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## NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (NEA)

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- America's largest labor union
- Advocates leftist positions on a host of issues, including abortion, sex education, teen pregnancy, school prayer, socialized medicine, affordable housing, drug testing, prisoner rights, bilingual education, global warming, and health care
- Opposes merit pay for teachers
- Opposes school vouchers
- Ranks among the leading funders of the Democratic Party
- Has contributed vast sums to many leftwing organizations

Based in Washington, DC, the [3.1 million-member](#) National Education Association (NEA) is the largest labor union in the United States. It represents public school teachers and support personnel; faculty and staffers in colleges and universities; retired educators; and college students preparing to become teachers. The NEA's [mission](#) is "to advocate for education professionals and to unite our members and the nation to fulfill the promise of public education to prepare every student to succeed in a diverse and interdependent world."

The NEA pursues these goals through its 14,000+ [local affiliate organizations](#) (which are active in fundraising, conducting professional workshops, and negotiating teacher contracts); its 51 [state affiliates](#) (which "lobby legislators for the resources schools need"); and its Washington, DC-based [national headquarters](#) (which "lobbies Congress and federal agencies on behalf of its members and public schools, supports and coordinates innovative projects, works with other education organizations and friends of public education, [and] provides training and assistance to its affiliates").

The NEA was founded in 1850 as the National Teachers Association, and adopted its present name in 1857. Promoting government-owned public schools and "modern" pedagogical ideas, this union [permitted no private school teachers to join](#) its ranks. These government-owned-and-run schools were modeled on statist European education in Prussia, and attracted socialist activist teachers who saw public school students as perfect subjects for re-engineering society. That remolding began with the anti-Catholic objectives of Horace Mann (1796-1859) and expanded to the anti-religious humanism of John Dewey (1859-1952).

In a 1935 report presented at the 72nd annual NEA convention, the union's future Executive Secretary Willard Givens [wrote](#): "A dying laissez-faire must be completely destroyed and all of us ... must be subjected to a large degree of social control.... The major function of the school is the social orientation of the individual. It must seek to

give him understanding of the transition to a new social order."

In a 2003 article titled "[NEA Hastens Death of American Education](#)," veteran journalist Ralph de Toledano [wrote](#) that in 1938 "the Institute for Social Research, founded by the Comintern, appeared on the [Columbia University](#) campus, taking over the Teachers College, the country's most influential school of education." "Better known as the [Frankfurt School](#)," de Toledano continued, "... [the Institute] eschewed the economic aspects of Marxism and promulgated a substitute based on Marx's 1843 preachments. Later labeled neo-Marxism, the program called for the destruction of religion, the family, education and all moral values, along with the capture of the intellectuals and the instruments of mass communication such as the press, radio and films. To this it appended a new Freudianism, which reduced human relationships to rampant sexuality and the grossest pleasure principles -- a program its secret founder boasted 'will make America stink.'"

[Added de Tolenado](#): "The Frankfurt School's program, implemented by the NEA, made the goal of education not to educate the young but to give them an anarchic 'self-esteem' and deprive them of any sense of what's wrong or right ... [a]nd it preached the alienation of children from parental guidance, urging them to 'inform' on their families, as in Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany."

The NEA's explicitly stated quest to "[foster positive self-esteem](#)" in schoolchildren continues to this day. In his book *Inside American Education*, Thomas Sowell observes: "Perhaps nothing so captures what is wrong with American schools as the results of an international study of 13-year-olds which found that Koreans ranked first in mathematics and Americans last. When asked if they thought they were 'good at mathematics,' only 23 percent of Korean youngsters said 'yes' -- compared to 68 percent of American 13-year-olds. The American educational dogma that students should 'feel good about themselves' was a success in its own terms -- though not in any other terms."

As of 1957, the NEA had more than [700,000 members](#). (By way of comparison, in 1907 the union's membership had stood at [5,044](#); in 1917 it was [fewer than 9,000](#); and by the World War II era it was just over [200,000](#).)

