

NEA-NEW MEXICO RESOLUTIONS

As Adopted by the NEA-New Mexico Delegate Council on November 7, 2009

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FINANCE

A. Economic Concerns of Members

A-1. Federal Support of Education

NEA-New Mexico believes that the funding of public elementary and secondary education is a major responsibility of the federal government. It seeks federal support in accordance with the following principles:

a. An increasing portion of public funds should be for direct instruction of students;

b. Local governing boards must be fiscally independent, and restrictive limits must not be imposed on their budgets or long-term borrowing;

c. State and federal mandates affecting public education programs must be accompanied by adequate and equitable funding;

d. The amount of aid must be generally predictable for long-range planning and specifically predictable for year-to-year planning;

e. Present programs of specific aid must be expanded and improved by consolidation and simplification of administration;

f. Public funded services for nonpublic school students must be strictly limited to medical and dental care, public welfare programs, school lunch and milk programs, and public safety services such as fire and police protection, which are budgeted and administered through the appropriate public agencies; and

g. Federal legislation must comply with civil rights statutes, be consistent with the constitutional provision respecting an establishment of religion, and provide for judicial review as to its constitutionality.

The Association opposes providing any public revenues to sectarian pre-K through 12 schools. The Association also opposes providing such revenues to nonsectarian pre-K through 12 private schools or to nonpublic school students in pre-K through 12 education, unless such revenues are used for educational services that are not available in

public schools to which students have reasonable access. (2004)

A-2. Professional Salaries

NEA-New Mexico believes the salary policy of any school system should be based on clearly defined factors, applicable to salaries for all professional services including summer school, after-school activities, federally supported programs, and research and writing assignments. Educators should not be required to perform extra duties without extra pay and their consent. No professional group should be overlooked in the establishment of such policies.

The Association believes salary scales for principals, other building supervisors, and central office administrators should be related to the salary schedule for teachers by ratios which reflect differences in assigned responsibilities and length of contract year and should grant equal salary differentials for equal amount of advanced preparation.

The Association believes a professional salary schedule for licensed personnel should:

a. Be based upon preparation, academic degrees, education experience, professional growth, responsibilities and full length of service;

b. Have structural continuity through the use of an index or percentage guide for experience increments and levels of academic preparation;

c. Be revised by methods preventing deterioration in the ratios of maximum salaries, experience increments, and preparational differentials;

d. Provide scheduled minimum salaries competitive with beginning salaries paid to college graduates entering the private sector;

e. Provide a differential of 15 percent or more between the scheduled minimum salaries for the bachelor's degree and master's degree scales;

f. Have automatic annual increments for experience, in no case less than 7 percent of the bachelor's degree minimum;

g. Provide for advancing the master's degree class to reflect twice the bachelor's

degree minimum and for advancing at least to a ratio of 2.5 times the bachelor's degree minimum with advanced preparation beyond the master's degree class; (2007)

h. Establish salary credit for intermediate preparation levels between full-year classes to encourage academic advancement beyond the bachelor's degree;

i. Assure that employees be compensated at standard contract rates for required days exceeding state minimum standards;

j. Permit no discrimination as to grade or subject taught, residence, creed, race, sex, marital status, or number of dependents;

k. Place newly-appointed teachers on step according to their teaching experience, allowing full credit for all previous service outside the district;

l. Be applied in actual practice in an equitable manner so teachers are not penalized in changing assignments;

m. Be developed through the process of professional negotiations;

n. Be developed without pay provisions that rely solely on student achievement or that rely on subjective criteria; and

o. Assure that salary paid for summer employment, continuing education programs, extended contracts, conducting in-service training or workshops, and extra duty is not less than the rate for regular pay (2001)

A-3. Salary Goals

NEA-New Mexico believes that teacher salaries that meet or exceed regional and national averages are necessary to retain competent teachers and other school employees and attract persons of outstanding ability to the profession.

NEA-New Mexico also believes that all school employees should have a salary schedule that rewards training and experience. (2004)

A-4. Fringe Benefits

NEA-New Mexico believes comprehensive programs for employee's benefits should be provided, including, but not limited to:

a. An adequate, continuously updated, retirement program

b. Employer-financed group health insurance to 75%

c. Employer-financed group life insurance

d. Employer-financed group disability income insurance

e. Sick leave benefits, with unlimited accumulation

f. Reimbursement for unused sick leave

g. Paid personal leave

h. Paid professional leave

i. Maternity leave/paternity leave, including adoption

j. Family medical leave

k. Paid sabbatical leave

l. Payroll deductions

m. Tuition reimbursement

n. Severance benefits

o. Tax-sheltered benefits

p. Personal assault/battery protection

q. Workers' Compensation

r. Unemployment Compensation.

NEA-New Mexico believes comprehensive programs for employee benefits are a vital part of school employee compensation. School employee benefit packages should compare favorably with income in other professions and occupations requiring comparable preparation. (2007)

A-5. Educational Retirement Legislation

NEA-New Mexico believes educators throughout New Mexico must be provided with a sound, well financed retirement system.

The Association further believes that the Legislature must continue: (1) complete control of the fund by the Educational Retirement Board, (2) joint employer-employee basis of funding, (3) the provision for representation of the Board of NEA-New Mexico since it comprises the largest group of employees covered by the fund, (4) support of

the principle that educational retirement benefits should in no way be reduced because of the receipt of social security benefits, and (5) the system as a defined benefit plan

The Association further believes the Legislature must provide: (1) improved cost-of-living increases in retirement benefits, (2) retirement benefit computation based on the best three year average, (3) full service credit for all unused sick leave, (4) 3.0 percent computation formula for all years service (earned and allowed). (2006)

A-6. Retiree Health Care

NEA-New Mexico urges the legislature to support and insure proper funding of the Retiree Health Care Authority. The beneficiaries of the system should be the employees who along with employers have contributed to the Authority. The members of the Retiree Health Care Authority should democratically represent the participants of the RHCA. (2007)

A-7. Social Security

NEA-New Mexico believes that Social Security should be available to eligible school employees where desired, but should not be mandated. Contracts with Social Security should provide for supplementary plans rather than integrated or coordinated plans.

