RESOLUTIONS AS ADOPTED

NEOEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY

NOVEMBER 11, 2023

Resolutions of the
North Eastern Ohio Education Association
2023-24

Definition

A resolution:

- **A.** shall define a goal
- **B.** shall formally state and/or clarify a goal, policy, principle, or a point of philosophy
- **C.** may state appropriate action to be taken
- **D.** shall upon passage constitute a group action

Preamble

Resolutions stated herein are in agreement with the purposes of the North Eastern Ohio Education Association (hereinafter designated as We in the resolutions). The NEOEA shall:

- **A.** Serve as the voice for education in Northeastern Ohio
- **B.** Advance the cause of education for all individuals
- **C.** Promote the health and welfare of children and/or students
- **D.** Promote professional excellence among educators
- **E.** Gain recognition of the basic importance of the teacher in the learning process and other employees in the educational effort
- **F.** Protect the rights of educational employees and advance their interests and welfare
- **G.** Secure professional autonomy
- **H.** Unite educational employees for effective citizenship
- **I.** Promote and protect human and civil rights
- **J.** Obtain for its members the benefits of an independent, united education profession

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A. SERVE AS THE VOICE FOR EDUCATION IN NORTHEASTERN OHIO

A-1 Public Education

We believe that a free and equitable public education is the cornerstone of our social, economic, and political structure and is of utmost significance in the development of our moral, ethical, spiritual, and cultural values.

We also believe that public educational opportunities in American schools must be preserved and strengthened for all students. (14-21)

A-2 United States Department of Education

We believe it is imperative to maintain the United States Department of Education and that the department must be fully funded and a major force for improvement of public education in the United States.

We also believe that the Secretary of the United States Department of Education must be an advocate for public education. (78-14)

A-3 State Board of Education and Other Public Offices

We believe that the State Board of Education shall be comprised entirely of members elected to office by their constituencies.

We also believe that all elected officials, particularly those serving as State Board of Education members, should have personal and sufficient knowledge of the many mandates, restrictions, and regulations facing public education from pre-K through higher education. Decisions on these issues require officials to be capable of representing the diversity of public interests and be familiar with the current provisions and reported data as well as best practices for these topics.

We further believe that the educational background and career experiences of public officials, state school board members, and candidates running for State Board of Education be fully disclosed prior to election. (98-21)

A-4 Thorough and Efficient Education Funding

We believe that ample and consistent funding is essential to meet the State of Ohio's constitutional mandate for a thorough and efficient education.

We also believe that all needed classroom equipment and materials should be provided at school board expense. Teachers should not take needed teaching or preparation time to conduct fund-raising activities to purchase needed equipment and supplies. We further believe that all education mandates must be fully funded. (78-15)

A-5 Equitable Tax Reform

We believe that the implementation of Ohio Supreme Court's decision calling for a fair and an equal system of funding for public schools is essential for the continued existence of public education in this state. In order to enable all students to achieve educational excellence, adequate and equitable funding from public tax sources must be provided to schools.

We further believe that the state and local share of finance must be derived from a balanced tax system that includes all broad-based taxes and reduces the excessive reliance on property taxes. (78-19)

A-6 Delayed Tax Monies

We condemn the practices of state and county officials who delay the payment of tax monies to educational governing boards and force them to borrow in anticipation of these funds. We further urge that state and county officials make timely payment of tax monies and set notification dates for deliveries of such funds. (77-09)

A-7 Supplemental Funding for Public Education

We believe tax credit programs, management-by-objective systems, block grants, educational foundation grants, federally-funded educational incentive programs, stimulus grants, and revenue-sharing programs must be monitored to prevent abuses detrimental to public education. (00-10)

A-8 Business Support for Public Education

We encourage our local affiliates to establish liaisons with local businesses and industries in order to enhance educational programs.

We believe that the business community should play substantive, responsible, and cooperative roles in the financial support of public education in Ohio and that the business community should not seek, nor governing boards grant, tax breaks to avoid paying an equitable share of the cost of public education.

We urge local affiliates to develop coalitions with the business community to advocate adequate and stable funding for public education. We welcome cooperative programs, resource assistance, release of employees for parent-teacher conferences, and the donation of specialized equipment or services by the business community, but believe that such programs must be supplementary to adequate funding of public education. Furthermore, we believe that local affiliates should engage in efforts to prevent the use of programs in the public schools that involve the marketing and/or the promotion of products that exploit students.

We welcome input from the business community to help implement State Standards, but recognize that final decisions about educational programs remain with the local governing board. (77-10)

A-9 Non-Traditional Public School Options

We encourage innovation in public education. However, we believe that when concepts such as charter schools, virtual schools and other non-traditional school options are proposed, all school employees must be directly involved in the design, implementation, and governance of these programs. In addition, virtual schools should not be the sole source of a child's education, except when dictated by the child's Individualized Education Plan.

We further believe that plans for non-traditional public school options should not negatively impact the regular public school program, must safeguard employee contracts, allow for collective bargaining, and must meet the following criteria:

a. have open admissions policies and be tuition-free;
b. be non-sectarian in their programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations, and not be affiliated with a sectarian school or religious institution;
c. be fiscally accountable and subject to the same federal and state audit requirements as other public elementary and secondary schools in the state;
d. have clear objectives, missions, and goals for which they are periodically assessed and held accountable to the public;
e. meet the needs of at-risk students and those requiring special education services;
f. have adequate start-up resources and funding mechanisms that do not harm the district or other traditional public schools in that district;
g. meet the equivalent safety and health standards as required for existing (non-community) public school districts;
h. comply with all federal, state, and local laws and policies regarding due process, nondiscrimination, and equal educational opportunity;
i. have a teaching force that is state-certified;
j. operate on a basis of voluntary participation by students, faculty, and staff;
k. ensure all school staff have the same collective bargaining rights provided other public school employees under state law, and comply with all state-required regular, periodic assessments and evaluations of student academic achievement; and
l. meet the same standards of academic performance and operational standards required of traditional public schools. (77-12)

A-10 Voucher and Tuition Tax Credit Plans

We oppose all voucher and tuition tax credit plans that remove public money from public educational institutions. We are especially concerned when such programs lead to racial, economic, and social isolation of children.

We believe that using vouchers, using tax credits, or changing funding formulas to provide federal, state, or local finances to parents/guardians/caregivers for students to attend non-traditional or private schools weakens public education.

We further believe that every school-aged child is entitled to a free, equitable, and quality public education. (77-14)

A-11 School District Reorganization

We believe that to assure an equitable, high quality, and efficient public school system for all students, it may be necessary for school districts to be decentralized, consolidated, reapportioned, or restructured. Reorganizing should occur only to improve educational opportunity. Any changes must not be used to segregate students based on social, ethnic, economic, political, religion, family, or geographic differences in affected districts.

All school reorganization plans must involve local associations and other stakeholders in all decision making. Such efforts must:

a. adhere to collectively bargained labor agreements;
b. comply with all appropriate school board policies;
c. exhaust all viable evidence-based internal school improvement plans that address the needs of the whole child;
d. identify, analyze, and evaluate the impact of reorganizing and its funding;
e. deliberate reorganizing proposals in open meetings and public hearings;
f. develop procedures and criteria that support and attract staff transfers to/from reorganized schools.

We also believe that education services in reorganized schools should continue to be provided by public entities and public employees. (15)

A-12 Takeover of Public Schools or Public School Districts

We believe that the locally elected school board should govern the school district to provide an educational program designed to meet the needs of all students in the district. School boards of public school districts undergoing a program improvement process should maintain their authority over school district business as duly elected officials of the school district.

We further believe that if a takeover of a public school or a public school district occurs, current collective bargaining agreements and due process rights must be maintained. Employees of these public schools and public school districts should remain bargaining unit members of local, state, and national affiliates.

We also believe that federal, state, and local support should be given to public schools and public school districts undergoing a program improvement process. Support should also be provided by local and state affiliates. We believe that schools created to replace public schools or that have been taken over must follow all the laws regarding public schools and comply with the affiliate guidelines.

Any takeover plan of a public school district must involve local associations and other stakeholders in all decision making. Such efforts must have exhausted all viable evidence-based internal school-improvement plans that address the needs of the whole child. The deliberation of takeover proposals must be held in open meetings and public hearings attended by all stakeholders. Any takeover by state or municipal agencies must include a time table and a specific plan for returning the school system to local control. (19)

A-13 Financial Aid for Post-Secondary Education and Training

We believe that to be successful in today's society most secondary school graduates must continue their education, but the increasing cost of education beyond a secondary school diploma should not be prohibitive, especially for the economically disadvantaged.

We urge federal, state, and local governments, as well as those in the private sector, that currently offer secondary school graduates financial aid programs to continue to do so, at least at current, if not at increased and enhanced, levels. Furthermore, we urge our local and affiliate associations to offer scholarships or other financial aid programs to secondary school graduates. These programs should be reviewed to ensure their support realistically helps graduates meet the rising cost of post-secondary training.

We commend and support school counseling programs committed to directing our graduates toward post-secondary education. These programs must offer assistance on how to secure financial aid and provide education to students on debt incurred by further education and training.

The Association supports public service loan forgiveness programs. Loan forgiveness should be based upon successful completion of years of service, and not be dependent upon specific loan types, location of employment, or repayment plans. Loan repayment and forgiveness criteria, as well as information on predatory lending practices, should be provided to all aspiring and practicing public servants prior to incurring educationally-related debt. (05-23)

A-14 State Employment Relations Board

We believe the State Employment Relations Board must be an impartial arbiter of employer/employee disputes.

We further believe that to achieve this goal, appointees to the Board should be required to demonstrate a non-partisan commitment to and past experience in decisions relating to labor actions, petitions, and suits that impact future decisions that may come before the Board. (19)

B. ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF EDUCATION FOR ALL INDIVIDUALS

B-1 Modernization of Curriculum

We believe that public education must help students meet the challenges of life, compete successfully in the modern world, improve the quality of life, and encourage life-long learning. (77-15)

B-2 Democracy and Citizenship Education

We believe that law related education and instruction in democratic processes must be an integral part of the curriculum in the public schools. We encourage teachers, lawyers, court personnel, lawmakers, and others to work together to develop appropriate materials, including information about the justice system and constitutional issues, in order to teach students to be responsible citizens. (87-05)

B-3 Cultural Diversity in Instruction

We believe that educational programs should strive to portray a full range of human diversity and encourage teaching methods which assist students in gaining an understanding, appreciation, and acceptance of those who are culturally, ethnically, socially, or personally different from themselves.

We also believe in the importance of observances, programs, and curricula that accurately portray and recognize the roles, contributions, cultures, and history of these diverse groups and individuals.

We encourage affiliates and members to become part of programs and observances that may include cultural and heritage celebrations and/or history months. (96-11)

B-4 Promoting Female and Minority Participation in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics

We believe in providing full participation and equal opportunity to female and minority students in STEAM education which investigates science, technology, engineering, arts,

and mathematics through inquiry and problem-based learning methods using the creative process to assure their success, and inspire new generations of interdisciplinary innovators.

We further recommend that females and minorities should be encouraged, inspired, and recruited to enter and be actively involved in STEAM opportunities and education to learn creatively by using 21st century skills. (99-21)

B-5 Science Curriculum and Standards

We believe that the State science curriculum should include elements in its standards that are in strict alignment with national science standards as set by the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA), the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), and/or the National Science Foundation (NSF). Science standards should address subjects that conform and be based on empirical evidence derived from the scientific method. Concepts, such as Intelligent Design, that fail to meet the most fundamental standards of scientific validity have no place in science classrooms. (02-12)

B-6 Energy Education

We support educational programs that increase understanding of energy, environmentally safe alternative energy sources, and energy conservation practices. We further urge the development and implementation of programs to educate the general public concerning the need for, and benefits of, energy conservation and the use of reusable and recyclable products. (77-11)

B-7 Environmental Education

We believe the environment must be protected. We urge the establishment and maintenance of federal, state, and local wilderness areas, recreational areas, refuge areas, and designated green areas. We believe that the public schools need environmental education to produce an awareness and understanding of environmental problems confronting society including the need to develop alternative sources of energy, such as wind and solar power, while maintaining the highest levels of protection to the environment especially in regards to the production of energy sources through fracking, tar sands extraction, and sea floor mining.

We support the dissemination of factual and reliable scientific data on climate change and global warming.

We also believe that school systems should implement and support environmental programs in schools for Pre-K through higher education.

We further believe that environmental education programs need to emphasize the interdependence of humanity and nature, raise an awareness of the effects of past, present and future pollution disasters. We believe in programs that address the

protection of endangered, threatened and rare species and recognize the reality and effects of global warming as well as Earth's finite resources. We encourage support of legislation and local policies that ensure a safe and healthy environment. (77-19)

B-8 Classroom Use of Animals

We believe that educators at all levels should develop and/or implement guidelines concerning the humane use of animals in the classroom and alternatives to using animals in the classroom. We further believe in the use of classroom animals for observation studies and for the development of empathy among students for all forms of life. (77-09)

B-9 Metric System/International System of Units

We believe in the adoption of the International System of Units (SI metric system). We advocate that the SI system be taught at all educational levels in light of our global economy and interactive space technology.

We further believe that the retooling of our country's manufacturing to the metric system would promote American productivity and increase our capability to compete. (06-12)

B-10 Foreign/World and Classical Language Education

We believe that foreign/world and classical language instruction is an important part of the total educational process and an integral part of international studies.

Further, students must be offered the opportunity to learn other languages early enough in their educational experience to enhance their understanding of English and to participate fully in a global society and economy. We support the maintenance of current programs and the encouragement and development of foreign/world and classical language instruction and international studies programs.