In 1966 the NEA [merged](#) with the historically black American Teachers Association (ATA), which was originally founded as the National Association of Colored Teachers. The NEA and ATA had long enjoyed a close working relationship prior to the merger.

In the 1960s and 1970s, teachers were becoming unionized at a faster pace than ever before. Precisely at this time, student SAT scores, a popular and objective achievement barometer, deteriorated dramatically. Confronted by this embarrassing fact, the NEA responded by [calling for the abolition of standardized testing](#) of students.

In recent decades the NEA has been outspoken about its positions

vis a vis [a host of social and political topics](#), including abortion, sex education, teen pregnancy, school prayer, socialized medicine, affordable housing, drug testing, prisoner rights, and bilingual education. In July 1997 the union formally adopted a series of resolutions that called for:

- “making available all methods of [taxpayer-funded] family planning to women and men unable to take advantage of private facilities,” and “the implementation of community-operated, school-based family planning clinics that will provide intensive counseling by trained personnel”
- “sex education programs, including information on ... birth control and family planning ... [and] diversity of sexual orientation”
- “programs for [teen parents] that include flexible scheduling and attendance policies, development of self-esteem, on-site child care services ...”
- opposition to “any federal legislation or mandate that would require school districts to schedule a moment of silence”
- a rejection of “efforts to legislate English as the official language, [which] disregard cultural pluralism [and] deprive those in need of education, social services, and employment”
- “programs [that] increase acceptance of, and sensitivity to, gays and lesbians”
- increases in Social Security funding
- the prohibition of “mandatory and/or random drug and alcohol testing of employees and job applicants,” on grounds that it “is an unwarranted and unconstitutional invasion of privacy”

The NEA also [specifically advocated](#):

- statehood for the District of Columbia
- the reparation of American Indian remains
- a nuclear freeze by the United States military (Notably, the NEA currently [endorses](#) the anti-military-recruitment organization [Leave My Child Alone](#), which is a project of [Working Assets](#), [ACORN](#), and Mainstreet Moms Operation Blue.)
- “affordable, comprehensive health care [as] the right of every [U.S.] resident”
- the notion that “all members of our society have the right to adequate housing”

- the idea that “incarcerated persons ... are entitled to equal access to educational, recreational, and rehabilitative programs within all correctional systems”

Nine years later, at its 2006 national convention, the NEA [proposed](#) that all public schools should unequivocally support homosexual marriage and other forms of marriage (polygamy, etc.). In the NEA's view, this perspective should be transmitted -- via classroom instruction and textbooks alike -- to all children at all age levels, without any requirement for the permission or knowledge of parents.

At its 2007 national convention in Philadelphia, the NEA passed a number of [additional resolutions](#) -- some founded on the axiom that American society is inherently discriminatory and unjust, and others advocating massive increases in taxpayer funding of school programs and extra-curricular activities. For example, the NEA stated that:

- “funds must be provided ... to eliminate portrayal of race, gender, sexual orientation and gender identification stereotypes in the public schools”
- “full-day, every day kindergarten programs should be fully funded”
- “federal, state, and ... local governments should provide funds sufficient to make pre-kindergarten available for all three- and four-year-old children”
- tax dollars should “support[t] early childhood education programs in the public schools for children from birth through age eight”
- early childhood education programs should “be available to all children on an equal basis”; “should include mandatory kindergarten with compulsory attendance”; and “should include a full continuum of services ... including child care, child development, ... diversity-based curricula, special education, and appropriate bias-free screening devices”
- “excellence in the classroom can best be attained by small class size ... an optimum class size of fifteen students in regular programs and a proportionately lower number in programs for students with exceptional needs”
- “to achieve or maintain racial diversity, it may be necessary for elementary/secondary schools, colleges, and universities to take race into account in making decisions as to student admissions, assignments, and/or transfers” (i.e., the NEA supports busing and similar measures to micro-manage racial balance)
- “all members of the educational community [should] examine assumptions and prejudices, including, but not limited to, racism, sexism, and homophobia, that might limit the opportunities and growth of students and education

employees”