NEA-New Mexico believes that the reform of Social Security laws is necessary to eliminate offset provisions that are discriminatory. In addition, NEA-New Mexico believes that the reform is necessary to maintain or reduce the current retirement age. NEA-New Mexico further believes that no benefit for which money has been collected should be withdrawn without equal replacement.

NEA-New Mexico believes that supplementary health programs should be removed from the Social Security program and financed from some other source. (2004)

A-8. Instructional Supplies

NEA-New Mexico believes that full funding should be provided for the needs

of public education. It is the responsibility of the New Mexico Legislature to adequately fund the New Mexico Public School Funding Formula in order that local boards of education can meet their responsibility to provide instructional supplies and materials to meet the requirements of the district curriculum.

The Association believes the practice of spending personal funds on instructional supplies relieves the local board of education of its responsibilities and effectively reduces all efforts of the Association to gain public and legislative support for financial needs of schools. (2008)

A-9. Funding for New State Programs

NEA-New Mexico believes public education is not currently funded at a level to provide quality education for each student in the public schools. The Association further believes any additional programs mandated by the Public Education Department must be fully funded.. (2007)

A-10. Reimbursement for Mandated Courses

NEA-New Mexico believes that the New Mexico Secretary of Public Education must be required to reimburse previously licensed teachers for the cost of transportation, registration, tuition, and books incurred while completing any college course work deemed necessary for relicensure or continuing licensure by the Professional Licensure Unit. (2007)

A-11. Reimbursement

NEA-New Mexico believes that it is the responsibility of the legislature to fund CEU (Continuing Education Units) required for licensure or continued employment of public school employees. (2007)

A-12. Compensation

NEA-New Mexico believes school employees must be compensated for the time

needed to prepare documentation required by the Public Education Department or any other educational agencies. (2007)

A-13. Funding for Off-Campus Courses

NEA-New Mexico believes funding for the community colleges and off-campus college courses must be provided through the state funding formula for the universities of New Mexico. (2007)

A-14. Private School Funding

NEA-New Mexico opposes all efforts to expand the use of public funds to support private **K-12** schools. (2007)

A-15. Driver Education

NEA-New Mexico believes that driver education should be fully funded, taught by licensed personnel, and available as part of the basic education to all qualified students in New Mexico. (2007)

PROTECTION

B. Job Security of Members

B-1. Fair Employment Practices

NEA-New Mexico believes state law and Board policies should ensure the job security of all education employees through fair employment practices, including fair dismissal provisions, reasons for non-renewal of contracts and due process rights for all educational employees. (2007)

B-2. Employer-Employee Relationships

NEA-New Mexico believes good employee-employer relationships comprise a foundation on which to build a strong education profession. (2006)

B-3. Access to Personnel File

NEA-New Mexico believes all school personnel must have access to all items in their personnel files. The Association further believes all school personnel must receive a copy of all items entered into the file and must have the right to attach a written response to any such item. The Association also believes a

procedure must be established for removing any inappropriate or unsubstantiated material.

The Association further believes each employee has the right to be accompanied by any individual of his/her choice when examining his/her file. (2001)

B-4. Collective Bargaining

NEA-New Mexico believes in the legal right of school employees to seek binding and contractual rights with their employers through the process described in the Public Employee Bargaining Act.

The Association believes all local affiliates (1) should seek exclusive representation rights for employees in their districts, (2) should enter into good faith negotiations with the employer, and (3) should negotiate a contract addressing salary, benefits and working condition concerns, including, but not limited to, seeking the widest scope of bargaining possible relating to curriculum, preparation time, retraining and other matters of mutual concern needed to best affect the duties of school employees and the mission of New Mexico's public schools.

The Association believes the collective bargaining process will, through good faith negotiations on the part of both parties, increase the efficiency, effectiveness and accountability of the public schools of New Mexico.

The Association believes that collective bargaining rights must not be weakened by any legislative changes. (2006)

B-5. Non-Privatization of the Jobs and Fair Salaries for Educational Support Professionals

NEA-New Mexico believes that educational employers must secure and maintain a highly qualified and capable educational support staff. The Association further believes that such support staff should not be displaced by temporary, part-time, or private workers. The Association believes that salaries and benefits for educational support staff should be competitive with those for similar positions in private industry. (2002)

B-6. Reduction in Force (RIF)

NEA-New Mexico believes its affiliates must negotiate criteria to be utilized should reduction in force (RIF) occur.

The Association further believes these criteria must include seniority, objectivity, nondiscrimination, and uniformity of application; contracts must establish recall procedures providing priority job opportunities on a seniority basis to educational personnel unemployed because of reductions in force. (2006)

B-7. Right of Due Process

NEA-New Mexico believes the current statutory right of due process for teachers and Educational Support Professionals must be protected and should be extended to all education employees, except for top educational management who serve at the pleasure of governing boards. (2003)

B-8. Revocation and Suspension of Licenses

NEA-New Mexico believes that since teaching licenses are issued at the state level, revocation and suspension of said licenses shall remain the responsibility of the issuing agency. (2007)

PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

C-PROFESSIONAL CONCERNS

DETERMINING STANDARDS OF THE EDUCATION PROFESSION

C-1. Excellence in Education

NEA-New Mexico believes in a shared national, state, community and individual commitment to excellence in education. The Association reaffirms its support for the establishment and maintenance of high standards for teaching and learning. These standards must be established, maintained and governed by the member of the profession and must apply to recruitment, teacher preparation, induction, professional development, evaluation practice and accountability (2007)

C-2. Mandated Paperwork

The Association believes there must be a reduction in the amount of paperwork required of school personnel to allow adequate and quality time for the instruction of students. (2001)

C-3. Federal Program Standards and Teacher Preparation

NEA-New Mexico believes that federal programs for education must meet the same standards of preparation, licensure, salary principles, and salary schedules as other programs in the public schools.