We recognize the need for teacher training programs for foreign/world and classical language teachers, and supports teacher exchange programs. We oppose cuts in foreign/world language education as a means of reducing instructional budgets. (07-09)

B-11 Global Education

We believe that in order for students to understand the dynamics of world geopolitics, ethnic tensions, economies, and past global events a strong curriculum in global education needs to be incorporated into all areas of today's curriculum.

Furthermore, students should be exposed to all aspects of geography, ethnic diversities, world biomes and threats to life's continuance such as climate change, biotic extinction, and weather extremes in order to understand world politics.

We also believe students need to become knowledgeable in such government regulations and restrictions at home and abroad that would impact their travel or careers; such as visa requirements, passports, immigration and emigration requirements and cultural/religious sensitivities. (20)

B-12 Bilingual, ELL, and MLL Education

We believe that limited English Language Learners (ELL), also known as Multilingual Learners (MLL), must have available to them instructional materials, resources, and programs that address their unique needs and provide equal opportunity to all students, regardless of their primary language. Programs for ELL and MLL students should emphasize English proficiency while concurrently providing meaningful instruction in all other curricular areas. ELL and MLL students should be placed in bilingual and multilingual education programs to receive instruction through a certified Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) instructor until such time as English proficiency is achieved. Students should not be enrolled in special education classes solely because of linguistic differences.

We value bilingual and multilingual competence and support programs that assist individuals in attaining and maintaining proficiency in their native language before and after they acquire proficiency in English.

We support federal and state legislation that would require and fully fund ELL and MLL programs for all students who are not proficient in the English language. Such legislation must provide funds to expand current ELL and MLL programs, including those for teacher preparation. (88-23)

B-13 Economic Life Skills

We believe that all students should develop the necessary life skills in economics to help them manage finances responsibly.

We also believe that economic life skill education should begin no later than in middle school and be incorporated into a variety of high school curricula so as to ensure comprehensive coverage of the student body.

We further believe economic life skills curricula should include basics as banking options, checking account reconciliation, interest rates, loan terminology and procedures, credit card and debit card procurements, student loans, buying a car or house, managing a budget, procuring insurance, and savings account options and investments. (11)

B-14 Family Stability

We believe that it is in the best interest of all children to live in a secure and stable family environment. We recognize the multiple family structures of our society and the

impact of these family structures and other close personal relationships on the quality of individual lives and upon society. Every effort should be made to provide a family with the supportive services it needs to allow it to stay together and care for the child in a safe, nonabusive, and nurturing environment.

We therefore support culturally sensitive educational activities and programs designed to prepare people for the roles and responsibilities of family relationships, particularly for marriage, parenting, family literacy, and the care of older-generation family members.

We urge that such programs and activities include, but not be limited to, interpersonal communication, problem-solving and related human relationship skills. (95-19)

B-15 Family and Consumer Sciences

We believe that the study of family and consumer sciences must be state mandated and state funded.

We further believe these programs should be afforded to all students to prepare them to become adults who can live independently, make homes for themselves, and care for families. These programs should be taught by licensed specialists, in modern settings, with safe state-of-the-art equipment. We oppose cuts in family and consumer science as a means of reducing instructional budgets. (92-20)

B-16 Career and Technical Education

We believe career and technical education (formerly known as vocational education) should ensure a broad range of career options. It should be geared to both training in specific skills and further education of the student. Career and technical education should provide educational opportunity for students:

a. To acquire the basic skills needed to function in society
b. To acquire marketable skills
c. To further their education or training for careers
d. To continue post-secondary education.

We further believe these programs should be afforded to all students regardless of gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, race, and ethnicity. These programs should enhance self-esteem, stress equal opportunity for career development, equal access to college and university admissions, and employment opportunities.

We support career and technical education as a major component of education. To be effective, career and technical education should be preceded by career awareness and exploration programs. These exploratory courses should be incorporated into traditional academic courses and into industrial and practical arts education courses. (99-21)

B-17 Industrial Technology Education

We believe that industrial technology education must be an integral part of the Pre-K through 12 curriculum and should be state mandated. This subject must be taught by licensed specialists in the field, in hazard-free settings, and with state-of-the-art equipment. We believe that cuts in industrial technology education as a method of budget reduction are counterproductive and irresponsible. (77-10)

B-18 Fine Arts in Educational Programs

We believe that the arts are a vital part of a student's education and urge all schools to develop and support programs by which students become observers and participants in music, the visual arts, dance, literature, and drama. We oppose cuts in arts curricula and staffs as a method of reducing instructional budgets. (77-09)

B-19 Comprehensive Health and Physical Education

We believe that physical activity and exercise are essential for good health and must be encouraged during the developmental years of students. We also believe that comprehensive instruction in health and physical education should be provided daily in grades Pre-K through 12, in or on facilities designed for that purpose, regardless of participation in extracurricular activities. Comprehensive health and physical education programs and curricula should be developmental, sequential, cooperative in nature, and culturally sensitive and should:

a. emphasize physical activity, fitness, exercise, good health and hygiene; skills of sports, dance, and basic movement; and related concepts and knowledge;
b. assess students, including physical fitness testing, at least twice a year as a culmination of preparatory activities;
c. provide for the special needs of students with low fitness, physical disabilities, or learning disabilities;
d. be taught by teachers appropriately certificated/licensed in health and/or physical education;
e. be taught in hazard-free settings with state-of-the-art equipment;
f. be taught with the same student/teacher ratio as other grade level class sizes and be provided the same amount of planning time.

We oppose cuts in health and physical education curricula and staff as a method of reducing instructional budgets. (00-15)

B-20 Student Athletics K-12

We believe in offering students the opportunity to participate freely in a full menu of extracurricular athletic activities. Such activities should be available on an equal opportunity basis, regardless of "star potential," to all those students who legitimately

meet eligibility standards set by the Ohio High School Athletic Association and those of the local governing board. We believe the practice of "pay-to-play" is a violation of the principle of equal opportunity. We likewise believe that attempts to manipulate student academic performance indicators to meet athletic eligibility standards should be regarded as unethical.

We believe the positions of coaches, managers, and other supervisory personnel of athletic programs should be awarded first to on-staff and secondly to non-staff individuals whenever potential candidates are equally qualified.

Governing boards should provide student athletes with clean, safe, and up-to-date facilities and equipment. They must take adequate precautions to ensure that athletic programs are drug-free and free from all forms of hazing and harassment. Governing boards should ensure that supervisory personnel have been screened through proper background checks, receive and maintain proper training in athletic skills as well as first aid and safety techniques. Athletic personnel must comply with the Code of Ethics of the Teaching Profession and be evaluated for professional excellence on a yearly basis.

We recognize the value of athletic booster organizations, but believe that the role of boosters should not interfere with or supersede legitimate authority of the governing board or supervisory personnel. (15)

B-21 Labor Movement Education

We believe that the contributions and influence of the labor movement and unionism to the growth of the United States, as well as the reasons for the celebration of Labor Day, should be an integral part of the curriculum in our schools. (77-12)

B-22 Adult Basic Education/Literacy Programs

We believe that governing boards should receive ample and consistent financial state assistance in order to provide adult basic education programs that will enable more adults to complete their formal education and to retrain the semi-skilled and skilled worker. We further believe that state and federal funding should be provided for effective adult literacy programs. (78-15)

B-23 Higher Education

We believe that higher education and post-secondary education serve to foster educational development, basic research and scholarship, career preparation, and preparation for life. We support access to collegiate programs for all qualified students without regard to age, gender, race, economic, or military registration status.

We believe that higher education units must be allowed to determine the criteria for employee evaluation, promotion, work load, and compensation through the collective bargaining process.

We support the expansion of funding for higher education, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and developing institutions. We support funding programs in higher education that are based not only on enrollment, but that also take into consideration student and program needs. Programs for student financial assistance that assure access and choice for all qualified students—regardless of financial means—who wish to pursue higher education must be guaranteed.

We further believe that both governmental and private sectors need to provide research and study grants to higher education faculties in all academic areas. Such grants should be awarded on the basis of merit without discrimination. The dissemination of grants must not be used to influence university decisions and policies. We believe that academic freedom applies to research and the dissemination of research results. (77-21)

B-24 Home Schooling

We believe that home schooling programs cannot provide the student with a comprehensive education experience. When home schooling occurs, students enrolled must meet all state requirements. Home schooling should be limited to the children of the immediate family, with all expenses being borne by the parents/guardians/care-givers. Instruction should be by persons who are licensed by the appropriate state education licensure agency, and a curriculum approved by the State Department of Education should be used.

We also believe that home-schooled students should not participate in any extracurricular activities in the public schools.

We further believe that local public school systems should continue to 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 home school setting. (00-11)

B-25 Involvement of Parents and Guardians

We believe that parents and guardians are an integral component of students achieving success. Therefore, it is imperative that parents and guardians support education, instill a desire to learn, insure daily attendance and teach courtesy, respect, responsibility, and self-discipline.

We further believe in the importance of reaching out to the parents and guardians of students who are chronically absent and/or disruptive and otherwise at risk by developing programs such as evening courses, social worker/home visits, and referrals to social service agencies. Such programs may be developed in partnership with school, community, business, and family. Participation in such programs by educational employees must be on a voluntary basis and fully compensated under supplemental contract. Financial support for these programs must be provided by additional funding to the local districts, and existing school funds shall not be used.

In addition, we believe that alternative programs need to be funded and developed to encourage at-risk students to receive an education sensitive to alternative learning styles. (93-97)

B-26 Violence Free Schools

We believe that school employees and students should be safe from violence. The appropriate agencies—including public safety agencies, school administrators, and local, state, or national governments—have an obligation to use their authority to prevent violence in schools.

We support the creation of posted gun-free/drug-free/crime-free zones as well as neighborhood watch zones in areas proximate to school property.

We believe that mandatory penalties must be enacted for criminal actions involving deadly weapons or look-alikes on school property.

We urge governing boards to pass student conduct codes that will provide punishments for unauthorized actions involving deadly weapons or look-alikes. Such punishments must include expulsion, removal to a more restrictive environment, or home-bound instruction. We support the documentation of incidents where students have threatened others. We further support psychological evaluation, counseling, and therapy for students who have demonstrated violent tendencies or have initiated violent actions against others.

We support the development of strategies, instructional materials, and activities that will encourage nonviolent resolution of interpersonal and societal conflicts. (78-19)

B-27 Education of Undocumented Children and Children of Undocumented Immigrants

We believe that, regardless of the immigration status of school-aged students or their parents, every student has the right to a free public education. We further believe that the determination of legal residency status is the responsibility of the federal Immigration and Naturalization Service, not of educational systems. (14)

B-28 Media Centers

We believe that every school or educational facility in Ohio should have a media center. Each media center should be staffed by at least one certificated/licensed media specialist and by a certificated/licensed substitute in case of absence.

We believe that adequate funding for print and non-print materials is necessary to support the curricular needs of students and faculty. (78-11)

B-29 Public Libraries and Public Education

We recognize that as America's public schools strive to create an informed, flourishing society, America's public library system is committed to the same goal.
We support the efforts of public libraries in:

a. providing academic and cultural resources complimentary to or lacking in the schools;
b. providing study time and space beyond that of the classroom or lacking in the home;
c. encouraging and providing opportunities for life-long learning by addressing the needs and interests of pre-school learners and of the more mature and elderly; and
d. offering vocational/career resources not only for students but also for adults.

Though we recognize that in many communities, school libraries/media centers or public libraries substitute one for the other, we believe that any individual community is best served by both.

We also believe that a free, comprehensive public library system must be maintained and supported to the degree that it will be able to keep pace with the explosion of information in contemporary society. (12)

B-30 Internet Access

We believe that every school classroom, office, teacher workroom, and library/media center should have affordable, high speed, seamless, and equal access to the Internet.

We also believe that educational employees are essential to the development of an accepted use policy (AUP) and to the appropriate use of the Internet.

We further believe that an AUP that requires the signatures of parents/guardians/care-givers and students must be in place before allowing student access.

We believe that Internet access and activities should be age appropriate and monitored and should foster critical use. Any documentation materials reproduced as a result of Internet access should be properly cited and comply with copyright laws. (10)

B-31 Technology in the Educational Process

We support instruction in computer literacy and in the responsible use of high technology. We believe such instruction should be conducted by licensed specialists in the field, in modern settings with state-of-the-art equipment, and should be integrated as fully as possible into the curriculum at large without detriment to those programs. (10)

B-32 Summer School

We believe that all governing boards should have and continually expand summer school programs that enable students to attend and take courses that meet personal and academic needs. Summer school programs should parallel the content and curriculum of the school year course and be taught by licensed professionals. (78-10)

B-33 Field Trips

We believe that quality field trips offer unique, immediate, valuable, on-site educational experiences and can impact the academic performance and personal advancement of students in ways that the regular classroom activities and virtual learning cannot provide. We believe that they should be offered as part of a full educational program and should not be subjected to budget cuts. Field trips should be scheduled at a time in the school year when they may best enhance the curriculum.

We encourage the community resources at large to promote field trip opportunities; especially discounts, subsidies, sponsorship, and financial support to students or programs that may be at economic disadvantage. We believe student participation in field trips should be afforded to all enrolled in a particular educational program regardless of economic status.

We believe those who organize field trips must be certain to provide safe transportation, a secure environment, and proper supervision. (15)

B-34 Media Literacy

We believe that all media, not limited to the Internet or social media, can be powerful tools to obtain information, to create universal understanding, and to promote peace.

We support and encourage those programs that use electronic media in the classroom positively to achieve these ends and help students sharpen judgement to approach information with caution and enable them to distinguish that which is verifiable, accurate, and reliable from that which is not. (19)

C. PROMOTE THE HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND/OR STUDENTS

C-1 Safe and Orderly School Climates and Communities

We believe that a safe and effective school climate is necessary for promoting educational excellence in public schools. We further believe that all education employees, parents/guardians, students, school governing boards, and community members and agencies must work cooperatively to establish and maintain safe and

orderly school communities. Students and education employees must be safe physically, socially, and psychologically.