- "any immigration policy that denies educational opportunities to immigrants and their children regardless of their immigration status" should be rejected
- "financial aid and in-state tuition to state colleges and universities" should be accessible for students who are illegal aliens
- "[illegal] students who have resided in the United States for at least five years at the time of high school graduation should be granted amnesty by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, granted legal residency status, and allowed to apply for U.S. citizenship"
- "[non-English-speaking] students should be placed in bilingual education programs to receive instruction in their native language from qualified teachers until such time as English proficiency is achieved"
- "[m]ulti-cultural education should promote the recognition of individual and group differences and similarities in order to reduce racism, homophobia, ethnic and all other forms of prejudice, and discrimination and to develop self-esteem as well as respect for others"
- educational programs should promote: "an awareness of the effects of past, present, and future population growth patterns on world civilization, human survival, and the environment; solutions to environmental problems such as nonrenewable resource depletion, pollution, global warming, ozone depletion, and acid precipitation and deposition; [and] the recognition of and participation in such activities as Earth Day"
- "global warming causes significant measureable damage to the earth and its inhabitants," and "humans must take steps to change activities that contribute to global warming"
- "educational strategies for teaching peace and justice issues should include ... activities dealing with the effects of ... weapons of mass destruction, strategies for disarmament, [and] methods to achieve peace"
- "curricular materials should ... cover major contributing factors to conflict, such as economic disparity, demographic variables, unequal political power and resource distribution, and the indebtedness of the developing world"
- "proven conflict-resolution strategies, materials, and activities" should be utilized "at all educational levels"
- "home schooling programs based on parental choice cannot provide the student with a comprehensive education experience"

- "home-schooled students should not participate in any extracurricular activities in the public schools"
- "every child should have direct and confidential access to comprehensive health, social, and psychological programs and services" which include "comprehensive school-based, community-funded student health care clinics" and, "if deemed appropriate by local choice, family-planning counseling and access to birth control methods with instruction in their use"
- "hiring policies and practices must be nondiscriminatory and include provisions for the recruitment of a diverse teaching staff"
- "affirmative action plans and procedures ... should be developed and implemented"
- "affordable, comprehensive health care, including prescription drug coverage, is the right of every [U.S.] resident"
- "the [United Nations](#) furthers world peace and promotes the rights of all people by preventing war, racism, and genocide"
- "the United States should ratify the Rome Statute of the [International Criminal Court](#) and recognize and support its authority and jurisdiction"
- "the governments of all nations must respect and protect the basic human and civil rights of every individual, including equal access to education as embodied in the United Nations [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)"
- "efforts to legislate English as the official language disregard cultural pluralism [and] deprive those in need of education, social services, and employment"

In addition to the foregoing resolutions, the NEA [supports](#) "the movement toward self-determination by American Indians/Alaska natives" and believes that these groups should control their own education. It further holds that all schools should [designate separate months](#) to celebrate Black History, Hispanic Heritage, Native American Indian Heritage, Asian/Pacific Heritage, Women's History, Lesbian and Gay History. This proposal is founded on the premise that members of these demographics are victimized by persistent, widespread discrimination.

In the NEA's estimation, America's alleged inequities are by no means limited to the domestic sphere but extend also to U.S. foreign policy. After 9/11, for instance, the union's position was that America had long mistreated and exploited the peoples of other nations, and thus essentially had sown the seeds of the rage that ultimately found its expression in the 9/11 attacks.

Immediately after 9/11, the NEA issued [guidelines](#) on how teachers

should discuss the topic with their students. These guidelines stressed the need for children to be tolerant and respectful of all cultures -- and said virtually nothing about the fact that the U.S. was at war with an enemy that was aiming to annihilate it. The NEA came so close to blaming America for having provoked the 9/11 attacks, that a public outcry ensued and the union was forced to remove the teacher guidelines from its website.