The Association further believes that teachers must be involved from inception to evaluation of these programs. (2001)

C-4. Professional Autonomy

NEA-New Mexico believes the profession must govern itself. The Association further believes that an independent professional practices and standards board must set and enforce standards of entrance to the education profession and education training programs, license, practice, ethics, and competence. (2003)

C-5. Accountability

NEA-New Mexico believes educational excellence for each child is the objective of the education system. The Association further believes educators can be accountable only to the degree they share responsibility in educational decision-making and to the degree other parties who share this responsibility - legislators, other government officials, school boards, parents, students and taxpayers - are also held accountable. (2001))

C-6. Class Size

NEA-New Mexico believes that excellence in the classroom can best be attained by small class size, particularly in grades pre-K through 12, which allows for the optimum development of a student's potential. Class size and daily student-teacher contacts must allow for individual attention to each pupil. Class size must include all students' i.e. Special education students. The Association further believes that excessive class size

hinders the teaching and learning process and is a contributing factor to the disruptive behaviors of students. (2007)

C-7. Professional Competence

NEA-New Mexico believes each educator must have the knowledge and skills necessary to perform duties based upon a broad general education with depth of preparation in special areas and a commitment to continued learning.

The Association believes that each professional position should be filled by a qualified and licensed educator. The Association further believes attempts to diminish the quality of learning or services through the elimination of teaching positions, through the arbitrary increase in size of classes, number of students served, or through the employment of non-licensed personnel and/or student teachers in teaching or service roles must be resisted. (2003)

C-8. National Certification

NEA-New Mexico believes the profession must grant recognition to an individual who has, voluntarily, met qualifications specified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). NEA-New Mexico further believes that the NBPTS must be composed of a majority of practicing public school teachers.

The Association also believes the periodic evaluation of such certification procedures is necessary to ascertain whether cultural, economic, gender, racial, or age bias is perpetuated by the requirements for certification. (2004)

C-9. Licensure Standards

NEA-New Mexico believes New Mexico's children deserve a fully qualified and competent teacher in every classroom as well as a fully qualified and competent professional in every educational position. Further, the Association supports legislation that requires school districts to employ such qualified and competent professionals. This legislation should require that school district superintendents certify that they have

attempted and failed to fill positions with such professionals before they seek waivers from licensure requirements. Further, the Association believes school districts should be required to notify parents and the community in any instance in which less than qualified educational professionals are employed.

Further, the Association opposes any changes in licensure requirements during the life of a license.

Additionally, the Association opposes any additional licensure requirements without clear professional value. (2000)

C-10. Substitute Teachers

NEA-NM believes that substitute teachers perform a vital function in the maintenance and continuity of daily education. The Association condemns the practice of assigning substitute teachers to regular positions for an extended duration of time. Positions created by extended absence should be filled by available licensed teachers who are eligible to be placed on contractual status by the school district. The Association believes substitutes must be provided for all instructional positions. The Association opposes the practices of replacing absent teachers by dispersing students to other classrooms. In the absence of available licensed teachers, the Association believes educational assistants licensed to substitute can substitute within their assigned duties, provided they receive additional compensation above their regular daily pay. The Association opposes the use of Educational Support Professionals not assigned to a classroom setting. The Association also opposes the use of individuals such as Educational Support Professionals, part-time employees, or employees hired through private agencies to cover classes. The Association further opposes requiring teachers to substitute during their preparation time. (2000)

C-11. Substitute Educational Support Professionals

NEA-NM believes in the importance of substitute educational support professionals in

the maintenance and continuity of daily operations. The Association believes that an educational support substitute must meet the same standards as the employees for whom he/she substitutes. The Association supports the right of substitute employees to organize for collective bargaining purposes. The Association also supports the practice of providing schedule pay plus basic and fringe benefits for educational support professionals on extended leave. The Association believes substitutes must be provided for all Educational Support Professionals. (2002)

C-12. Academic Freedom

NEA-New Mexico believes academic freedom for all teachers is essential if the educational system is to serve, teach, guide and help maintain a sense of a free society. Academic freedom for educators must include respect from members of the community they serve before they can teach rights and responsibilities of individuals. They must be free to search for truth, be taken seriously in considering new educational plans, and be able to express their ideas objectively. They, as organized groups, as well as individuals, must be permitted to evaluate and review controversial issues involving educational trends. (2003)

C-13. Employee Stress

NEA-New Mexico believes its local affiliates, in cooperation with local school authorities, should develop stress management programs to facilitate the recognition, prevention, and treatment of stress-related problems.

The Association further believes the harmful effects of stress on teachers and other school personnel must be recognized. The Association believes these procedures must ensure confidentiality and treatment without personal jeopardy. (2006)

C-14. Instructional Materials Adoption

NEA-New Mexico believes decisions on school learning experiences and teaching techniques to develop a student's talents are best made by teachers. Teachers are trained

professionals who know the learning needs of students.

The Association believes the state-adopted list of instructional materials should provide a broad selection of materials for the purpose of meeting the ever-diverse needs of the students of New Mexico.

The Association believes that individual districts should be allowed to purchase instructional materials on the state-adopted list directly from publishers.