We also believe there must be procedures to prevent and eliminate all types of harassment that might occur. Plans and procedures regarding discipline and/or harassment must include due process.

We further believe that both schools and school districts must have written discipline plans and procedures that are fair, equitable, and consistently enforced as well as procedures for the safe and orderly conduct of school activities and events. We further believe that appropriate school personnel must be properly trained to interact with students exhibiting violent behavior.

We also believe that all school buildings should have controlled access during the school day. Schools and school districts should implement policies and procedures that would closely monitor and restrict visitor access to ensure the safety of students and school personnel. (07-21)

C-2 School Emergency Plans

We believe that to ensure the safety of all students and staff, school districts, schools, and school transportation systems must have written plans that delineate procedures that include but are not limited to emergencies, lockdowns, evacuations, and weather-related conditions. School personnel and parents/guardians, in partnership with the community and safety experts, should be involved in the development of emergency plans for each school site. We further believe, for these plans to be effective, they must be practiced and updated on a regular and consistent basis. Plans must include stress management/counseling strategies as follow-up care for students and staff when appropriate. (07-11)

C-3 Extremist/Terrorist Groups

We are concerned about the emergence and resurgence of extremist and terrorist groups.

We condemn the philosophy and practices of extremist and terrorist groups and their efforts to recruit young people in our schools, and to target the schools themselves to achieve their ends. We urge all affiliates and members to oppose actively all such movements whose objectives are hostile to students, schools, the ideals of the Association, and a peaceful, secure society.

We encourage programs that help students identify and resist the recruitment claims and appeals of such groups. (01-15)

C-4 Family/Domestic Violence and Neglect

We believe that family/domestic violence and neglect has a detrimental effect on students' well-being and urge districts to provide preventive training and educational programs for staff, students, and parents/guardians. We support existing family services and urge creation of additional support systems and shelters for family members experiencing violence, neglect, or other forms of abuse within the home/family environment when harm to oneself or others may be imminent. Furthermore, we encourage social services and the criminal justice system to continue to intervene actively in the cycle of family/domestic violence and neglect. (95-21)

C-5 Child Abuse and Missing Children

We believe that all children should be protected from child abuse, including but not limited to physical, mental, emotional, and sexual abuse, exploitation of children, and/or criminal abduction and the resultant consequences. Given our concern about the number of children who disappear annually, we believe that unexplained absences should be considered suspicious and should warrant full and continued investigation.

We and our affiliates should:

a. heighten education employee awareness of these problems through the development of workshops, lectures, and seminars;
b. encourage the development, endorsement, and use of materials to increase public awareness and understanding of child abuse and criminal child abduction;
c. cooperate with community organizations and businesses to increase public awareness and understanding of child abuse and criminal child abduction;
d. encourage local affiliates to work cooperatively with local programs and/or authorities to raise the public’s consciousness about the missing children crisis;
e. urge that the voluntary fingerprinting of children be conducted in a non-threatening environment and that the completed fingerprint be given exclusively to the parent or guardian.

We urge local affiliates to seek legislative support and publicity in addressing these problems. (00-11)

C-6 Construction/Destruction/Remodeling or Repurposing of Educational Facilities

We believe that students learn best in a safe, healthful, and pleasant physical environment. The environment should support the most modern and sound educational practices.

To achieve the above goal, we believe that:

a. Notice and the opportunity for public input must be given prior to the purchase of a site for any instructional facility.
b. Educational employees should be active participants in site selection and building design in order that the resulting facility best serve the needs of students and staff.
c. A thorough and timely study of environmental impact must be conducted prior to the purchase or use of such site.
d. Prospective sites must be reviewed to determine that the sites are not current or former hazardous waste disposal sites, hazardous release sites, or sites of hazardous substance pipelines or wells, or underground hazards.
e. There must be full compliance with all federal, state, and local codes, ordinances, and laws governing the purchase, design, and construction of such site. Work shall begin only upon evidence that the necessary licenses and permits have been secured.
f. Educational facilities should be safe and secure for all students and educational employees. Appropriate safety concerns include: freedom from such hazardous materials as asbestos, lead-based paint, harmful fumes and gases, and stinging insects; adequate supplies of potable water; proper ventilation and temperature control; sanitary, well-maintained restroom facilities; smoke alarms and other effective emergency systems.

Furthermore, we believe that when an educational site or facility no longer serves the purpose for which it was intended and the governing board determines upon its disposal, the following conditions should be met:

a. The environmental impact of disposal or destruction should be assessed by the proper authorities or agencies in a timely and thorough manner.
b. The historical, cultural, and community resource value of the site or facility should be considered.
c. Prior notice and the opportunity for public input is to be provided in a timely manner.
d. There must be full compliance with all federal, state, and local codes, ordinances, and laws governing the disposal or destruction of said site or facility. Work shall proceed only upon evidence that the required licenses and permits are secured.
e. Disposal or destruction of the educational facility must proceed in a timely manner and should not create an eyesore or hazard to the community.

We further believe that the governing board's decision to remodel, repurpose, or replace current facilities must be suspended until current testing and maintenance have met all safety and health standards. (16)

C-7 Toxic Chemical-Free Zones

We believe that toxic chemical-free zones must be established around all public schools, libraries, pre-Kindergarten facilities, higher education institutions, municipal water supplies, nursing homes, hospitals, and community gardens in order to protect the occupants from air, soil, or ground water contamination.

The volatile and carcinogenic chemicals used in the fracturing of wells and created as air and water wastes from gasification refineries—as well as the potentially explosive Bakken crude oil being transported along railroad lines—must be prevented from harming the environment and area residents.

We also believe that local, state and federal environmental protection agencies should enforce the prevention of contamination in and around existing wells, refineries, petroleum pipelines and other chemical facilities, as well as prevent the construction of new toxic chemical facilities near public institutions.

We further believe the determination of the size of the toxic chemical-free zones and the distance and direction of air currents or water movements from the polluting facilities should be taken into consideration as EPA authorities determine their location. (15)

C-8 Eliminating Environmental Hazards at Educational Facilities

We believe that all educational facilities must have good indoor air quality, be smoke-free and safe from all environmental hazards; including lead from water pipe systems within schools, inadequate ventilation, and sick-building syndrome. Appropriate provisions should be made for individuals allergic to perfumes and other aerosols. School districts should conduct periodic testing for harmful water and airborne particles/ agents that are detrimental to the health of students and education employees. Also, additional health hazards should not be created when facilities are altered or repaired.

We urge the establishment and vigorous enforcement of stringent standards at least equal to private sector standards of the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) to ensure health and safety. These standards and any noted deviations should be posted at the facility. We further urge association affiliates to support local ordinances and state and federal legislation and funding to ensure these health and safety standards.

We support ongoing standardized training and certification of education employees working with potentially hazardous school equipment and in hazardous facilities. We believe that such training must include the proper handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials and instruction on material safety data sheets (MSDS). Material safety data sheets should be on file in each school building and available to employees upon request.

We further believe that school districts must post MSDS and OSHA standards. Students and/or their parent/guardians, education employees, and the public should be notified of actual and potential hazards. All stakeholders should be involved in developing a plan for corrective action. (97-01)

C-9 Health Care for All Children

We believe that every child should have direct and confidential access to comprehensive health care.

We also believe that such health care should be provided by properly licensed physicians and licensed health professionals.

We further believe all educational personnel should be made aware of any students under their supervision who are being medically treated for any illness and/or disorder and be made aware of proper procedures for dealing with the possible side effects of the prescribed medications and emergency medical events.

We believe that the dispensing of medication and performance of maintenance medical procedures should be delivered by properly trained health professionals. (97-19)

C-10 School Nurses

We believe that all students should have access to the immediate services of a full-time licensed professional school nurse at every school.

We also believe that professional development programs should be available to all licensed/certified school nurses to augment their skills in delivering health care services, including special programs for those school nurses who deal with students with disabilities.

We urge our affiliates to enroll school nurses in active membership and to seek legislation that provides licensure/certification and inclusion in collective bargaining agreements. (00-07)

C-11 Protecting Students with Allergies

We believe that all educational governing bodies should establish and implement anaphylaxis plans that include strategies to reduce exposure to allergens, procedures to communicate to parents/guardians, students, and employees about life-threatening allergies, and regular training on dealing with life-threatening allergies for all educational employees. In addition, an individual plan for each student at risk for anaphylaxis must maintain a file that lists that student's prescription and emergency contacts and ensures that parents/guardians supply information on a child's allergies. The individual plan must include details about the type of allergy, monitoring, avoidance strategies and

appropriate treatment, a readily-accessible emergency procedure for the student, and storage for epinephrine auto-injectors (epi pens) if necessary. (07-11)

C-12 Life-Saving Techniques

We believe that all educational employees and age-appropriate students should be trained and/or provided with refresher courses in basic life-saving techniques in CPR, use of EpiPens, and AEDs as part of both school curriculum and staff development. Such training should be provided by licensed/trained personnel. (09-16)

C-13 Substance Abuse

We believe that educators should play a key role in nationwide efforts to educate young people about the dangers of substance abuse and gateway drugs. This includes the awareness of the well-documented dangers involved in the abuse of illegal and legal substances as well as the danger in breathing second-hand smoke. We also believe that every student must be made aware of the inherent dangers in the abuse of prescribed substances, narcotics, drugs, steroids and other addictive substances; including alcohol and nicotine.

We support the elimination of advertising of alcohol and nicotine products at school functions and on school property.

We further believe a concerted effort must be made to strengthen and improve laws and rehabilitation programs. We urge all schools and community groups to initiate programs to combat this serious problem. (78-19)

C-14 Anti-Opiate Treatments

We believe that governing boards of education must provide in-service training for all staff on how to recognize impaired, addicted, or overdosed students and/or educational personnel. Such training should include the proper use of Narcan or other anti-opiate remedies for those seriously impaired and in danger of dying. If available, a police officer, a school nurse, or certified medical professional should be the initial responder. Educational personnel will not be held responsible or liable if their efforts fail to revive an overdosed person.

We also believe governing boards of education need to establish clear directives and policies on these matters. (16)

C-15 Medical Marijuana

We believe all educational personnel should be made aware of any students under their supervision who are being treated with medical marijuana and be aware of proper procedures for dealing with the possible side effects that may evidence themselves in any educational setting or activity.

We also believe governing boards of education need to establish clear directives and policies on these matters. (16)

C-16 School Counseling Programs

We believe that counseling programs should be integrated into the entire education system, pre-K through college. We also believe that the role of the counselor as a member of the educational team should be clearly defined. Such programs should be provided through a maximum counselor/student ratio of 1:250 by appropriately certificated/licensed school counselors who have been trained to support students in realizing their full potential in all areas of growth and achievement. School counselors should spend at least 80 percent of their time providing counseling services to students.

Furthermore, we believe that training of counselors must include vocational areas.

We believe that classroom experience in the field of education must be required for all counselors. This in-the-field training should provide counselors with a greater ability to support students in realizing their full potential in all areas of growth and achievement. (78-16)

C-17 Mental Health

We believe students must be provided with educational programs which promote positive self-concepts and provide the skills needed to ensure good mental health.

We also believe there are increasing mental, emotional, and environmental pressures upon students. Stress management, anger management, grief counseling, conflict resolution, and suicide prevention programs that address the needs of students within both school and community settings and follow up support must be provided.

We further believe educators should be trained and provided with evidence-based suicide prevention programs that help them recognize symptoms of serious mental health issues. Educators should also be provided with proper procedures to obtain support for students in need. The Association urges that these programs be an integral part of the school mission. (92-21)

C-18 Educational and Custodial Services for Emotionally Disturbed Children

We believe that there should be an increased awareness of and a determined effort to identify school-age children who may be emotionally disturbed and meet their needs.

We further believe that all health, social, and psychological services must be provided only by appropriately licensed and certificated professional personnel. We believe that educational employees, parents/guardians, students, and personnel from community

agencies providing services to students must be involved in the development, implementation, and coordination of these services.

We also believe that the State of Ohio should provide facilities for education, psychiatric care, and twenty-four hour custodial care for school age children who have been previously identified as severely emotionally disturbed and who cannot function in a traditional public school setting. (78-15)

C-19 Alternative Programs for At-Risk and/or Special Needs Students

We recognize that there must be increased development and maintenance of alternative programs to meet the needs of at-risk and/or special needs students in Pre-K through 12. We recommend early and appropriate identification and placement of these students. Administrators, regular classroom teachers, special education teachers, and education support professionals should receive necessary training in diagnostic and alternative methods of teaching and learning styles for at-risk and/or special needs students.

Programs should emphasize a broad range of activities for responding to students' differing behavioral patterns, interests, and learning styles. These programs must be evaluated on stated objectives. Teachers in these programs must have a major role in designing the objectives and evaluations and working with appropriate school and education support professionals to execute these objectives and evaluations. Faculty and education support professionals who are working with special needs students should be provided with appropriate resources to accommodate these students' special requirements.

We urge affiliates to seek adequate compensation, planning time, materials, and facilities for all affected educational personnel.

We support the efforts of affiliates to negotiate and legislate for the training of teachers and other related professionals seeking additional certification and for hiring of an increased number of teachers and other related professionals with education in special areas. (99-10)

C-20 Early Childhood Education

We strongly support early childhood education programs through the school system. We support a high quality of transition from home and/or preschool to the public kindergarten or first grade. This transition should include communication and cooperation among parents/guardians, the preschool staff, and the public school staff. We urge that federal legislation be enacted to assist in funding and organizing the implementation of such programs.

We believe that early childhood programs must be staffed by trained and certified/ licensed personnel and support training programs that will lead to credentials consistent

with educational standards in Ohio. We further recommend that males should be encouraged and recruited to enter and be actively involved in early childhood education.