In the summer of 2002, as the first [anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks](#) neared, the NEA again [posted guidelines](#) on its national website stating that classroom teachers should not "suggest any group [was] responsible" for the previous year's atrocities. Rather, the union advised teachers to have their students "discuss historical instances of American intolerance."

The NEA directed special praise to a 9/11 [curriculum](#) designed by Milwaukee fifth-grade teacher Robert Peterson, who explained the importance of helping students to: (a) "understand that they live in a global village"; (b) ask "why" the attacks may have been aimed against America; and (c) develop empathy for people elsewhere in the world. The NEA [summarized](#) what it considered to be one of Peterson's exemplary lesson plans:

"[Peterson] leads the children in a study of world population and distribution of income, and then takes them outdoors to illustrate their research on a large world map drawn on the playground blacktop. With each child representing 240 million people, the kids spread out—15 students in Asia, three in Europe, three in Africa, one in North America, two in South America, none in Australia. Chocolate cookies are then distributed according to each continent's gross domestic product. Six cookies are shared by the 15 people in Asia. Nine are shared by three Europeans, one cookie for South America, just half a cookie for Africa, eight for the lone North American. Most students have strong reactions and many questions. Why are there so many people in Asia? Why are the Europeans and Americans so rich? Some try negotiating with other 'nations,' while others even suggest war to even the odds. Peterson says his students begin to glimpse how the world's enormous inequalities could lead to animosity."

Of course the NEA concerns itself not only with social and political issues in the U.S. and abroad, but it also is actively involved in negotiating the terms under which its member teachers work. For example, the union adamantly opposes merit pay (or "performance contracting") for public school teachers -- [characterizing](#) such a system as "detrimental to public education." Delegates to the summer 2000 NEA convention openly declared their categorical opposition to "any ... system of compensation based on an evaluation of an education employee's performance." In 2007 the union [elaborated](#), "competency testing must not be used as a condition of employment, license retention, evaluation, placement, ranking, or promotion of licensed teachers"

Not only is the NEA opposed to merit pay, but for decades it has manifested a marked hostility toward outstanding teachers. The [example](#) of world-famous math teacher Jaime Escalante is

instructive. According to Escalante (the subject of the 1988 Hollywood movie *Stand and Deliver*), who developed the most successful inner-city math program in America, teacher union officials chastised him for attracting "too many" students to his calculus classes. When Escalante finally resigned from the high school which he and his students had made famous, local teacher union officials circulated a celebratory note that read: "We got him out!"

The NEA is similarly [opposed](#) to vouchers which would permit parents to divert a portion of their tax dollars away from the public school system, and to use those funds instead to help cover the tuition costs for private schools to which they might prefer to send their children. In the NEA's calculus, such voucher programs "compromise the Association's commitment to free, equitable, universal, and quality public education for every student." (Helping the NEA to lobby against vouchers and parental choice have been such organizations as [People for the American Way](#), the [American Civil Liberties Union](#), and the [NAACP](#).)

The NEA ranks among the most influential entities in modern American politics. [Wrote](#) journalist Ralph de Toledano in 2003: "The NEA's openly avowed goal today: 'To tap the legal, political and economic powers of the U.S. Congress. [It wants] ... sufficient clout [to] roam the halls of Congress and collect votes to reorder the priorities of the United States of America.'"

Specifically, the NEA's closest political ties are with the [Democratic Party](#). In 1976 the union used its financial resources and manpower to help elect [Jimmy Carter](#) to the U.S. presidency. After the election, Carter in turn thanked the union by creating the Department of Education in 1979, prompting one NEA executive to boast that this was the only union in the United States with its own cabinet department. At recent Democratic National Conventions, up to a quarter of the delegates have been members of teachers unions.