The Association believes in the right of students and parents to individually object to curriculum materials used in sensitive subject areas. Such challenges to the choice of instructional materials must be made in an orderly and objective way, under procedures adopted mutually by teachers and school boards.

The Association believes in the rights of students and parents to object individually to curriculum materials and the right of the general public to pursue an education where the necessary tools of instruction are available without censorship by any minority group. (2007)

C-15. Teacher Testing

NEA-New Mexico believes neither pencil and paper type tests of teacher skills nor any other single criterion should be used for determining who should study for or be licensed in the teaching profession. A broad range of factors should be used to evaluate a candidate for professional licensure.

The Association supports rigorous and relevant evaluation in the selection and preparation of teachers and believes licensed teachers and student teachers must be fully involved in determining these criteria. (2007)

PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS

C-16. Methods of Evaluation

NEA-New Mexico believes systems of employee assessment, which may include peer evaluation, should be rigorously carried out by trained and qualified personnel to ensure the quality of the education work force. Further, the Association believes these

systems should be employed primarily for the improvement of performance. They should be fair and impartial, and should be based on multiple objective evaluations of employee competency. The assessment tools used in such systems should be collaboratively developed between employees and management.

Additionally, the Association believes decisions not to re-employ educational personnel must be based on documented uncorrected unsatisfactory work performance and should be directly linked to the results of the assessment system for both permanent and probationary employees. (2006)

C-17. Teacher Assignment

NEA-New Mexico believes in making proper teaching assignments based on professional qualifications and in the development of and adherence to sound personnel policies and procedures by every school district. Policies and procedures must be in writing and accessible to all personnel.

The Association further believes the administrator has the responsibility to make proper assignments based on professional qualifications. (2001)

C-18. Conditions of Work

NEA-New Mexico believes that good working conditions for employees are necessary for a proper learning environment for the school children of New Mexico. The Association encourages local education associations, administrators and governing boards to exercise innovation in the improvement of working conditions through the collective bargaining process.

The Association believes conditions will improve when: (1) school personnel become involved in the decision-making process, (2) school administrators support increased employee responsibility, and (3) school employees, as members of their local professional association, accept both employee rights and their responsibilities for establishing conditions that increase their effectiveness in the classroom. (2001)

C-19. Time to Teach

NEA-NM believes that “time to teach” refers not only to those hours during which an educator is actually teaching but also applies to those conditions that contribute to the student-teacher relationship. These include a reasonable, carefully-defined work load, a duty-free lunch period (at least equal to that required for students and not less than 30 minutes), an office in which to work, access to telephones, adequate and appropriate office equipment, access to technology, freedom from interruptions during instructional time, unencumbered planning time, time to evaluate student progress, time for implementation of federal and state legislative requirements, and elimination of the non-instructional tasks required of a teacher.

The Association also believes that at all levels and in all disciplines, additional common planning time should be provided during the contract day for employees to meet for such purposes as, but not limited to, planning interdisciplinary activities/units, team planning time, and coordinating with special education and with support professionals. (2002)

C-20. Competency Based Licensure

NEA-New Mexico believes competent teachers employ the most appropriate processes known for the promotion of learning. The Association also believes competency-based programs for licensure, relicensure, employment and teacher evaluation must be based on many factors. The Association further believes the appropriate use of student progress in teacher evaluation must be the assessment of teacher effect on student learning through multiple measures of student growth, not on standardized measures of student status. (2003)

C-21. Educational Employee-Coach Contracts

NEA-New Mexico believes extracurricular coaching assignments are strictly voluntary and are not meant to be linked to employee assignments as a contractual obligation on the part of the educational employee-coach. (2001)

C-22. Discipline Policies and Procedures

NEA-New Mexico believes boards of education in conjunction with local affiliates should develop policies and standards that would provide the necessary administrative support to school employees for the maintenance of a positive school environment.

The Association believes in the right of teachers or designated employees in charge of instruction to cause the removal from the classroom of disruptive and/or dangerous students whose actions and/or behavior deprive other students of a productive learning experience.

The Association further believes any disciplinary action that uses removal must be based upon the rights of employees and students to work and learn in a safe and orderly environment. The Association opposes the use of discipline as a means of excluding students from the school setting until all other methods of behavioral intervention have been exhausted.

The Association encourages school employees to use the judicial system to press charges against students who commit crimes such as assault and battery. Further, the Association believes that school districts should provide assistance including legal counsel in such instances. (2008)

C-23. Education Employees and Active Duty Service

The National Education Association believes that an education employee whose career is interrupted by a call to active duty service by the National Guard or the reserves should be guaranteed reemployment and all benefits that would accrue if the employee had continued in a position with the school system. The Association also believes that the federal government, upon calling an educator to active duty, should supplement the service person's compensation so his/her family does not experience a loss of revenue or benefits. (2006)

PREPARATION

C-24. Accreditation of Teacher Preparation Institutions

NEA-New Mexico believes in the importance of national accreditation for all educator preparation institutions and supports the concept that a single national non-governmental agency performs this function.

The Association further believes that the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) is the appropriate national accrediting body. NEA-New Mexico also believes all New Mexico institutions for educator preparation must adopt NCATE standards as their minimum requirements. (2003)

C-25. Curriculum Committees for Teacher Education

NEA-New Mexico believes that professional educators and education students should serve on all curriculum committees at all institutions having professional educator preparation programs. The Association believes the Secretary of Public Education should make this mandatory for an approved program. (2007)

C-26. Professional Development

NEA-New Mexico believes educational personnel who attend in-service and training workshops in their schools and within their systems, as well as out of system, do contribute to the general improvement of instruction of children.

The Association believes educational personnel should receive credit for participating in such training sessions as instituted by their employer. Full credit should be applied for purposes of relicensure by the Public Education Department, or salary increments and for training and experience credit in the state funding formula.