We believe that programs should include a full continuum of services for parents/ guardians and children, including child care, child development, developmentally appropriate and diversity-based curricula, special education, and appropriate bias-free screening devices.

We advocate the establishment of fully-funded, early childhood special education programs. These programs should be readily accessible, provide those services necessary to assist children with disabilities from birth, and be staffed by certified/licensed teachers, qualified support staff, and therapists.

We furthermore urge Association affiliates to seek legislation that would ensure that such early childhood education programs offered primarily through the public schools are fully funded and available on an equal basis and culminate in mandatory kindergarten. We support regulation requiring students starting kindergarten to have reached five years of age by March 1 of that year or to have passed a reliable developmental assessment test. (78-99)

C-21 Gifted and Talented Students

We believe that it is essential that educators recognize children with gifted and talented abilities and provide them with enriched and practical school programs appropriate to their abilities. We also believe that educators need training in selecting reliable methods of identifying and teaching these students. Such identification shall not discriminate on any basis other than the exceptionality being identified.

We also believe that qualified personnel and facilities must be provided if adequate programs for gifted and talented children are to exist. Teachers involved shall be given lower class size based on a weighted formula. (78-00)

C-22 Inclusion

We are committed to the delivery of appropriate education and related services for all students. We believe that the policy of integrating all students with special needs into regular education classes should be considered as one option within the continuum of least restrictive environments. It is essential that all program options, including self-contained classes and self-contained schools, continue to be available. Building/staff modifications must be made if needed.

We further believe that the Individualized Education Planning Team must consider the full range of options available within the least-restrictive environment and must follow a process that will assure an appropriate delivery program for each student. All impacted classroom teachers must be fully involved in the decision making, planning, and evaluation of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and each must receive a copy. All

impacted education support professionals must be involved in the ongoing maintenance of the IEP provision and must also be given a copy. Confidentiality must be maintained by all involved parties.

We also believe that when the inclusion option is the recommendation of the IEP team, all necessary support services must be maintained by appropriately licensed personnel. Teachers involved shall be given lower class size based on a weighted class formula. Time for training, planning, and consultation with resource and other support team personnel must be monitored and regularly evaluated in order to assure the success for the students with disabilities as well as their peers in regular education. In all matters affecting terms and conditions of employment education personnel relating to the inclusion practice, there shall be negotiations between the local association and the schools.

We believe inclusion programs shall not be implemented in order to reduce budgetary deficits. Job security shall be insured at all levels of the process. (93-21)

C-23 Education for Students with Disabilities

We believe that all students with disabilities, including those in a custodial environment, are entitled to a free, appropriate public education within the least restrictive environment and that this education should be determined with maximum teacher involvement.

We believe that to effectively implement laws that address education for students with disabilities, the following conditions must be met.

Regular and special education educators and administrators must share equally in planning and implementing programs for students with disabilities, including the identification of appropriate educational materials and the determination of support services. Classroom teachers must have a role in determining Individual Educational Plans/Programs (IEP's) and should also serve as members of the assessment teams. Individual Educational Plans/Programs (IEP's) must be evaluated and reported using plans which recognize individual differences. To ensure such cooperation, open channels of communication among all parties involved is essential.

An appeals procedure should be available to all educators involved in the planning and implementation of the educational program. Educators must be made aware of their right to dissent when questioning the appropriateness of a program or Individual, including the right to have the dissenting opinion recorded. Individual Educational Plans/Programs (IEP's) should not be used as criteria to evaluate the educator.

Individual Educational Plans/Programs (IEP's) should provide appropriate services for students with disabilities. To achieve this end, modifications in class size (using a formula), in scheduling, and in curriculum design should be made. Students with these IEP's should be allowed to use the designated accommodations for all standardized tests, both local and state. The special needs of these students must not be used to rationalize a negative impact on the learning or working conditions for any student or

educator. Local collective bargaining agreements which provide additional services for students with disabilities must be honored. Staff reductions must not result from the implementation of an Individualized Educational Plan/Program (IEP).

Certified therapy or service animals should be welcomed into the classroom and school facilities when the animal provides positive physical or emotional assistance to the student with disabilities. Staff should be in-serviced as to the extent of services provided by the service animal to the student and basic procedures used by the student or student's aide in integrating the activities into the classroom operations.

All staff must be adequately prepared for their roles in educating students with disabilities through in-service training and retraining. Likewise, adequate amounts of released time must be available to staff so that they can fulfill any increased program demands made upon them.

Finally, we believe that adequate state funding must be provided for the program and that said funds must be used exclusively for the program. (78-21)

C-24 Child Care

We believe that all child care centers should have adequate facilities; proper supervision; appropriate education programs; and qualified, screened, and trained personnel. Child care centers need to maintain proper hygiene among the children attending and insure a sanitary environment to prevent contagion.

We encourage school districts and educational institutions to establish on-site child care for preschoolers, students, the children of students, and the children of staff members. (00-05)

C-25 School Meal Programs

We believe that proper nutrition is essential to child development and student success. We also believe that proper nutrition must be a part of prenatal care and must continue through life.

We support programs within the educational framework that promote understanding of proper nutrition. In addition, we advocate efforts to develop uniform symbols that make clear to consumers which food choices promote good nutrition.

We further believe school food service programs must be nutritionally sound, appealing, and affordable. We support nutrition programs that are regulated by uniform standards, readily accessible, and are supported by public funds.

We also believe that changes in the way public funds are allocated for school food service programs must maintain quality and appropriate levels of service as well as support additional funding, given projected increases in population and need. (01-11)

C-26 Student Transportation

We believe that free transportation should be provided for all students residing beyond a reasonable and safe walking distance from school. Pickup points should be safe and reasonably located.

We believe all students should be transported to and from any school sponsored activity in buses driven by drivers holding valid Commercial Drivers Licenses with SP (school bus passenger) endorsement. No educational employees other than school bus personnel should be required to transport students as a condition of employment.

We also believe that school buses should be safe and properly maintained. Where preschoolers or students with disabilities are being transported, buses should be adapted appropriately. To ensure the welfare of students, paid bus aides must be provided. All safety requirements must be rigorously enforced. Yearly bus evacuation drills should be mandated. Appropriate health and safety training including the issues of student management, discipline, and violence prevention should be provided for all school transportation personnel. (95-06)

C-27 Juvenile Detention and Incarceration

We believe students in detention centers have the same right to an education as any student in a regular public school setting. Education programs for these students must meet the minimum standards of the State of Ohio and should be structured to provide instruction not only in learning skills but also life skills and self-discipline to help them become contributing members of society. Local school districts must fulfill their fiscal obligations to remit the required funding to the detention facilities in which students from their districts are placed.

We further believe it should be the commitment of all educators to provide for the smooth transition of a juvenile from the institutional setting back to the community setting in order to allow for the success of the juvenile. Such a transition should include planning on the part of the school to meet the special needs of the juvenile. (05-11)

C-28 Homeless Students

We believe that homelessness creates educational challenges that interfere with the ability of students to access education and to progress academically. Homelessness can limit the knowledge of, and access to, services such as education, housing, jobs, health care, and other human service agencies.

We also believe school and community groups should work cooperatively to meet the needs of the homeless. (09-12)

C-29 Student Rights and Responsibilities

We believe that student involvement is important in shaping better schools and better social institutions. We support the legitimate and responsible efforts of our students to participate in school governance, to participate in the development of curriculum scope and content, and to regulate their own affairs. We believe that basic student rights include the right to free inquiry and expression; due process; gender equity; freedom of association; freedom of peaceful assembly and petition; participation in the governance of the school, college, and university; freedom from discrimination; freedom from commercial exploitation, including the payment of sub-minimum wages; and equal educational opportunity.

We also believe that each of these rights carries with it a comparable responsibility. Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work and assessments, and conformance to school rules and regulations. Students share with the administration and faculty a responsibility to develop a climate within the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and living. No student has the right to interfere with the education of other students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of each person involved in the educational process.

We urge educators to be responsive to student concerns and to facilitate continuing dialogue and collaborative efforts with students to achieve greater student involvement. (78-00)

C-30 Children and the Media

We recognize that children are an especially vulnerable audience who must be protected from violence, glamorized crime, race and sex stereotypes, and exploitation by advertisers and all entertainment media. We encourage advertisers, media professionals, and parents/guardians/caregivers to promote, at proper viewing times, a variety of materials of the highest caliber for children of all ages to help them to become intelligent and critical viewers, listeners, and readers.

We further believe our affiliates should establish media study committees to monitor media activities to provide research materials and training for members, and to promote positive educational programming. We also urge affiliates and members to help educate parents/guardians/caregivers in determining the types of programs, music, and computer/console type of games that their children should listen to or view and computer/console type of games that their children should listen to, play, or view. (01-06)

C-31 Student Employment

Though we recognize the value of student employment and outside activities, we believe these activities should not be permitted to interfere with the student's personal and educational well-being. (77-93)

C-32 Programs Before and After School

We believe that all children need adequate adult supervision and guidance before and after school hours.

We further believe that children who have limited or no adult supervision before or after school need local, state, and/or national programs, developed and staffed by qualified and trained personnel, which include opportunities to participate in study skill sessions, counseling, and guidance in addition to recreational activities, especially those of a physical nature.

We also believe that participation in such programs by educational employees must be on a voluntary basis and fully compensated under a supplemental contract. Financial support for these programs must be provided by additional funding to the local districts, and existing school funds shall not be used. Employees of these programs should be organized and afforded the rights and benefits of collective bargaining. (92-05)

C-33 Education in Times of Crisis

We believe that the health and safety of students, staff, family, and community must be foremost and that educational integrity must be maintained in times of crisis. We believe that no student should be required to study or educational employee should be required to work in life-threatening situations without appropriate protections or informed consent free from reprisal.

Furthermore, we believe that students receive best instruction in settings where they can interact person-to-person with classroom teachers, other educational employees, and their peers.

Accordingly, in cases when schools must be closed or curriculum, practices, services, or schedules must be modified because of crisis, we believe governing boards and public officials must work closely with staff, parents, and community leaders to maintain as much as possible the existing modes of classroom instruction and student services. In institutions of higher learning, we believe recognized leaders of the student body should be involved.

We also believe that public officials at all levels have the obligation to keep the public honestly informed about the scope of, the course of, and steps being taken to address the crisis at hand. So too, we believe all decisions must be made in a timely manner--without bias, without regard to program popularity, and without political or economic expediency rather than necessity.

Likewise, we believe that local associations must be consulted and participate in any immediate decisions regarding the crisis, especially when contract matters are concerned. We urge local associations to define their members as essential workers

during the time of crisis, and to include provisions for future contingencies as they negotiate contracts with governing boards. (20)

C-34 Historic Preservation

We recognize that our heritage as Americans has often failed to measure up to our ideals and has too often celebrated such.

However, we believe that works of art, monuments, historic sites, and museums—however painful/sensitive to some—can educate future generations by helping them to learn from the past, understand the present, and commit themselves to a better future.

Furthermore, we encourage educators to include such works of art, monuments, historic sites, and museums into their studies as accurately as possible so that students may better understand our history and evolution as a nation. (21)

C-35 Vaccinations

We believe that vaccines are essential medical tools in preventing infectious diseases and must be pervasive to effectively protect society. We also believe that students should be vaccinated, whenever possible and appropriate, prior to enrollment in public school. We further believe that vaccination guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention should be followed by educators, parents/guardians, and students. Ultimately, we believe that state legislatures should establish clear guidelines for waivers that minimize the numbers of unvaccinated students to those necessary due to documented medical conditions. Evidence-based vaccination campaigns are integral in maintaining student and community health. (21)

D. PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE AMONG EDUCATORS

D-1 Code of Ethics of the Education Profession

We affirm the responsibility of all educational employees to become knowledgeable about the *Code of Ethics of the Education Profession* and to adhere to its principles. (97-00)

D-2 A Competent Certificated/Licensed Educator in Every Professional Position

We believe that quality teaching demands the highest quality of training and dedication to students and to our nation. Each teacher must have time to teach under working conditions compatible with the dignity of the profession.

We further believe:

a. In the continuous improvement of educational standards for educators and in the promotion of conditions which will attract and retain educators who are thoroughly trained and have as a minimum a provisional certificate/ license. Temporary Certificates should be in force only as long as those holding such certificates are working toward certification/licensure.
b. That the candidates for admission to the teaching profession should be required to have a minimum of a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. In the case of vocational education teachers, "degree" may mean an approved equivalency. Professional positions, including specialized and substitute positions, must be filled by highly qualified educators holding the appropriate certification/licensure.
c. That the *Code of Ethics of the Education Profession* should be maintained as the standard for ethical conduct of members of the profession. (78-16)

D-3 A Fully Qualified Employee in Every Education Support Professional Position

We believe that all education support professionals, including specialized and substitute positions, must have the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their duties. We recognize that education support professionals are positive role models, enhance the education process, and are essential in the learning environment. Education Support Professionals (ESPs) are integral to the foundation of school communities and must be treated with the respect, recognition, and value due all professionals.

We further believe that every education support professional position must be filled by employees who have appropriate levels of experience, can demonstrate competency in their area, and have completed appropriate training programs and hold licenses and certificates where required by law or by the regulations of civil service or other public agencies.

We likewise believe that the Code of Ethics of the Education Profession should be maintained as the standard for ethical conduct of Education Support Professionals. (91-22)

D-4 Evaluation of Educational Personnel

We believe in sound, objective vehicles for the evaluation of all educational personnel.

We believe that it is a major responsibility of educational employees to participate in the evaluation of their professional performance. We further believe that, just as supervisory and administrative personnel have a responsibility to evaluate educational employees, educational employees should be provided the opportunity to evaluate supervisory and administrative personnel and governing board members.