Today the NEA is a [member organization](#) of the [America Votes](#) coalition of get-out-the-vote organizations. America Votes is itself a member of the so-called [Shadow Party](#), a nationwide network of activist groups whose agendas are ideologically Left, and which are engaged in campaigning for the Democrats. NEA's fellow America Votes coalition members include: [ACORN](#), [America Coming Together](#), the AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor – Congress of Industrial Organizations); AFSCME (American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees); the American Federation of Teachers; the Association of Trial Lawyers of America (renamed the [American Association for Justice](#)); the [Defenders of Wildlife](#) Action Fund; [Democracy For America](#); [EMILY's List](#); the [League of Conservation Voters](#); the [Media Fund](#); the [MoveOn.org](#) Voter Fund; the [NAACP](#) National Voter Fund; [NARAL Pro-Choice America](#); [People for the American Way](#); the [Planned Parenthood](#) Action Fund; the [Service Employees International Union](#); the [Sierra Club](#); [USAction](#); and 21st Century Democrats.

Of the \$341 million the NEA received from September 2004 to August 2005, some \$295 million came from member dues. In turn,

many of those revenues were used to promote political agendas and candidates -- almost all of them Democrats. For several decades the NEA has been [among the largest](#) contributors of money and personnel to the Democratic Party and its candidates. Between 1990 and 2008, [93 percent of the union's political donations went to Democrats](#). (And virtually all of the rest went to the most liberal Republicans running in primaries, not in general elections, to tilt the political playing field even farther left).

[As reporter Lowell Ponte puts it](#), "The astronomical amount of political money thus coerced from workers is the lifeblood of [the] Democratic Party.... The NEA functions as a giant money-laundering machine for the Democrats. Democrats impose laws that let the union take a big piece of every employee's paycheck, which in public schools comes from the taxpayers. And the unions pay for this power and privilege by splitting this taxpayer money with partisan Democrat politicians to keep the machine operating. Public schools are an ultimate example of this synergy, not only because they are government monopolies but also because already-taxed parents are required by law to school their children, to offer their offspring as hostages to this money-extorting government-union machine." Because the NEA works so closely with the Democratic Party, it promotes the leftist ideologies and worldviews reflected in its aforementioned resolutions.

Studies have shown that as few as 40 percent of NEA members are Democrats, the remaining 60 percent splitting evenly between Republicans and independents. According to the NEA's own internal polling, [half](#) of the union's members identify themselves as conservative. Yet the NEA, like other unions, claims an absolute right to spend dues as it sees fit, regardless of the viewpoints of the teachers it nominally represents.

The NEA has a permanent, paid, full-time staff of [at least 1,800](#) United Service (UniServ) employees who function as political operatives -- more than the Republican and Democratic Parties combined. In a presidential election year, this army of union foot soldiers is tantamount to a political [donation of more than \\$100 million](#) to Democrats. They are trained at radical boot camps, paid and typically given graduate school credit for attending. One NEA handbook is titled *Alinsky for Teacher Organizers* and teaches activists how to use the confrontation and pressure tactics of the late radical leftist Saul Alinsky.

As Joel Mowbray [reports](#) in a Capital Research Center study, the Virginia-based Landmark Legal Foundation (LLF) in recent years has investigated the NEA for possible illegal use of tax-exempt funds. According to LLF President Mark Levin, the NEA has "kept information from its dues-paying members and the general public that clearly shows [improper use of tax-exempt money](#) to influence elections."

[LLF's investigation](#) traces its path back to the 1996 presidential election, when the NEA was a key constituent of a "National Coordinated Campaign Steering Committee" (NCCSC) whose function was to help Democrats win as many national, state, and local elections as possible; to determine campaign strategy for Democratic

candidates at all levels of government; and to coordinate spending on their behalf. [Joining the NEA on this Committee](#) were the AFL-CIO, the Democratic National Committee (DNC), the 1996 [Clinton-Gore](#) Campaign, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, the Democratic Leadership Campaign Committee, the Democratic Governors Association, and [EMILY's List](#).

Because the NEA is a tax-exempt organization, the federal government places certain [restrictions](#) on how the union may use its immense revenues. Specifically, the government requires that whatever funds a union earmarks for political activities designed to influence an election, must be disclosed on IRS Forms 990 and 1120-POL. The latter of these must be filed by any tax-exempt group whose political expenditures exceed \$100 in a single calendar year, and requires some disclosure about the details of those donations.