The Association supports cooperation, coordination, and communication with other education groups and agencies for the purpose of identifying and defining quality programs and promoting measures for the support of these programs. (2001)

C-27. Standardization of College Transcripts

NEA-New Mexico believes transferred credits should be counted in a uniform manner toward meeting degree requirements at all of the in-state colleges and universities. (2007)

C-28. Teacher Preparation Institutes

NEA-New Mexico believes teacher preparation institutes must provide prospective teachers, in their first year of training with hands-on experience in connection with actual instruction. The Association believes early actual experience in the classroom, along with instruction, will produce more effective educators. (2006)

C-29. High Standards for Non-public and Home Schools

NEA-New Mexico believes non-public and home schools must be held to the same standards of accreditation required of public schools. The Association also believes that local public school systems must have the authority to determine grade placement and/or credits earned toward graduation for students entering or re-entering the public school setting from a non-public or home school setting.

The Association further believes non-public and home-schooled students participation in any extra-curricular activities in the public schools must be fully funded. (2002)

C-30. Computer/Electronic Based Technology

NEA-NM believes every student must have a comprehensive school library media program within his or her educational setting. The program should include a certified/licensed school library media specialist and/ or qualified educational support professionals: a variety of print, non-print, and electronic resources to supplement and complement curricular, to address the diverse needs of students and staff, personal, and leisure needs; relevant technology; and instruction in library research and information skills. The Association further believes that

school library media programs are negatively impacted if a media specialist does not have a substitute during his or her absence.

The Association encourages increased funding for school library media programs from federal, state, and local governments as well as other sources such public and/ or private partnerships.(2009)

C-31. Educators for the Hearing Impaired

NEA-New Mexico believes the New Mexico Professional Licensure Unit should adapt its requirements to recognize the unique professional preparation required for educators of the hearing-impaired in our state. (2007)

C-32. Awareness of Students with Head/ Brain Injuries

NEA-New Mexico believes appropriate teacher training programs should be provided through workshops, conferences, and college and university courses for head/brain injury identification and awareness for all students with head/brain injuries. (2007)

C-33. Inclusion of Special Needs Students

NEA-New Mexico believes there must be increased development and maintenance of programs to meet students' special needs. Teachers in these programs must have a major role in designing the objectives and evaluations and working with appropriate school and community personnel to execute these objectives and evaluations. In order to implement special education legislation, the Association believes:

a. The educational environment, using appropriate instructional materials, support services, and pupil personnel services, must match the learning needs of both students with and students without special needs.

b. Student placement must be based on individual needs rather than on space availability or funding, must be examined on a regular basis to ensure appropriateness, and should not be made disproportionately by ethnicity or gender. Necessary building/staff

modifications must be provided to facilitate such placement.

c. Regular and special education classroom teachers must have a major role in determining an individual education program (IEP) and the appropriateness of educational methods, materials, professional development, and supportive services and must receive a copy of the IEP.

d. Regular and special education teachers, pupil personnel staff, administrators, Educational Support Professionals, and parents must share in planning and implementing the IEP. Prior to implementation, all necessary educational materials, professional development and supportive services must be provided.

e. All impacted staff members must have an appeal procedure regarding the implementation of the IEP, especially in terms of student placement. The procedure must include the right to have the dissenting opinion recorded and attached to the IEP.

f. A plan recognizing individual differences must be used in a systematic evaluation and reporting of program development.

g. Limitations must be made in class size, using methods such as weighted formulas, modified scheduling, and/or curriculum design to accommodate the demands of each IEP.

h. Classroom teachers who serve students with special needs must have scheduled access to resource personnel.

i. The student's IEP should not be used as criteria for the evaluation of education employees.

j. Staff must not be reduced.

k. All staff must be adequately prepared for their roles through appropriate licensing and ongoing professional development programs.

l. Adequate released time or funded additional time must be made available so that teachers can carry out the increased demands placed upon them by special education legislation.

m. Full funding must be provided by local, state, and federal government. (2007)

C-34. Multi-lingual and Multi-cultural Training.

NEA-New Mexico believes teachers must be adequately trained to teach children of various cultural backgrounds. The Association believes teacher-training institutions must provide quality cross-cultural training in their professional education preparatory programs. The Association also believes these institutions should offer courses to increase their awareness of and sensitivity to New Mexico's multi-cultural heritage.

The Association believes quality in-service training in multi-lingual, multi-cultural education should be provided to all school personnel. (2007)

C-35. Public School Food Service Program

NEA-New Mexico, aware that school boards presently have the responsibility to establish and implement school breakfast and lunch programs, believes in the efficient management and use of available funds.

The Association believes the implementation of such food service programs to be the responsibility of food service personnel and not be an additional duty imposed on teachers. (2006)

STUDENT EDUCATION

D-Student Educational Opportunities, Rights, and Responsibilities

D-1. Educational Opportunities

NEA-New Mexico believes programs in the public schools must be established to provide the opportunities for all students to develop those abilities, attitudes, and habits of thought and action leading to responsible citizenship, vocational, career, and technical effectiveness, and maximum personal development and fulfillment. All such

programs should provide a comprehensive program of lifelong learning for the advancement and promotion of all students (2007)

D-2. Independent Reading Skills(2009)

NEA-New Mexico believes that it is critical that students become independent readers to succeed in life and school. Reading instruction, with appropriate interventions, especially in the early grades, is essential for learning in all content areas and for achieving high standards.