We believe that the evaluation process should be continuous and conducted for the purpose of improving professional performance. The evaluation should be based upon

written criteria and procedures mutually determined and agreed to by the local association, the administration, and the governing board.

We believe that only one official personnel file should be maintained on any employee for purposes of evaluation. We further believe that the evaluation procedure should be tied to the professional growth program which has been developed and maintained in conjunction with representatives selected by the local association and should include:

a. clear performance expectations that are specific to the job description;
b. regular observation of job performance with reasonable advance notice and discussion of evaluation visits and a timely consultation after each visit;
c. a written evaluation report to be provided to the person being evaluated;
d. opportunity for a written response prior to the placement of the evaluation in the personnel file;
e. ability to review the personnel file—including the right to attach a written response to any item therein and a procedure for removing any inappropriate or unfounded material from the file;
f. a provision for an alternative evaluator and/or an opportunity for an alternative evaluation report to ensure a fair and unbiased evaluation of the education employee; and
g. an unbiased appeals process.

We believe that by participating in an evaluation an education employee does not waive his or her right to due process or privacy in any subsequent contractual or legal proceeding.

We hold that neither teacher examinations or value-added assessments nor student test results should be used as a method for evaluating educators or for determining salary, tenure, retention, or promotion.

We strongly condemn the imposition of merit rating for the purpose of determining salaries. (78-13)

D-5 Elements of Professional Growth

We believe that, as a means for meeting established policies concerning professional growth, governing boards should recognize the value of and accept participation by educational employees in professional organizations, including association activities, involvement in school and community activities, work experiences outside of education, continued education, as well as other experiences. These actions should be accepted as a means of earning PDUs (Professional Development Units)/CEUs (Continuing Education Units) by local professional development committees. (78-11)

D-6 Local Professional Development Committees (LPDC)

We believe that local professional development programs should assure that certificated/licensed education employees have a decisive voice at every stage of planning, implementation, and evaluation of professional development plans. All active certificated/licensed education employees should have access to such programs.

We further believe the LPDC must meet the certification/licensure requirements specified by statute, but we also encourage local associations to negotiate locally appropriate specific implementation procedures and policies with their governing boards. (78-99)

D-7 Professional Development/In-service Training

We believe that professional development is necessary throughout the career of the education employee. Professional development might include, but not be limited to, continuing education courses, state or regionally developed professional development resource center programs, and local professional development and grant programs. Professional development resource centers should be established, funded, and accessible to all educational employees. We maintain that local professional development programs (created and maintained at the school district level) play a substantial role in reinforcing and developing positive changes in education employees' performance and effectiveness.

We also believe that such programs should provide equal opportunities for educational employees to gain the knowledge and skills they feel are important to their position, the improvement of their programs, and their performance as members of their profession.

We believe that governing boards should recognize the value of and accept participation by educational employees in activities of professional organizations, involvement in school and community activities, work experiences outside of education, continued education, as well as other experiences. (78-11)

D-8 Funding of Continuing Education

We believe that continuing education must be affordable and not burden participants with unsustainable and oppressive debt.

We support educational funding models and programming that reduce the financial burden to the learner. Promotion and access to financial aid educational resources addressing predatory lending practices, as well as loan forgiveness requirements and repayments, should occur before the financial burden is incurred by the participants. Any additional training and programming that is required for education employment should also not incur a financial burden. (22)

E. GAIN RECOGNITION OF THE BASIC IMPORTANCE OF THE TEACHER IN THE LEARNING PROCESS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES IN THE EDUCATIONAL EFFORT

E-1 Academic Freedom

We believe that academic freedom is essential to the teaching profession. Academic freedom includes the rights of teachers and learners to explore and discuss divergent points of view. Controversial issues should be a part of the instructional program when, in the judgment of the professional staff, the issues are appropriate to the curriculum and to the maturity level of the student.

We further believe that academic freedom includes all educators' right to evaluate, criticize and/or advocate his/her professional philosophy concerning the school's policies and programs. (77-22)

E-2 Teacher Involvement in Curriculum Development

We believe that to provide the highest quality of education to all students, educators must be the primary voice in the planning, development, implementation, monitoring, and refinement of curricula. We also believe that careful consideration must be given to the curriculum in regards to:

a. student academic standards;
b. alignment of curriculum with standards;
c. unwarranted duplication of content;
d. prevention of content gaps;
e. content overload;
f. developmentally appropriate content;
g. appropriate accommodations and modifications for students with special needs.

We further believe that educators must have an active role in the establishment of procedures for the planning, development, implementation, monitoring, and refinement of curricula. To that end, professional time and training must be provided. Governing boards are also responsible for financing the curriculum which they approve.

We believe in positive action plans that establish procedures and timetables for eliminating racism and sexism in the curriculum. These plans should continue to be monitored for compliance. (77-12)

E-3 Ohio Learning Standards

We believe in high learning standards that are educationally sound in order to provide a full and well-rounded education for all students. These standards should state common goals or benchmarks for learning.

We also believe the implementation of these standards, for any particular grade level or subject area, should be phased in over time and directed by the classroom educators. Implementation should be supported by adequate data collected and analyzed over a period of at least 4-5 years using a limited number of different testing instruments. Such implementation must be carried out without threat of retaliation or any negative impacts to an educator's professional status, compensation, benefits or other conditions of employment.

We further believe the methodology, grade or age appropriateness, classroom techniques and supplies, supplemental materials, tests, and number of assessments must be primarily determined by the classroom educator or grade level team of educators. Adequate technological equipment must be provided in order to properly implement the Ohio Learning Standards. (15)

E-4 Testing

We recognize the need for ongoing comprehensive assessments to determine student achievement. A student's level of performance must be assessed through multiple measures linked to the lessons teachers teach and the materials teachers use. We believe that the primary purpose of multiple testing is as follows:

- to assist students and their parents/guardians/caregivers in identifying the student's strengths and needs;
- to measure a program's effectiveness, communicate learning expectations, and provide a basis for determining instructional strategies; and
- to develop an appropriate learning experience for students.

All methods of assessment shall provide the necessary accommodations, modifications, and exemptions, and be free of cultural, racial, and gender biases.

We believe that classroom teachers are best suited to decide the proper means and methods of testing students. (78-10)

E-5 State Mandated Testing

We believe that the students in Ohio's schools need to be able to perform at a reasonable educational level upon graduation. We also believe that a single evaluative tool cannot adequately measure the achievement of every student. We endorse the use of varied testing tools that will adequately and fairly test Ohio's students.

We also believe that any such achievement/criterion-based assessment must be accompanied by statutory guarantees that the results of minimum skills measurements shall not be used as criteria for any evaluation or compensation of an education employee unless negotiated as a stipulated portion of a federal grant program.

We further believe that association members must be involved in the development and implementation of such assessments.

We call on the State Department of Education to ensure that any education employee who is assigned to monitor or proctor any level of state mandated test be given written explanation of the rules governing the administration of the tests and the possible consequences that may result from non-compliance. (03-11)

E-6 Challenges to Teaching Materials and Techniques

We believe that quality teaching depends on the freedom to select materials and teaching techniques. Educators and school library media specialists must have the right to select and use materials and techniques without censorship or legislative interference. States, school districts, and educational institutions must include teachers and faculty as full voting members on textbook and curriculum review and adoption committees.

We believe educators and library media specialists should receive administration and board support in resisting undue pressure from single-issue citizen groups. We further believe the pre-publishing censorship, book-burning crusades, and attempts to ban books from school library media centers and school curricula violates the professional and civil rights of educators and students.

We also believe that challenges to the choice of instructional materials and techniques must be orderly and objective, under procedures mutually adopted by professional associations and school governing boards. Instructional materials and equipment must be provided in sufficient variety and quantity to serve all students. (11-12)

E-7 Religious Heritage in Instructional Materials

We believe that educational materials should objectively portray the influence of world religions in the social and historical development of our nation and world culture. We further believe that legislation, regulations, or policies that mandate or permit the teaching of sectarian doctrines in the public schools violate the principle of separation of church and state and the rights of teachers and students. (77-04)

F. PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF EDUCATIONAL EMPLOYEES AND ADVANCE THEIR INTEREST AND WELFARE

F-1 Collective Bargaining

We call for changes in existing statutes which:

a. will provide that during work stoppages, only those days on which at least 70% of the certificated/licensed staff are in attendance be counted as instructional days;
b. will protect the rights of employees to refrain from crossing the picket line of another bargaining unit engaged in a lawful strike; and
c. will provide adequate funding of SERB so as to carry out the intent of the law in a timely manner.

We oppose any/all attempts to weaken or eliminate current collective bargaining laws. (78-03)

F-2 Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action

We reaffirm our commitment to the principle that every person regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, residence, physical disability, political activities, professional association activity, age, size, marital status, family relationship, gender, gender identification, or sexual orientation has the right to fair and equal evaluation for service in an educational institution in any capacity for which the education employee is properly certificated/licensed.

We endorse the efforts of those public and private educational institutions that have entered into affirmative action programs. We urge institutions without such programs to begin to design an affirmative action program that will voluntarily address issues dealing with past discrimination and to implement that program so that the local educational institution is in compliance with state and federal laws.

We also urge governing boards and education associations to eliminate discriminatory practices in matters of recruitment, employment, promotion, retention, and compensation. (04-22)

F-3 Accountability

We believe that education employees can be accountable only to the degree that they share responsibility in educational decision making and to the degree that other parties who share this responsibility—legislators, other government officials, school boards, administrators, parents/guardians, students, and taxpayers—are also held accountable.

Furthermore, we recognize that just as students are diverse, the schools and school districts which they comprise will share in that diversity. Therefore, any instrument of accountability which, like the State Report Card, attempts to quantify the quality of education within the schools or districts by reducing it to a single formula without recognizing that diversity must be considered unfair, inaccurate, and unproductive.

We believe that education employees cannot be held accountable for the progress of students who are chronically absent and/or disruptive.

We further believe that parents/guardians are primarily responsible for supporting education; instilling a desire to learn; properly monitoring attendance; and teaching courtesy, respect, and self-control. (77-12)

F-4 Social Promotion of Students

We believe promotion should be based upon academic achievement. However, when the option of social promotion is to be exercised, we believe it must be demonstrated to be in the best interest of the student, must consider the recommendation of the professional staff, and must be implemented in accordance with written policies of the governing board.

We believe that promotion, placement, or retention of a student is ultimately the responsibility of the school administration and that the student's written record must indicate that administrative decision. We further believe that no individual teacher should be held accountable for the administration's decision to grant social promotion. (94)

F-5 Site-Based Shared Decision Making

We support site-based shared decision making processes that are based on contractual/formal agreements between school districts and local associations. We believe that the scope of local site-based decision making should be limited only by the contractual/formal agreement. We also believe that such agreements must include the following elements:

a. voluntary participation by local sites;
b. safeguards against the unilateral circumvention of the collective bargaining agreement of the rights of employees at other sites;
c. a school district-association structure for processing conflict resolution that is separate from the contractual grievance procedure;
d. an agreement on the scope of decision-making authority to be exercised by the sites;
e. a determination of the constituencies which will have representation, the number of representatives for each, and the method of their selection;
f. effective training for all site-based program participants as well as additional resources necessary for successful implementation; and
g. fair compensation and/or release time for participating staff members. (01)

F-6 Learning Environment

Because we recognize the need to safeguard the rights of individuals, we believe that educational employees should not be subject to verbal or physical abuse, and that no educational employee should be required to work in a situation of disrespect and insubordination, harassment or assault. When such a situation does exist, it is the responsibility of the administration to take immediate action to maintain an orderly atmosphere advantageous to the learning of all students in the classroom, being careful

to balance the rights of educational employees to perform their duties and students to learn. (77-13)

F-7 Working Conditions

We believe that, in the interest of health standards, every building used for instructional purposes shall have adequate employee restrooms, employee dining facility, and a faculty planning center.

In addition, we believe that all educational employees need to have the following items available to them: private area for professional/personal calls, computers, refrigerators, and cooking facilities. (77-12)

F-8 Environmentally Safe School

We believe that the physical environment for education must keep pace with the growth of the number of students, including the changes in electronic equipment that impact the methods of teaching, and the presentation of instructional materials; especially as these affect the well-being of educators. Sufficient custodial and maintenance staff and resources must be provided in every facility in order to maintain a safe, healthful, attractive, and clean environment for both students and staff. Instructional space must be flexible and provide for the needs of special students. Instructional materials and equipment must be provided in sufficient variety and quantity to serve all students.

We also believe that education employees should be made aware of the presence and location of hazardous materials within their worksites. With the involvement of local education associations, governing boards should implement appropriate programs to protect education employees and students from such materials.

Education employees must be involved in the development of emergency plans to be followed in the event of accidents involving hazardous materials and environmental contaminants or other catastrophic events, and all education employees must receive copies of these plans. We urge our affiliates to work for cooperation and planning among neighboring school districts, communities, and states. At a minimum, emergency plans must include comprehensive alerting and communications systems, predetermined escape routes and alternatives, training for the education employees involved, and regularly scheduled practice drills. All public school classrooms must have at least two exits. (91-12)

F-9 Contract Enforcement

We believe that all those represented by the bargaining unit share the responsibility for contract enforcement. However, the specific responsibility should be delegated in a local's constitution and bylaws to either a local executive committee, grievance committee, or negotiations team. Contract enforcement should be conducted with the guidance of the local's labor relations consultant. (78-18)

F-10 Required Attendance outside the Normal Work Day

We believe that when an educational employee's attendance is required at school functions and/or meetings scheduled outside the normal work day, the employee would either be remunerated at his/her per diem/overtime rate or receive an equal time reduction of normal work hours or other negotiated time off or benefit. (77-13)

F-11 Continuing Employment and Fair Dismissal

We believe there should be fair and equitable laws for governing the continuing employment of educational employees. Laws must guarantee that before the status of an educational employee can be affected—that is, dismissal, demotion, or non-renewal of a contract—that employee must be afforded the rights of both substantive and procedural due process. This includes adequate notice, a statement of the specific charges or reasons, a fair and impartial hearing upon request before a neutral tribunal or court of law, and the right to appeal the decision to an impartial third party whose decision is binding.