Yet from 1994-96 the NEA reported that it [spent no money at all](#) on politics. This is because an honest disclosure of its political expenditures would have entitled union members, if they objected to having their mandatory dues used to finance Democrat causes, to recover the portion of those dues that had been so earmarked. Also, union revenues used for partisan political purposes were taxable in certain cases.

Contrary to its claim that its political expenditures were nonexistent, the NEA not only spent millions of dollars on issue ads and get-out-the-vote drives for Democrats, but it also coordinated its campaign strategies with the Democratic National Committee (DNC). Confirming this was a key piece of evidence acquired by the Federal Election Commission (FEC) -- an unsigned Coordinated Campaign [memo](#) from Democratic Rep. Bob Etheridge. This memo stated: "When the DNC and its national Partners including ... the AFL-CIO and the NEA ... agree on the contents of a plan, each national partner will give their funding commitment to the state."

In other words, if the NEA disapproved of a particular state strategy, [it could prevent its "partners"](#) -- the DNC and AFL-CIO -- from funding it, and the measure could effectively be stopped. This was akin to a veto power over Democratic Party political action plans. In other words, the NEA dictated terms to the DNC, not vice versa.

"Those of us who have long dismissed the National Education Association as a tool of the Democratic Party have been badly mistaken," [wrote](#) columnist William McGurn in 2001 in the *Wall Street Journal*. "Apparently it's just the opposite ... it's the Democratic Party that is the tool of the NEA."

Beginning in 2005, [new federal rules](#) required large labor unions like the NEA to report in greater detail (to the U.S. Department of Labor) how they spent their money. Under these new disclosure regulations, it was confirmed that an immense amount of NEA money was being spent for purposes having nothing to do with the union's purported priorities (i.e., better wages, benefits, and working conditions for teachers and school staff). For example, the NEA [reported](#) that during the 2004-05 fiscal year, it had spent \$56.8 million on "union

administration," \$25 million on "political activities and lobbying," and \$65.5 million on "contributions, gifts, and grants." In other words, it is possible that up to \$90.5 million (the sum of the latter two categories of expenditures) was earmarked for leftist political candidates, organizations, and causes. Among these expenditures were [the following](#):

- \$5,070,192 to various Democratic [political consultants and strategists](#)
- \$500,000 to Protect our Public Schools, to campaign against public charter schools in Washington state
- \$300,000 to Citizens United to Protect Our Public Safety, to oppose property tax limits in Maine
- \$25,000 to the National Coalition on Health Care, which supports a taxpayer-funded system of socialized medicine
- \$5,000 to the National Conference of Black Mayors, a group representing the ideals of its overwhelmingly leftwing members
- \$75,000 to the Ballot Initiative Strategy Center, which [seeks](#) to help leftwing organizations "more effectively to fight for social, environmental, and economic justice"
- \$45,000 to the [League of United Latin American Citizens](#)
- \$25,000 to the North Carolina Democratic Party Building Fund
- \$400,000 to the Fund to Protect Social Security, which [seeks](#) to defeat personal investment accounts
- \$10,000 to the Rock the Vote Education Fund, which aims to register new young voters who will support leftwing causes and candidates
- \$14,000 to the Missouri Progressive Vote Coalition
- \$249,000 to the Floridians for All Committee, which [supports](#) "the construction of a permanent progressive infrastructure that will help redirect Florida politics in a more progressive, Democratic direction"
- \$250,000 to Alliance for Nevada's Working Families, "[to support](#) [a] ballot measure to increase minimum wage"
- \$600,000 to Communities for Quality Education, a [political advocacy](#) group created by the NEA
- \$5,000 to the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), a 1.4-million member union that is the Democratic Party's [top donor](#)