The Association also believes that the acquisition of the primary language spoken within the home is the foundation for reading skills development. Emerging literacy skills begin with the interaction and communication between children and adults. An increased number of words spoken to a child during language development increases future reading proficiency. The Association further believes that schools and communities should work together in raising awareness of the link between language development and reading acquisition skills.(2009)

D-3. Educational Program for English Language Learners

NEA-New Mexico believes that English Language Learners (ELL) must have available to them programs that address their unique needs and that are committed to providing equal opportunity to all students, regardless of their primary language. Programs for EELs should emphasize English proficiency while concurrently providing meaningful instruction in all other curriculum areas. In planning a comprehensive program for EELs, age, academic needs, individual differences in language acquisition abilities, and environmental factors must be considered. (2009)

The Association believes those students whose primary language is other than English must be placed in bilingual/ESL education programs, which shall be determined by local needs, promoted and funded at the national,

state and local levels, to receive instruction in their native language from qualified teachers until such time as English proficiency is achieved.

The Association supports the principals of the “Dream Act” which encourages access for undocumented students to higher education, financial aid, in state tuition and to legal pathway to residency status. (2008)

D-4. Standards for Student Learning

The National Education Association of New Mexico believes in high standards that describe clear expectations for what students should know and be able to do. Throughout the implementation of content and performance standards, all students must be provided the instructional opportunities and learning conditions necessary to attain the standards.

The Association supports the development and use of assessments appropriate to the standards.

The Association believes that education employers must include its local affiliates in the planning, development, implementation, and refinement of standards, conditions, and assessments to ensure that-

- a. Students, parents/guardians/caregivers, education employees, community members, and governmental officials are involved and share the accountability
- b. Education employees are afforded release time and/or compensation in order to have opportunities to work with colleagues on a regular basis throughout the school year on how to teach and assess student proficiency in the standards
- c. Full funding and resources are provided
- d. Curriculum includes, but is not limited to, required standards. Standards are introduced into the curriculum at a rate that allows education employees opportunities to adapt their practice, work with each other, and pilot the work in a concerted fashion
- e. Assessments will be used to evaluate each student's progress toward attaining standards

f. Appropriate attention is given to the needs and developmental levels of each student

g. Professional development is provided for all education employees to help align their practices to the standards

h. Education employees participate in the review and refinement of standards and assessments. (2006)

D-5. Assessment of Public School Students

NEA-New Mexico strongly supports authentic assessment of students. The Association believes authentic assessment is appropriate for the purposes of identifying learning needs, recommending instructional activities and describing the progress of individual students for the sole use of student, parents and teachers.

The Association opposes the use of standardized test and/ or assessment when students with special needs or limited English proficiency are required to take the same tests as regular education students without modifications and/ or accommodations, Non-English-Proficient scores adversely affect the evaluation of a school based on federal and state guidelines, and when testing programs or test limit or supplant instructional time.(2009)

The Association believes assessments should be performance-based and measure what students should know and be able to do. The Association believes that these evaluation instruments should utilize developmentally appropriate techniques that are bias-free, reliable, and valid.

The Association opposes the use of standardized tests that, in any way, deny students full access to equal educational opportunities or are used to evaluate teacher performance. The Association believes standardized tests should not be administered when they are:

a. not cognizant of current research on how children learn (such as learning styles, multiple intelligences, physical growth, child development, and maturation);

b. biased on the basis of gender, race, culture, ethnicity, or socioeconomic level;

c. used as the only criterion for student placement;

d. invalid, unreliable, or out-of-date;

e. used as the sole basis for the allocation of federal, state, or local funds;

f. used in an exploitative manner by anyone in commercial enterprise;

g. used to compare classes or schools;

h. used as the sole criterion for graduation or promotion;

i. used as a criterion for the development of a state system of classification of schools, school systems, students or teachers; or

j. used to dictate curriculum in the schools so teachers are, in fact, “teaching to the test” rather than testing the students over material in the designed curriculum. (2007)

D-6. Social Promotion and Retention

NEA-New Mexico believes that sufficient resources and program alternatives should be provided to allow for the proper placement of each student so that social promotions can be prevented. (2007)

D-7. Art and Music in the Schools

NEA-New Mexico believes it is extremely important to educate children in art and music. These programs should be taught by persons properly trained and licensed in their respective fields.

The Association believes school districts should implement such programs where adequate programs do not exist and should continue to support existing programs. (2007)

D-8. Geography and New Mexico History in the Schools

NEA-New Mexico believes it is important to educate children in geography and New Mexico History.

The Association believes school districts should implement such programs where adequate programs do not exist and continue to support existing programs. (2007)

D-9. Communication Skills

NEA-New Mexico believes that relating oral communication proficiency is a basic educational need placed upon citizens of our society for expression. Because oral communication is a highly specialized field, full-time speech teachers trained specifically in speech communication should be included in every secondary school to specifically teach oral communication. (2007)

D-10. 12 Educational Programs(2009)

NEA-New Mexico believes in the creation of special curriculum, guidance and counseling programs, and health services to meet the special needs of all students in our changing society. (2001)

The Association further believes all publicly funded/public schools educational programs must be staffed by well trained, fully qualified, licensed personnel.(2009)

D-11. Day Care

NEA-New Mexico believes that there is need for quality day care for the children of working parents. The Association supports the concept of providing quality day care for the children of working parents at an affordable price. (2007)

D-12. Students with Head/Brain Injuries

NEA-New Mexico believes students with head/brain injuries have the right to educational programs that best meet their individual needs, as mandated by state and federal law. (2007)

D-13. Health Education

NEA-New Mexico believes in development and implementation of a comprehensive health education program for all students in New Mexico. This curriculum should include mental, emotional, physical development, substance use and abuse, AIDS awareness and prevention and parenting. (2007)

D-14. Suicide Prevention Programs

NEA-New Mexico supports the establishment of suicide prevention and intervention programs. The Association

further believes these programs must be available to the family and classmates of suicide victims and attempted suicide victims. (2007)