We also believe that bargaining groups and governing boards have the right to negotiate continuing employment and fair dismissal policies and that local boards of education must honor all current negotiated continuing employment policies. (78-01)

F-12 Personal Life of Educational Employees

We believe that the personal life of any educational employee is not the concern of the governing board.

We also believe the use of the likeness or image of any educational employee is privileged and should be used only with the written consent of said educational employee. (78-13)

F-13 Right to Privacy for Education Employees

We believe that education employees must be guaranteed the rights of privacy. These rights must include:

a. the freedom from audio or video surveillance within classroom settings without the prior written permission of the individual;
b. the freedom from harassment, by individuals, organizations, or businesses due to unauthorized release or sale of employee records;
c. the protection from exploitation, or harassment via telephone and the electronic media;
d. computer access in a private and secure setting;
e. security or computer files, passwords, and user codes from inappropriate or authorized access; and

f. the right to refuse a polygraph, lie detector, or other invasive method of evidence collection.

We further believe that fingerprinting is acceptable only for the purpose of a pre-employment or pre-licensure check for criminal records that are pertinent to education employment. We oppose fingerprinting as a condition of continued employment or licensure. We further believe that all costs of fingerprinting must be borne by the employer or licensing agency. (18)

F-14 Confidentiality of Employee Records

We believe that all employee records are privileged information and must remain confidential. In order to maintain confidentiality, the rights of the education employee must include:

a. a guarantee that only one personnel file exists;
b. access to materials in personnel files, including a list of all electronic and hard copy records maintained by governing boards;
c. the authority to inspect, review, and obtain copies of such records, explanations, and interpretations of such records, and a record of past access;
d. written notification within ten (10) working days of any placement of materials in the employee's personnel file;
e. an opportunity to respond to and challenge any materials and purge those that are inaccurate, misleading, and distorted;
f. a provision to consent to or deny release of such records, including the right to receive copies of released materials;
g. written notification within ten (10) working days of any request by the public to access employee records; and
h. the guarantee that the employee must be present when records are accessed by a member of the public.

We also believe that any ancillary records, such as medical and legal records, with which the governing board may come in contact, are to be treated as privileged information and must also remain confidential.

We further believe that it is the duty of the governing board to inform employees of these rights and to enforce these rights. (13)

F-15 Health Care Records

We believe that the health care records of educational employees must be regarded as privileged information according to current HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) regulations. Insurance carriers should not provide such information, or information which can be used to associate any particular educational employee with any particular health care, to employers. We believe that the privacy of such records must be maintained, even in self-insurance systems. (77)

F-16 Personal Appearance

We believe that harassment, disciplinary action, or negative evaluation of an education employee based on types of wearing apparel, facial hair, hair style, or body art is unacceptable, an infringement on an educational employee's right to self-expression, and unreasonable unless they are factors proven detrimental to performance. (03-13)

F-17 Reduction in Force

We believe that local affiliates should negotiate reduction in force procedures that are based on seniority; including provisions where educational employees are recalled in the reverse order from which they were laid off.

We also believe that the number of administrators, managers, and supervisors should be reduced at least in proportion to the number of other educational employees being reduced.

We condemn the improper use of RIF to eliminate educational programs.

We oppose any attempt to allow RIF due to arbitrary and open-ended financial reasons. It must be recognized that the non-replacement of retiring and resigning educational employees is a form of reduction in force.

We further recommend that all educational employees laid off, except those terminated as non-renewal through evaluation, should be placed on a re-hiring list determined by continuous seniority and/or licensure requirements for an unlimited period of time. (78-18)

F-18 Involuntary Transfers

We believe locals should have and support the enforcement of contract language which protects educational employees' rights in involuntary transfer. (77-13)

F-19 Released Time

We believe governing boards must establish a professional leave policy for released time without loss of pay, salary status, retirement credit, sick or personal leave for those Association members who assume leadership in professional organizations. (77-88)

F-20 Parity for State Educational Employees

We believe that all educational employees who work in a civil service setting must be granted at least the same benefits granted to public educational employees through state statutes. (87-04)

F-21 Protection of Advocates

We believe in the fundamental right of all educational employees to organize in their own self-interest and to speak out in defense of education employees, students, and parents/guardians/caregivers without fear of reprisal.

We condemn boards of education, boards of trustees, administrators, and public officials who attempt to fire, demote, transfer, or give punitive assignment to education employees for their leadership in education employee organizations or their forthrightness in questioning apparent violations of their terms of employment or improper management within the school district. Such actions are an affront to the dignity of all education employees and a desecration of the principles of a democratic education system.

We also believe that school administrators, boards of education, boards of trustees, and other public officials should respect the dignity of education employees and reaffirm the rights of citizens to organize through representatives of their own choosing, as well as their rights to exercise all other constitutional guarantees.

Furthermore we insist that local governing boards and administrators respect the rights of Association members to use school property, such as message boxes and meeting rooms, for communication without censorship, prior restraint, or other interference.

Local associations must pursue every resource to achieve redress of wrongs done to education employees and work for guarantees assuring education employees that reasonable pursuit of their representation responsibilities will cause them neither intimidation, harassment, nor loss of employment. (03-18)

F-22 Board Meetings

We believe that the president of the local association or designee must be notified of all regular and special meetings of a governing board. When meetings occur during the employee's workday, the representative shall be granted released time to attend.

We also believe in the right of these individuals to full participation in these meetings without prior notice or agreement.

We further encourage affiliates to bargain for non-voting representation on governing boards. (04)

F-23 Additional Duties

We believe that educational personnel should not be expected to perform curriculum development, extra-curricular, or other additional duties without adequate compensation.

We believe that educational personnel shall not be expected to perform curriculum development, extra-curricular, conferencing duties beyond the normal school day, or other additional duties within the school day without adequate compensation. (77-04)

F-24 Fringe Benefits

We believe both half-time and full-time educational employees are entitled to fully paid fringe benefits, such as (but not limited to) medical benefits, prescription coverage, life insurance, vision and dental coverages, leaves, personal assistance and additional remuneration. Furthermore, we believe employees working less than half-time should at least be extended the same benefits, but pro-rated according to work load. We recognize that such benefits are essential to attract and retain qualified personnel and urge local associations to negotiate improved fringe benefit packages. (78-13)

F-25 Salary Goals

We believe that salary schedules for educational employees should:

a. be developed through the process of collective bargaining;
b. be based upon preparation, academic background, experience, professional growth, responsibilities, and length of service;
c. have structural continuity through the use of an index or percentage guide;
d. be revised by methods that prevent deterioration in the ratios of maximum salaries, experience increments, and preparation differentials;
e. provide for entry level salaries and career earnings comparable to those of other professions and occupations with similar preparation and responsibilities and be structured to provide compensation levels that encourage educational employees to remain in the educational setting;
f. have automatic annual increments for experience;
g. establish salary credit for professional development activities to encourage professional advancement;
h. assure that initial placement, advancement on the salary schedule, and promotions are based on objective criteria to prevent disparities among staff members of comparable preparation, experience, and length of service;
i. place newly hired personnel on steps according to their experience allowing full credit for all previous experience;
j. be applied in actual practice in an equitable manner so that no one is penalized in changing assignments;
k. assure that salary paid for summer employment beyond contract days, extended contracts, or extra duty is not less than the rate for regular contract pay;
l. permit no discrimination as to job description, political or professional activity, residence, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, gender, gender identification, sexual orientation, age, disability, size, economic status, marital status, or number of dependents;

m. include a cost of living adjustment, based upon the Consumer Price Index, which is in addition to the regular rate of pay scale and payable to the employee;
n. define salary increase to mean the exact monetary differential between the existing salary schedule and proposed salary schedule, exclusive of incremental adjustments, and all basic benefits; and
o. provide remuneration for educational employees who conduct in-service training or workshops. (78-22)

F-26 Medical Benefits

We believe that all full time active and retired educational employees should receive fully paid comprehensive health insurance from the appropriate governing board, including reimbursement for Medicare Part B, for themselves, their spouses, domestic partners, and/or dependents.

We also believe that these benefits should be legally protected from unilateral change by a governing board.

Governing boards shall provide hepatitis B vaccinations, Covid-19 vacations, and annual flu shots to all employees who choose to be vaccinated at no cost to those employees. Likewise, governing boards shall assume the cost of physical examinations and other vaccinations when these are required by statute as a condition of employment in a given position.

We further believe any educational employee who is quarantined, isolated, or otherwise prevented from performing their duties as a result of COVID-19 infection or exposure must receive paid leave of absence regardless of other sick leave accrual. (77-22)

F-27 Retirement

We believe that properly and soundly financed state retirement systems are essential. We call for the attainment of the following goals by those systems:

a. retirement at 100% of formula after 35 years of service;
b. benefits at least 50% of average of the highest three years of salary after twenty years of service;
c. full vesting after no more than five years creditable service;
d. actual cost of living increases in retirement benefits provided annually;
e. no decrease of established pay and benefits; and
f. fully-paid health care benefits, properly funded by the respective retirement systems.

We encourage local associations to negotiate retirement incentive programs for employees who qualify because of age.

We believe that educational employees' retirement contributions should be made on a tax-deferred basis. (78-03)

F-28 State Public Retirement Systems

We believe that the public retirement systems in the State of Ohio must be maintained, be properly funded, and be continued under the control of its members through elected governing boards.

Furthermore, we oppose additional regulatory, supervisory, or directive authorities granted to any agency over Ohio's public retirement systems that might weaken the integrity of the systems.

We also condemn governmental interference with funds belonging to the members of the state retirement systems as taxation without representation and a violation of the United States Constitution.

We demand that any funds lost through such interference must be fully restored plus interest plus penalty as assigned in tax delinquencies. (77-10)

F-29 Mandatory Social Security

We oppose any legislation which mandates contributions to the Social Security System by educational employees. Furthermore, we urge OEA and NEA to continue their immediate efforts toward this same goal. (78-80)

F-30 Protection of Social Security Entitlements

We strongly believe all employees and their spouses should be eligible to collect their earned Social Security benefits without endangering any part of their benefits from all Ohio public retirement systems.

We also believe that our elected officials should make this entitlement a priority in their lobbying efforts until such time as legislation is passed.

We further believe that any monies transferred from Social Security to other governmental categories be returned as soon as possible to guarantee the continued viability of the Social Security fund. (77-18)

F-31 Sabbatical Leave

We believe that the Revised Code of the State of Ohio should be changed to allow full payment of the teacher's current contract salary to the teacher when a year of sabbatical leave is taken. (78-98)

F-32 School Calendar/Work Day

We believe that the formulation and/or changes in the school calendar or normal work day shall be by mutual agreement between the local association and the governing board. (78-13)

F-33 Job Descriptions

We believe job descriptions of educational employees should be subject to the negotiations process, and we urge local affiliates to incorporate this principle into the local agreement. (02-06)

We also believe that by contract essential and non-essential employees be specifically identified and the specific conditions under which each must report for duty or be excused when such conditions are warranted. (02-22)

F-34 Performance Pay Concepts

We believe that basing salaries on training and experience is the fairest method of fixing salaries and salary schedules for educational employees.

We also believe that performance pay schedules, such as merit pay or any other system of compensation based on an evaluation of an education employee's performance, are inappropriate, except in institutions of higher education where it has been bargained.

Performance pay concepts create inequities, and, therefore, we urge local affiliates to resist attempts to impose such plans. (09)

F-35 Part-time Faculty

We believe that part-time faculty should be employed only when an educational program requires specialized training or expertise not available in the full-time faculty and when the need for such training and expertise does not justify more than half-time employment. Part-time faculty should not be employed for the primary purpose of reducing instructional budgets or for the purpose of reducing the number of full-time positions.

We also believe that certificate/licensed faculty who have assigned duties equal in time to half or more of the normal teaching day should be paid for conference, lunch, and other non-assigned periods of time allotted to full-time personnel according to the percentage of assigned and non-assigned time comparable with the normal time of the teaching day. Faculty who have been assigned duties equal in time to half or more of the normal teaching day should be entitled to full fringe benefits allotted to full-time teachers. (03)

F-36 Substitute Teachers

We condemn 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.

In order to achieve and maintain the highest standards of student learning and professional practice, and to ensure quality instruction in every classroom every day, we further believe that substitute teachers must:

a. meet the same standards as other licensed teachers within the state;
b. receive professional compensation and benefits;
c. receive continuous provisional development;
d. be provided with materials and information appropriate to the position in which they are substituting;
e. be entitled to and supported by state and national affiliates in collective bargaining; and
f. be shown the same professional respect as permanent staff.

Furthermore, we condemn the use of students, educational aides, or assistants as substitutes for certified staff.

We further oppose the practice of replacing absent teachers by dispersing students to other classrooms. We also oppose the use of individuals such as education support professionals, part-time employees, or employees hired through private agencies to cover classes. We further oppose requiring teachers to substitute during their preparation time.

We believe that school districts must provide full compensation for licensed teachers who substitute for personnel on extended leave. (77-13)

F-37 Substitute Education Support Professionals

We recognize the importance of substitute education support professionals in the maintenance and continuity of daily operations. We believe that since a substitute for an education support professional must meet the same standards as the employee for whom he/she substitutes, and should be shown the same professional respect.

