca S. Pringle, Vice President
Princess Moss, Secretary-Treasurer

**NEA Executive Committee**
Eric Brown
Shelly Moore Krajacic
Robert Rodriguez
Christine Sampson-Clark
George Sheridan
Hanna Vaandering

**NEA Executive Director**
Kim A. Anderson

National Education Association
1201 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
www.nea.org