D-15. Vocational, Career, and Technical Education

NEA-New Mexico believes preparation of K-12 children for careers, vocations, and productive jobs should be a basic policy of education. The Association also believes K-12 educational programs should be developed for all children assuring equal opportunity for career and occupational development. A continuing program for training, retraining, advancement, and promotion should be provided for out-of-school youth and adults. (2007)

D-16. Inclusion of Students with Special Needs

NEA-New Mexico believes a free, appropriate public education should be provided for all students with special needs in a least restrictive environment, which is determined by maximum teacher and parent involvement. The Association believes there should be a full continuum of placement options and services/delivery models available to students with special needs. Programs should emphasize a broad range of activities for responding to students' differing behavioral patterns, interests, needs, and learning styles. (2007)

The Association believes students with special needs must have appropriate testing options matching the processing disorders, motor skills, and/ or academic developmental levels or language proficiency of those students to measure individual progress and proficiencies.(2009)

D17. Student Discipline

NEA-New Mexico believes discipline is essential in promoting optimum learning. High expectations and effective instruction promote self-control and responsible behavior in students.

The Association believes its local affiliates should develop guidelines for effective disciplinary techniques. Local affiliates

should negotiate a process whereby school employees, parents, students, and courts will be involved in identifying disruptive behavior and prescribing, implementing and evaluating procedures that will reduce and correct disruptive behavior.

The Association believes all students should have the right to due process and an orderly learning environment. (2004)

POLITICAL POWER

E. Effective Use of Political Power

E-1. Tuition Tax Credits and Vouchers

NEA-New Mexico believes tuition tax credits and voucher plans, and/or other funding/financial arrangements—under which K-12 private school education is subsidized by federal or state tax moneys—could lead to racial, economic, and social isolation of children and undermine our commitment to the public school system.

The Association opposes all federal and state legislation designed to establish or implement such plans. (2007)

E-2. NEA-New Mexico EdPAC

NEA-New Mexico believes school employees must constitute a strong political force to secure legislation for the betterment of education and the election of candidates who view education's needs as a priority.

The Association supports NEA-New Mexico EdPAC (Educational Political Action Committee) and believes that school employees and friends of education should support it through individual involvement and contributions.

The Association believes each of its affiliates should work to promote the election of Friends of Education to all governmental bodies including state and local boards of education. (2006)

E-3. Funding Formula Training and Experience Index

NEA-New Mexico believes that the New Mexico Public Funding Formula Training and Experience (T&E) Index must provide the

financial undergirding for the salary structure created in the education reform act of 2003. NEA-New Mexico further believes that the T & E Index should flexibly support salary structures consistent with the three-tiered licensure structure and must not be used to institute state policy intended to force specific salary structures on local districts and employees.(2004)

E-4. Legislative Record

NEA-New Mexico believes school employees of New Mexico have a right to be informed of the voting records of their legislators in order to make an intelligent decision at the polls. (2007)

E-5. Salaries for Legislators

NEA-New Mexico believes New Mexico legislators should be paid a salary or fair and equitable per diem. (2007)

E-6. Children's Code

NEA-New Mexico believes a continuing study of the state children's code is imperative because of the increased number of offenses committed by juveniles and increased violence in the schools.

The Association believes stringent enforcement of the State Children's Code as well as adequate funding for its implementation is necessary. (2007)

E-7. Standard of Living

NEA-New Mexico opposes all legislation threatening to lower the standard of living of school employees and working people in the State of New Mexico, such as the proposed "Right to Work" legislation and Section 14b of the Taft Hartley Act or repeal of New Mexico's prevailing wage act. (2007)

EFFECTIVE LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

F. Building Effective Local Affiliates

F-1. Leadership Training

NEA-New Mexico believes in the development of individual talents and continuous training of future leaders as

essential to maintaining a progressive and dynamic Association. (2007)

F-2. The Local Association and Instruction

NEA-New Mexico believes school employees have a right to speak unequivocally on all matters related to curriculum and instruction. The Association further believes that Local affiliates are the vehicle through which the voice of school employees is heard at all levels where instructional policies, including those on the selection and use of instructional materials, are made. (2007)

F-3. Continuing Membership

NEA-New Mexico believes in the concept of unified professional membership and payroll deduction on a continuing basis. The Association believes educators should promote acceptance of these concepts by their local associations and employers. (2007)

F-4. Student Organizations

NEA-New Mexico believes the Student National Education Association of New Mexico (SNEA-NM) is an appropriate organization within the Association to develop early interest in, and commitment to, the profession of education. The Association believes its local affiliates should work with Student NEA organizations. (2007)

F-5. Professional Development Resource Centers

NEA-New Mexico believes regional professional development resource centers provide an opportunity for school employees to share resources, experiences, and ideas for professional growth. The Association believes that these centers should be established in sufficient numbers to be accessible to all school employees. (2007)

F-6. Retired Members

NEA-New Mexico believes its local affiliates should organize campaigns to solicit membership from retired school employees. (2006)

F-8. Public Relations

NEA-New Mexico believes school employees should place a maximum emphasis upon efforts to inform policy makers and the general public of accomplishments, situations, and conditions within their local school district. (2007)

HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS

G. Promoting Human and Civil Rights in Education

G-1. Family and Medical Leave

NEA-New Mexico believes school employees should be granted leaves to fulfill maternal, paternal, and family medical responsibilities. Absences related to child bearing or adoption should be treated as temporary disabilities for job-related purposes. Policies should recognize the rights of the school employee to determine initial and terminal dates of the leave. The Association further believes extended leaves of absence, without pay, but without loss of up to two years rights or benefits, should be available to school employees for the purpose of child rearing. (2007)

G-2. Multi-lingual and Multi-cultural Training

NEA-New Mexico supports the concept of providing the opportunity for multi-lingual, multi-cultural education to meet the needs of students in the State of New Mexico. (2006)

G-3. Equal Employment Opportunities

NEA-New Mexico believes all public education employers in New Mexico must provide equal employment opportunities to all. The employment guidelines must be the product of a working committee, which includes representatives of all affected categories of employees and community representatives.