We also support the practice of providing schedule pay plus basic and fringe benefits for education support professionals substituting for permanent education support professionals on extended leave. (99-13)

F-38 Certificated/Licensed Tutors

We believe that certificated/licensed tutors with responsibilities equivalent to that of classroom teachers shall receive compensation equivalent to classroom teachers. (96-97)

F-39 Classroom Education Professionals

We urge governing boards to provide classroom teachers with education support professionals who will free the teacher from certain non-teaching and routine duties so that the primary task of teaching can be performed more successfully. We also urge local affiliates and governing boards to become involved in setting standards in the recruitment, orientation and training of classroom support professionals.

We call upon local affiliates to resist efforts of governing boards to use the employment of classroom support professionals as an excuse to increase class size. (77-04)

F-40 Educational Aides and/or Assistants

We believe that those serving as educational aides and/or assistants must have appropriate training. Furthermore, educational aides dealing with disabled students must have the specialized training appropriate for work with the disabled. (77-*12*)

F-41 Use of Student Teachers

We believe that the objective of student teaching is to gain necessary in-class experience under the direction of a qualified teacher. We further believe that it is the governing board's responsibility to provide adequate substitute teachers in the absence of the assigned teachers. Student teachers shall not be used as substitute teachers. (77)

F-42 Volunteers in Public Schools

We believe that parents/guardians/caregivers and other community volunteers have a valuable role to play within the public schools. The proper use of volunteers is essential for the preservation of quality educational programs for children. Volunteers should be appropriately screened and trained, as determined by the needs of the local school system and by state statutes. The screening should be for the sole purpose of eliminating volunteers who are convicted felons, child abusers, or sex offenders. Training should include, but not be limited to, the development of age-appropriate activities and sensitivity to diversity issues.

We further deplore the practice of using volunteer workers for the purposes of reducing instructional budgets, reducing the number of full or part-time instructional positions, or reducing the number of full or part-time education support professional’s positions within a local school system.

We also believe that teachers and education support professionals should be involved in the decision making process regarding the utilization of volunteers within local school systems. (88-04)

F-43 Subcontracting

We believe that emphasis must be placed upon securing and maintaining the most capable education employees. We further believe that education employees should not be displaced by private sector service providers, temporary/substitute employees, part-time workers, or by volunteers.

Furthermore, we believe that school districts should not enter into subcontracting agreements that transfer education employees or that abrogate previously contracted benefits, reduce compensation, deny fringe benefits, and/or reduce or eliminate accumulated retirement experience and benefits. (93)

F-44 Withdrawal of Services

We believe the role of auxiliary, supervisory and administrative personnel should not be expanded when a withdrawal of services occurs. (78-05)

F-45 Assaults on Educational Employees

We believe that educational employees absent from work as a result of personal injury caused by assault occurring as a result of employment should receive full salary and fringe benefits for such periods of absence. Such absences should not be deducted from the employee's sick leave.

We believe that the governing board must reimburse the educational employee for any personal property damaged or destroyed during said assault and that any non-reimbursed cost of medical, surgical, or hospital services incurred as a result of said assault must be paid by the governing board.

We believe that the student who menaces or commits a physical assault on an educational employee should not be returned to that employee's work environment. The governing board shall have a written policy providing for the filing of charges, where appropriate, as a result of an assault. (78-04)

F-46 HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis Awareness

We believe that NEOEA members need to be aware of the impact of potential human immune deficiency virus (HIV)/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and cor-relating effects of hepatitis upon their students and their employment situations. (87-05)

F-47 Stress Management and Wellness

We recognize that as modern education strives to meet the increased demands of contemporary society, teachers and other educational personnel are working under increasingly stressful conditions. We also recognize that job-related stress can be so severe as to cause emotional, psychological, and physical disability.

We urge governing boards to cooperate with local affiliates to develop stress management programs that will facilitate the recognition, prevention, and treatment of stress-related problems, and promote physical fitness.

We further urge that the harmful effects of stress on educational employees be recognized by governing boards, and demand procedures that will ensure the confidentiality and treatment without personal or occupational jeopardy. (77-13)

F-48 Prevention of Vandalism to Property at Educational Facilities and Functions

We believe that school systems and communities should coordinate and develop a preventive program to deter vandalism at educational facilities and functions. Governing boards should be liable for vandalism to property of educational employees at educational facilities. (78-97)

F-49 Dual Certification/Licensure

We believe that current reductions in force make it desirable for teachers to obtain certification/licensure in more than one field. (78-04)

F-50 Supervisory Vacancies

We believe that school systems should establish minimum standards of qualifications for appointments to supervisory and administrative positions and that the entire staff be apprised of open positions thereby giving equal opportunity to all potential applicants who meet the requirements. We encourage the participation of staff in the selection of individuals to fill these vacancies. (78-04)

F-50 Protection during a Pandemic

We believe that governing boards must provide information that delineates the differences between the regulations concerning local disease outbreaks and worldwide pandemics.

We also believe that governing boards must identify which job responsibilities may put educational employees at risk of exposure. They must provide additional paid leave time and make available the option to work remotely so that educators may stay home

to stop the spread of disease as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

We further believe governing boards should modify the work environment and practices to provide additional protection for educational employees and students. Governing boards should provide adequate supplies and access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). The governing board must provide proper training to all educational employees on how to wear, use, clean, and store the equipment and supplies appropriately.

We believe that educational employees must be treated in a manner consistent with the health board's regulations regarding the right to know of disease and infections including the privacy laws of HIPAA. We believe that contact tracing can be an effective means of controlling a deadly infection such as COVID-19. However, we believe that contact tracing must be conducted by trained public health officials and that the identities of students or educational employees identified as potential carriers must remain anonymous.

We encourage all affiliates and governing boards to protect the rights of infected individuals and provide access to information regarding infections. In all cases, personal privacy must be respected.

We also believe that the legal rights of education employees exposed to the infection on the job during a pandemic must be protected. Educational employees should not be held liable for the transmission of the disease during a pandemic except in instances of criminal intent or criminal negligence. (20)

F-51 Workplace Accommodations for Lactating Employees

We believe that all workplaces must provide lactating employees with safe, clean, comfortable, appropriate, and private facilities to express breast milk. We also believe that employers must work with such employees to provide reasonable accommodations within their workday to express breast milk. (21)

G. SECURE PROFESSIONAL AUTONOMY

G-1 Professional Practices Board

We believe that the education profession must govern itself. We also believe that Ohio must maintain a professional practices board composed of a majority of practicing public school teachers.

We believe that this professional practices board should have exclusive authority to certificate/license and/or determine if and how a certificate/license will be recognized for professional educators. This board should also have the authority over the approval of

teacher preparation programs and over the suspension, revocation, or withdrawal of such certificates, licenses, and approvals. (78-10)

G-2 National Certification

We support and encourage voluntary national certification, by which the profession grants recognition to an individual who has met qualifications specified by the profession. National certification should not be used as a criterion for continuing employment, state certification/licensure, renewal of state licensure, salary determination, evaluation, dismissal, promotion, assignment, or tenure.

We further believe that the National Board for Teaching Standards, which we recognize as the authority for granting such certification, must be composed of a majority of teachers. (01-13)

G-3 Master Teacher

We support and encourage voluntary attainment of Master Teacher designation by which the profession grants recognition to an individual who has met qualifications specified by the profession. Master Teacher designation should not be used as a criterion for continuing employment, state certification/licensure, renewal of state licensure, salary determination, evaluation, dismissal, promotion, assignment, or tenure. (10-13)

H. UNITE EDUCATIONAL EMPLOYEES FOR EFFECTIVE CITIZENSHIP

H-1 Free and Fair Elections

We believe that the principle of one-person-one-vote must apply at all levels of government including the election of the President of the United States.

We recognize the right to vote as a constitutional right guaranteed to all eligible citizens. We support the original provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

We support voting and absentee provisions that insure the election process is accessible, easy, accurate, reliable, and verifiable.

We oppose all actions that encourage or result in voter fraud or disenfranchisement. Further, we oppose any action on the part of elected officials or private citizens that would interfere with or seek to overturn the will of citizens as expressed through vote count by local or state board of elections.

We believe that electoral districts should be drawn on a nonpartisan basis and that the conduct of elections should be free from partisanship and foreign interference.

We further believe in uniform registration requirements without discriminatory residency provisions, identification requirements, or voter purges.

We urge each citizen to register and to exercise the right to vote. We support voter education programs and encourage members to serve as poll workers. Furthermore, the Association reserves for ourselves the right to endorse individual candidates and issues consistent with its goals and philosophy and urges its members to become involved in the endorsement process. (78-22)

H-2 Public Relations

We believe that continuous public relations work must be done to involve all segments of the public in building a system of sound public education.

We support efforts to inform the public of:

a. the goals of public education and the role of professionals in meeting those goals,
b. the challenges faced by public schools in northeastern Ohio, especially the lack of commitment on the state level to finance and support public education at adequate levels,
c. the need to improve curriculum and instruction and to emphasize the role of the educator in developing curriculum and instruction,
d. maintain and upgrade equipment and facilities to meet the demands of a changing world,
e. the detrimental effects on public education of vouchers, charter schools, or of other attempts to divert public money to private institutions, and
f. the accomplishments of those involved in public education as the above challenges are met. (78-22)

H-3 Political Awareness

We encourage all educational employees to become involved in the political process by registering to vote and by voting in both the primary and general elections, and by supporting the legislative positions of the united teaching profession.

Furthermore, we encourage local associations to establish and maintain strong political action committees, which will actively work to promote political awareness of education issues, study the views of political candidates, support candidates who are most favorable to advancing the cause of public education, and lobby elected officials.

Finally, we urge individual Association members to exercise their right by contributing generously to the OEA/NEA Fund for Children and Public Education (FCPE) in addition to their local PAC. (92-09)

H-4 Participation in Political Activities

We believe that educational employees have full rights of citizenship, including participation in political activities so long as these activities do not interfere with the performance of professional duties.

We believe that a leave of absence must be granted to any educational employee for the purpose of campaigning or holding public office. We believe that when a leave is granted, all accrued rights and benefits must be accorded to the educational employee. (78-10)

H-5 Public Opinion Surveys

In order to ensure maximum involvement, we urge all members of NEOEA to become aware of and participate in public opinion research related to educational issues. We urge survey participants to exercise caution where surveys may be used for partisan purposes. (77-04)

H-6 Reliability of Information

We believe that accurate, verifiable, reliable, and trustworthy information must be promoted in classrooms, Association newsletters, electronic newsfeeds, and public discussions for the educational welfare of members, students, and the general public.

We further believe that educators, editors, sponsors, and contributors to public discourse must be ensured that the information they promote be held accountable by citing their sources. Any and all efforts to verify questionable material must be made in order to ensure the accuracy of information. (18)

I. PROMOTE AND PROTECT HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS

I-1 Equal Rights Amendment

We support an equal rights amendment to the U.S. Constitution which guarantees that equality under the law shall not be denied or abridged by any agency of the federal, state, or local government because of gender. (78-10)

I-2 Human Relations

We believe that positive human relations are essential to the educational environment. We believe that as our schools and communities become more diverse, educational programs which recognize this diversity and improve human relations are essential.

We urge students, educational employees, and administrators to work cooperatively to achieve human relations goals which would improve education in each community. (78-09)

I-3 Civil Rights

We believe in the achievement of an integrated society free from discrimination barriers, especially hate-motivated violence and harassment based upon political activity, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, gender, sexual orientation, gender identification, age, disability, size, economic status, and marital status. (78-17)

I-4 Title IX Compliance

We believe that local associations should initiate and continue awareness programs which will enable members to exert their influence in helping to continue to maintain and comply with the current guidelines of Title IX. (78-09)

I-5 Sexual Harassment

We support the Federal guidelines of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission which states sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. This includes, but is not limited to, unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature.

We believe that educational employees and students should be protected from all forms of sexual harassment. We encourage our affiliates to work with local school districts and institutions of higher learning to establish strong policies defining and prohibiting sexual harassment and to develop educational programs designed to help people recognize, understand, prevent, combat, and eliminate sexual harassment.

We further believe that governing boards should negotiate and publicize a grievance procedure that encourages the reporting of incidents of sexual harassment, resolves complaints promptly, and protects the rights of all parties.

We also encourage the formation and training of staff/student support groups to assist in the counseling of the targets of alleged sexual harassment. (77-23)

I-6 Gender Equity

We believe that equal opportunities must be guaranteed for all people regardless of race, gender identity, or sexual orientation in all hiring practices, educational activities, and job training and educational programs. We also believe that educational materials must portray various individuals doing all types of jobs and activities.

We recommend that individuals who identify as males should be encouraged and recruited to enter and be actively involved in elementary education. We further recommend that individuals who identify as females should be encouraged and recruited for administrative positions.

The Association also endorses the use of nonsexist language in all communication. It

also believes that sexism and sex discrimination must be eliminated from the curriculum and effective training of educational employees is necessary for this purpose. The Association further believes in pay equity for all regardless of their race, gender identity, or sexual orientation. (77-23)

I-7 Observances Celebrating Women

We believe in the importance of celebrating women's contributions to society. The Association also believes that these celebrations must recognize the intersectionality, challenges, and triumphs of women who identify as Native People and Asian, Black, Latin (o/a/x), Middle Eastern and North African, Multiracial, and Pacific Islander people. The Association further believes that these celebrations must also recognize the intersectionality, challenges, and triumphs of women who are transgender and non-binary. (23)

I-8 Bullying

We believe the school environment must be free from all forms of bullying including hazing, but not limited to physical, psychological, and/or cyber bullying. Bullying is the systematic and chronic infliction of physical hurt and/or psychological distress on one or more individuals. We recognize that bullying in schools is not limited to students, but can include members of the entire school community.

We encourage local associations to work with public school districts and institutions of higher education to develop comprehensive school-wide programs including all stakeholders to address bullying. Such programs should:

a. establish strong policies prohibiting bullying that include the definition, consequences, and procedures for reporting and appeals;
b. develop and implement educational programs designed to help students recognize, understand, prevent, oppose, and eliminate bullying;
c. provide training for all school employees in bullying prevention, and;
d. provide professional development materials and resources.