- \$5,000 to [Amnesty International](#)
- \$5,000 to the [Center For Women's Policy Studies](#)
- \$39,940 to the [Congressional Black Caucus](#) Foundation
- \$35,000 to the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute
- \$45,000 to the Economic Policy Institute, a leftwing think tank that which regularly [issues reports](#) claiming that education is underfunded and teachers are underpaid
- \$10,000 to the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, which [makes](#) policy recommendations to counter what it views as America's inherently racist, discriminatory society
- \$5,000 to the [Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund](#)
- \$5,000 to the National Association for Bilingual Education
- \$7,900 to the [National Council of La Raza](#)
- \$5,000 to the [National Women's Law Center](#)
- \$5,000 to the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation Media Awards
- \$13,000 to the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, which [views](#) affirmative action as a policy necessary to help offset America's allegedly rampant bigotry
- \$15,000 to the Human Rights Campaign, America's [largest](#) gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender civil rights organization
- \$5,000 to [Jesse Jackson's Rainbow / PUSH Coalition](#)
- \$5,000 to United South and Eastern Tribes, [dedicated to](#) "protecting Indian rights and natural resources on tribal lands"
- \$5,000 to the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, which views the U.S. as a nation that discriminates heavily against homosexuals
- \$20,000 to Rebuild America's Schools, [which seeks to expand](#) taxpayer funding of school construction and repairs
- \$25,750 to the Democratic Leadership Council
- \$10,648 to the [Children's Defense Fund](#)
- \$51,200 to [People for the American Way](#)
- \$6,000 to [USAction](#)

- \$6,000 to the Council on Foreign Relations
- \$40,148 to Brazile & Associates, a firm headed by longtime Democratic Party consultant and campaign manager [Donna Brazile](#), which [provides](#) diversity training for American businesses, and all types of training for political activists.

"What wasn't clear before is how much of a part the teachers unions play in the wider liberal movement and the Democratic Party," [said Michael Antonucci](#) of the Education Intelligence Agency, a California-based watchdog group. "They're like some philanthropic organization that passes out grant money to interest groups."

As of 2006, the NEA's \$58 million payroll [included](#) over 600 employees and officers, more than half of whom earned salaries exceeding \$100,000 per year. NEA President Reg Weaver's salary was [\\$439,000](#). As of 2004-05, NEA Vice President Dennis Van Roekel earned \$273,000, and Secretary-Treasurer Lily Eskelsen earned \$272,000. By contrast, the average classroom teacher [earned](#) \$48,000.

Though the NEA consistently complains that education in the U.S. is underfunded, government spending on education has in fact [outpaced overall economic growth by more than 50 percent](#) since the early 1900s. As of 2004-05, the government was spending an average of [\\$8,701 per year](#) per public-school student.

According to its [2007 financial report](#), the NEA's total assets were \$188,710,730. Its total receipts for the year were \$352,958,087. Moreover, the NEA's aggressive lobbying of Congress has enabled it to benefit from an archaic law [freeing it](#) from having to pay its \$1.6 million in annual property taxes. [No other labor union](#) in America has been able to negotiate such an arrangement.

An analysis of the NEA's financial disclosure report for the 2007-08 fiscal year revealed that the union [contributed \\$11.7 million](#) to a wide variety of leftwing advocacy groups, including: [ACORN](#), the AFL-CIO, [Campaign for America's Future](#), the [Center for Community Change](#), the [Children's Defense Fund](#), the [Congressional Black Caucus](#) Foundation, [Democracy Alliance](#), the Gay Lesbian and Straight Education Network, the [League of United Latin American Citizens](#), the [Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund](#), the [National Urban League](#), the [National Women's Law Center](#), [People for the American Way](#), [Planned Parenthood](#), the [Rainbow/PUSH Coalition](#), the [Service Employees International Union](#), [USAction](#), and the [WAND](#) Education Fund.

In November 2009, the NEA website posted a page titled "[Recommended Reading: Saul Alinsky, The American Organizer](#)." This page praised [Saul Alinsky's](#) two books -- *Rules for Radicals* and *Reveille for Radicals* -- as "an inspiration" to "every organizer" and "anyone contemplating action in their community."