The Association further believes that the employment practices of all public education employers must permit no discrimination as defined in the United States or New Mexico

Constitutions; federal statute or regulation; and state statute (including 28-1-7 NMSA 1978) or regulation. (2006)

G-4. Protection of Children

A. NEA-New Mexico believes all children should be protected from child abuse and neglect. Education employees are in a position to recognize abuse or neglect inflicted on children.

The Association supports the current state statute requiring educators to report instances of suspected child abuse or neglect directly to the appropriate authorities.

The Association believes its local affiliates should:

1. Cooperate with community organizations to increase public awareness and understanding of child abuse and neglect; and

2. Encourage development of in-service programs and university workshops stressing identification of neglected or abused children, reporting procedures, and available appropriate learning activities.

The Association supports the strong enforcement of current laws dealing with child pornography. We oppose the exploitation of children.

The Association supports statutory and regulatory provisions that preclude the licensure or initial employment of persons who have been convicted of committing crimes against children.

B. NEA-New Mexico believes that regardless of the immigration status of students or their parents, every student has the right to a free public education in an environment free from harassment. Schools are safe havens, and NEA-New Mexico opposes all Immigrant Control & Enforcement (ICE) raids on or near school property. (2008)

G-5.Environmentally Safe Schools(2009)

NEA-NM believes that all school facilities must be well constructed, safe, energy-efficient, aesthetically pleasing, accessible, functional, and adaptable to persons with

disabilities. The Association supports facility designs with the use of nontoxic materials that promote healthy indoor air quality through properly designed, installed, and maintained heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems. The Association further believes that the use, installation, and maintenance of building materials in school facilities must be appropriate and comply with established local, state, and federal guidelines.(2009)

NEA-New Mexico believes that strict monitoring should be required of nuclear facilities, radioactive/chemical pollutants and waste incineration. The Association believes the development and implementation of new technologies for the safe transport and recycling of nuclear and chemical wastes is necessary. The Association supports programs that would educate the public to the dangers and benefits of nuclear power, recycling of nuclear wastes, and the problems of nuclear waste disposal, and health risks associated with waste incineration.

The Association believes that the people of a state should make the final determination as to whether or not toxic and/or nuclear waste processing sites or the transportation of toxic and/or nuclear waste shall be within their state boundaries. Contiguous states directly affected environmentally by processing sites should be included in the final determination.

The Association supports legislation and local policies to ensure a safe environment. It further believes that school employees must be involved in the development and dissemination of emergency plans in the case of accidents that potentially could result in environmental or health hazards. (1998)

G-6. Violence in the Schools

NEA-New Mexico believes all members of the school community who are the victims of school-related physical attack, verbal abuse, hate crimes, vandalism, or theft should receive the full support of their local school district.

The Association believes that the school environment must be free from all forms of bullying, including physical, psychological, and cyber bullying. (2008)

G-7. Agency and Institutional Settings

NEA-New Mexico recognizes educational employees in agency and institutional settings struggle with unique problems. The Association supports their efforts to win and maintain human and civil rights for themselves and their students. (2007)

G-8. Adults with Disabilities

NEA-New Mexico supports education for adults with disabilities. (2007)

GOVERNANCE

H. Effective Operational Services

H-1. Members

NEA-New Mexico believes in maintaining and recruiting members on a continuing basis. Locals facing or attempting a representational challenge will be given the Association's sanction and support unless a conflicting agreement exists which precludes raiding and/or take back organizing efforts. (2007)

H-2. Minority Representation

NEA-New Mexico believes it must include members of ethnic minorities in all its activities.

The Association believes ethnic minority participation on its boards and committees must be at least in proportion to the ethnic minority membership in the Association. (2006)

H-3 Educational Support Professionals

NEA-New Mexico believes Educational Support Professionals (ESP) are essential to building and maintaining a strong state association. The Association believes that its Local affiliates should encourage full and effective participation of Educational Support Professionals members. Furthermore, the Association believes that local affiliates should encourage ESP members to serve in leadership roles at all levels of the association. (2002)

COMMUNITY

I. Family, School, and Community Relationships

I-1 Understanding and Support of Public Education.

NEA-New Mexico believes the Association and its affiliates have a responsibility to promote understanding and support of public education and educators and to encourage wide community and parental participation in achieving and maintaining educational excellence. (2006)

I-2. Partnerships with Parents

NEA-New Mexico believes parental and family involvement in a child's education is vital to academic success and individual development. The Association supports actions that will improve the capability of local schools and local school districts to establish programs for increasing partnerships that respond to the varying needs of parents and the home. (2006)

I-3. Parent and Family Training

NEA-New Mexico supports the provision and funding of training programs that prepare parents or guardians to take an active role in their child's education. The Association believes these programs should meet the needs of parents or guardians by using a variety of methods that will provide support for parents or guardians to become more active in both their child's classroom and the education process. (2007)

I-4. Business Support for Public Education

NEA-New Mexico believes that the business community and the Association should work cooperatively in promoting, planning, implementing, and evaluating school-community-business partnerships in the support of public education. The Association welcomes from the business community supplementary activities such as release of employees for parent-teacher conferences and other school-related activities, funding for scholarships, and the donation of specialized equipment.

The Association believes that both private and public New Mexico employers should provide paid leave to allow parents to participate in school activities that occur during the parent's normal working hours (2007).