These programs should be reviewed, revised, and updated to reflect changing needs. (10-11)

I-9 Human Trafficking

We believe in the abolition of all forms of human trafficking. Human trafficking is the acquisition of people by improper means such as force, fraud, or deception, with the aim of exploiting them as defined by the United Nations Convention of Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling. (11)

I-10 Immigration Status

We support efforts to improve the immigration process, including the provision of due process, political asylum, and timely legalization without regard to national origin. We also support policies that protect the integrity of the family unit and deplore the hardships imposed on families when family members, especially parents, guardians, or caretakers, are detained and/or deported for immigration status offenses and thereby separated from their children, many of whom are U.S. citizens. We further believe that English and citizenship classes should be available in sufficient numbers to ensure that immigrating individuals can comply with all federal mandates for permanent residence and/or citizenship. We also believe that the federal government is responsible for the enforcement of immigration policy. (13)

I-11 Prayer in the Public Schools

We oppose all attempts to set aside school time for prayer or moments of sectarian meditation in the public schools. (77-99)

I-12 Moments of Silence

We believe that moments of silence may serve useful educational purposes. However, to be acceptable, such moments of silence must be consistent with Constitutional guarantees. (77-93)

I-13 Institutional and Organizational Discrimination

We believe that the fabric of our society is strengthened when the contributions of all its diverse members are encouraged and embraced.

We deplore those social, institutional, and governmental actions and policies that engender discriminatory practices. We also believe that sanctions are both justified and necessary against government policies, organizations, businesses, and/or groups that utilize or support discriminatory practices.

We further believe that any code, policy, or system of discrimination and exploitation in the workplace and in schools must be eliminated. We believe that nondiscriminatory cultural expression is a human right. We also believe that it is important to eliminate discrimination against individuals wearing a religious/cultural dress or head covering and/or individual hairstyle.

We encourage our affiliates, in concert with community organizations, to educate the public to bring about an awareness of such policies and practices and to actively work to eliminate them. We urge our members to not participate in, provide programs to, or join organizations utilizing exclusionary memberships. (17-23)

I-14 Racial Justice

We believe in the necessity of racial healing to strengthen our society as a whole. Racial justice in education will be realized when we ensure systematic fair treatment resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes for people of all races. We acknowledge that both historical and current practices have systematically favored privileged people while disadvantaging and denying rights, opportunities, and equality for people of color. Biased policies and laws have been manifested in the conditions our students and educators face in their schools and communities.

We also believe that honest and open conversations about the sources of institutional racism that continue to threaten equity, fairness, and justice in our nation are necessary to produce the critical changes needed to achieve racial healing and justice.

We encourage our affiliates to educate members about the ways race privileges certain people. We further encourage our affiliates to work with family and student partners to develop, initiate, and promote programs that will lead us to repair, heal, organize, and advocate to achieve racial justice so that every student and educator may achieve their full potential. (17)

I-15 Sexual Assault

We believe that all members of society should be protected from becoming victims of sexual assault. We also believe that it is a violation of the victims' right to privacy to release the names of the victims or to have their past sexual history admitted as evidence in assault cases.

We support fair and equitable treatment by educational institutions, hospitals, and health and law enforcement agencies for sexual assault victims. We further believe that access to necessary services/programs must be made available to victims and their families. These services must be funded by appropriate government agencies.

We believe that a systematic process should be developed for gathering evidence when such assaults occur and supports the use of DNA testing as a means to identify perpetrators of sexual assault. We further believe in the importance of counseling and rehabilitation for the assailant. We also believe in the protection of privacy for both the victim and the alleged assailant. (17)

I-16 White Supremacy

We believe that in order to achieve racial and social justice, educators must acknowledge the existence of white supremacy as a primary root cause of structural racism and institutional racism. White supremacy is the state or condition of superiority to all others in authority, power, or status.

We further believe that the norms, standards, and organizational structures manifested in white supremacy perpetually exploit and oppress people of color, race, or creed and serve as detriments to racial justice.

We also believe that white supremacy severely limits the opportunities of people of color, race, or creed and impedes full achievement of racial and social justice. Therefore, we will actively advocate for social and educational strategies fostering the eradication of white supremacy. (19)

I-17 Observance of Juneteenth

We recognize that Juneteenth is a federal holiday and believe every U.S. state, territory, and protectorate should promote and celebrate this day to commemorate the fulfillment of the Emancipation Proclamation and the freedom of enslaved men, women, and children in the United States on June 19, 1865. (23)

I-18 Trauma-Informed Care

The Association believes that every educator and student must have access to Trauma-Informed Care (TIC). Trauma is the lasting emotional response of having lived through a severely distressing life event. Experiencing a traumatic event can harm a person's sense of safety, ability to regulate emotions, ability to perform one's professional duties, or ability to sustain relationships.

We also believe that TIC understands and promotes environments of safety, empowerment, healing, and recovery. TIC recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges trauma's role in an individual's life. We further believe that TIC changes culture to emphasize respecting and appropriately responding to the effects of trauma at all levels.

We believe TIC practices require everyone to shift from asking, "What is wrong with this person?" to "What has happened to this person?"

We also believe the intention of TIC is not to treat symptoms or issues related to mental, sexual, physical, or emotional abuse or any other form of trauma but rather to provide support services in a way that is accessible and appropriate to those who may have experienced trauma. We further believe and recognize that in many cases such support may require but not be limited to referral, leave of absence, or on-site care by a qualified professional.

We urge governing boards to recognize and provide appropriate support for those educational employees and students who may be suffering trauma. Furthermore, we urge governing boards to provide staff with training in TIC for situations when immediate on-site care is needed. (23)

J. OBTAIN FOR ITS MEMBERS THE BENEFITS OF AN INDEPENDENT UNITED EDUCATION PROFESSION

J-1 The Right to Organize

We believe that all people have the right to organize in order to achieve an improvement of their living and working conditions through their own free and independent unions and organizations. We urge that this right be advocated where it is now abused or denied and strengthened where it is now secured.

We further believe that the Association should identify common concerns with other unions and organizations to form alliances that will achieve common goals.

We deplore anti-union activities by political candidates, pundits, business interests, school districts, and government agencies, including efforts that attempt to destroy and undermine labor unions and organizations, penalize members for union involvement, and deprive workers of their right to organize and bargain.

We also believe that members have the right to have payroll deduction of both association membership dues and voluntary political contributions. (03-12)

J-2 Leadership Council

We recognize the value of the Leadership Council program as a means of making professional services easily available to individual members, local associations, and district associations. We believe it is the responsibility of all OEA members to cooperate fully with one another to maintain a successful Leadership Council program.

We support local associations who actively participate in their Leadership Council by selecting representatives to the council, by participating in council decision making, by asserting local control over how Leadership Council services are provided, and by taking an active role in the evaluation of the Leadership Council staff.

We also recognize that the Leadership Council program exists for the benefit of its constituent members and local associations. We oppose any abridgment of a constituent member's or local association's control of its own affairs or right to service because of its participation in the Leadership Council Program. (78-21)

J-3 Professional Membership

We believe that the Association and other labor organizations must have the right to contact and inform employees of their right to organize into bargaining units, regardless of property ownership or administrative oversight.

We also believe that all educational employees should consider it a professional duty to join, to support, and to participate in the activities of the affiliated local, district, state, and national professional associations.

We urge that all educational employees keep current with educational issues and the impact of changes to federal and state regulations that affect students, educational interest groups and employees. (78-21)

J-4 Association Membership Participation

We believe that every member has the right and obligation to participate fully in local, district, state, and national associations. The opportunity to participate in associations must be afforded every member without fear, intimidation, or retribution. All association activities must be free from all forms of intimidation or bullying.

We further believe that school policies should provide released time without loss of pay to those who are fulfilling leadership responsibilities, attending meetings, or participating in other association activities.

We support and encourage, whenever possible, association policies and practices such as affordable child care services so that members with children may have improved opportunities to participate in association activities. (12)

J-5 Coordinating Bargaining

We recognize the potential value of local associations coordinating their bargaining efforts.

We believe that the coordination of bargaining strategies and information on management proposals between adjacent locals and locals within a district will maximize the effectiveness of the bargaining process.

Coordination of health care proposals among locals within the same health care consortium should be shared as well as other fiscal strategies such as changes to salary schedules. (77-12)

J-6 Association Services Fee (Agency Shop)

We believe each association should maintain its professional integrity by securing association services fee (i.e., agency shop or fair share) provisions in its local contract and resisting attempts of the legislature, such as right to work initiatives, to circumvent the freedom of locals to negotiate such provisions. (77-12)

J-7 Retired Member Participation

We believe retired members are a valuable asset and play an important role in furthering the educational and political goals of the Association.

As such, retired members should be provided information about Association programs and activities at the local, state, and national levels and should be encouraged to join as retired members, provide input, and participate fully at all levels. (03-12)

J-8 Student Member Participation

We believe that eligible college students should have the opportunity and should be encouraged to join the Association and to participate in the Association at local, state, and national levels.

We further believe that cultivating a sense of the rights, responsibilities, and ethics of the teaching profession among student members should be a priority of the Association. (03-09)

J-9 Importance of Union Activism

We believe that educational employees should be made aware of the history of the union movement as it relates to their local, district, state, and national organizations.

We also believe that association members be reminded of the many societal and employment advances, such as 40 hour work weeks, sick leave provisions, and due process procedures, won through union activism.

We further believe that local, district, state, and national associations have an obligation to obtain information and to educate all their members of past, present, and possible future union advances. (18)

Members of the Committee are:

Rita Chahda-Gonzalez, Chairperson, Lakewood TA
Marchell Josie, liaison, East Cleveland EA
Carol Correthers, *ex officio,* Lorain EA
Eugene Mach, *ex officio,* Warren EA
Cynthia Nagy, *ex officio,* Ashtabula Area TA
Sandra Peloquin, *ex officio,* Lorain EA
Christina West, *ex officio,* Portage Co. Educators for the DD
Crystal Boyd Funderburk, Hudson EA
Barbara Catalano, Mayfield EA-R
Teri Mackey, Wadsworth EA-R
Dianne Noice, Independence EA-R
Frederick Robsel, Buckeye EA-R
Audrey Scuba, Stow TA-R
Kim Vivolo, Lakewood TA
Jené Wilson, ACCESS-R
Dana Yaro-Linderman, Independence EA

ADDENDUM

Code of Ethics of the Education Profession

Preamble

The National Education Association believes that the education profession consists of one education workforce serving the needs of all students and that the term “educator” includes education support professionals.

The educator, believing in the worth and dignity of each human being, recognizes the supreme importance of the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, and the nurture of the democratic principles. Essential to these goals is the protection of freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal educational opportunity for all. The educator accepts the responsibility to adhere to the highest ethical standards.

The educator recognizes the magnitude of the responsibility inherent in the teaching process. The desire for the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, of students, of parents, and of the members of the community provides the incentive to attain and maintain the highest possible degree of ethical conduct. The Code of Ethics of the Education Profession indicates the aspiration of all educators and provides standards by which to judge conduct.

The remedies specified by the NEA and/or its affiliates for the violation of any provision of this Code shall be exclusive and no such provision shall be enforceable in any form other than the one specifically designated by the NEA or its affiliates.

Principle I – Commitment to the Student

The educator strives to help each student realize his or her potential as a worthy and effective member of society. The educator therefore works to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the thoughtful formulation of worthy goals.

In fulfillment of the obligation to the student, the educator—

1. Shall not unreasonably restrain the student from independent action in the pursuit of learning.
2. Shall not unreasonably deny the student's access to varying points of view.
3. Shall not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter relevant to the student's progress.
4. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning or to health and safety.
5. Shall not intentionally expose the student to embarrassment or disparagement.
6. Shall not on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, national origin, marital status, political or religious beliefs, family, social or cultural background, or sexual orientation, unfairly—
    a. Exclude any student from participation in any program
    b. Deny benefits to any student
    c. Grant any advantage to any student
7. Shall not use professional relationships with students for private advantage.

8. Shall not disclose information about students obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law.

Principle II – Commitment to the Profession

The education profession is vested by the public with a trust and responsibility requiring the highest ideals of professional service.

In the belief that the quality of the services of the education profession directly influences the nation and its citizens, the educator shall exert every effort to raise professional standards, to promote a climate that encourages the exercise of professional judgment, to achieve conditions that attract persons worthy of the trust to careers in education, and to assist in preventing the practice of the profession by unqualified persons.

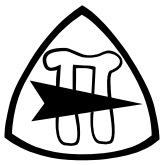
In fulfillment of the obligation to the profession, the educator—

1. Shall not in an application for a professional position deliberately make a false statement or fail to disclose a material fact related to competency and qualifications.
2. Shall not misrepresent his/her professional qualifications.
3. Shall not assist any entry into the profession of a person known to be unqualified in respect to character, education, or other relevant attribute.
4. Shall not knowingly make a false statement concerning the qualifications of a candidate for a professional position.
5. Shall not assist a noneducator in the unauthorized practice of teaching.
6. Shall not disclose information about colleagues obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law.
7. Shall not knowingly make false or malicious statements about a colleague.
8. Shall not accept any gratuity, gift, or favor that might impair or appear to influence professional decisions or action.

Adopted by the NEA 1975 Representative Assembly

Symbol of the United Education Profession

This symbol, adopted by the NEA Executive Committee in 1966, combines the legacy of the past with the symbol for pi, the first character in the Ancient Greek word for education, with a new direction for the future (>). The spherical triangle serving as the background represents the mutually supportive programs of local, state, and national education associations to advance education.



In one sentence, then, the design symbolizes the forward thrust of education through a united profession.

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