

4 Political Causes America's Largest Teachers' Union is Pushing that Have Nothing to do with Education

Every year the approach of July signals the annual National Education Association (NEA) conference. As the nation's largest teachers' union, the topics discussed and decisions made at this event likely have a greater bearing on what's taught in schools than many realize.

To get a flavor for the type of topics which have been on the minds and hearts of NEA members, I dug through the [2016-2017 resolutions](#) to see the most recent additions or updates to their platform. Below are four intriguing ones:

1. Economic Fairness

According to the NEA, "economic fairness is vital for a fully functioning democracy." The way to achieve such fairness, they suggest, is through "progressive taxation, estate taxes, a higher minimum wage, affordable higher education, and a strong social safety net."

In light of [recent research](#) on the negative effects which minimum wage laws seem to have on underprivileged Americans, one has to wonder if this position will be revised at this year's conference.

2. Family Planning

Perhaps it's no surprise that the NEA supports family planning and reproductive freedom. What is a bit surprising, however, is the fact that they believe those policies should be promoted in a school-based setting:

"The Association further believes in the implementation of

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

3. International Law

Noah Webster [once said](#) that education should "implant in the minds of the American youth the principles of virtue and of liberty," while giving them "just and liberal ideas of government and ... an inviolable attachment to their own country." Many modern Americans have endorsed public education for similar reasons.

The NEA, however, appears to have a different idea. Instead of upholding American law as supreme, it endorses America's involvement in the International Court of Justice:

"The National Education Association believes that all people, including lawmakers themselves, are subject to the rule of law and recognizes that the International Court of Justice is one instrument to resolve international disputes peacefully.

The Association urges participation by the United States in deliberations before the court."

4. Health Care

This recently updated resolution suggests the NEA believes that the government should provide care for a child's body in addition to that of his mind:

"The Association further believes legislation should be adopted to maintain and expand comprehensive health care for all children."

The NEA declares that [its mission](#) is to "advocate for education professionals" and "to fulfill the promise of public education to prepare every student to succeed in a diverse and interdependent world." In looking at the above resolutions, however, one has to wonder if their mission is more political

than educational. The data would confirm this. According to [Open Secrets](#), the NEA is the eleventh largest contributor to political campaigns in the nation. Of the \$27 million it gave in the 2016 election cycle, 99 percent of it went to liberal and democratic causes (chart).

With numbers and principles like those mentioned above, one has to wonder: are public schools as neutral and unbiased as many presume them to be?



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