Political Activism Takes Center Stage With The NEA
by Phyllis Schlafly July 28, 2004
Google Ads are provided by Google and are not selected or endorsed by Eagle Forum
To no one's surprise, the annual National Education Association convention voted six-to-one (7,390 to 1,153), to endorse John Kerry for President.

The head of the NEA, Reg Weaver, opened the annual convention in July in Washington, DC with a call for public school teachers and employees to mobilize to defeat President Bush this fall. He said the union's political activism "takes center stage," and he predicted that "our 2.7 million members can be the X-factor in this election."

For the 2004 political campaign, the NEA will "partner" with the leftwing organizations MoveOn.org, ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now), and the pro-Democratic Campaign for America's Future in order to achieve "the largest mobilization for education ever." Through a nationwide political strategy called "house parties" to be held on September 22, these activists will plan political rallies, register voters, meet with congressional candidates, and organize a get-out-the-vote program to cover teachers and parents.

John Kerry was to have been the convention's headline speaker, but he stood them up, choosing that very day to announce his choice of John Edwards as his running mate. The delegates were more than pleased with his replacement, Hillary Clinton, who was introduced as "one of our closest allies; she's so close, in fact, that she needs no further introduction."

Hillary brought the delegates to their feet with what the NEA's official newspaper called her "sharp wit," such as, "We are one day closer to the end of the Bush-Cheney Administration." Actually, she was just a warmup for a showing of Michael Moore's anti-Bush movie, "Fahrenheit 9/11," right after her speech.

The NEA's lobbying goals for next year's Congress include federal funding for public school child care, early childhood programs that are school-based, before- and after-school programs, big spending for school counselors, and school-based health care for children.

The NEA's non-education-related lobbying goals include funding for the National Endowment for the Arts, national health care, reparations to African Americans, statehood for the District of Columbia, taxpayer funding of federal elections, and a national holiday for Cesar Chavez. The NEA's foreign policy goals include ratification of the United Nations treaties on the Rights of the Child and on Discrimination against Women.

The NEA's feminist lobbying goals include "reproductive freedom without governmental intervention" (but, of course, with tax funding), affirmative action, assigning women to military combat, and the Equal Rights Amendment. The NEA's gay goals include a federal statute prohibiting employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, income tax benefits for domestic partners, and hate crimes legislation.

The NEA opposes all varieties of school choice, tuition tax credits, vouchers, parental option or "choice" in education programs, designating English as our official language, and any possible action that might impinge on the secularists' notion of "separation of church and state."

The NEA again made its animosity against homeschoolers loud and clear. The resolution against homeschooling demanded that all instruction be given by teachers licensed by the state education licensure agency, and that the curriculum be approved by the state department of education. The NEA also took the position that homeschooled students should not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities in public schools (even though their parents pay the same school taxes that

public school students' parents pay). Obviously, homeschooling is the only thing the powerful and wealthy NEA union fears.

The convention opened with an invocation by the president of the National Council of Urban Education Associations. A few delegates complained that his message sounded suspiciously like a reading from the Democratic Party platform.

Washington D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams was not on hand to welcome the delegates to the nation's capital because he supports school vouchers, a politically incorrect position for NEA speakers. The delegates were welcomed instead by U.S. Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton, who used her time at the podium to pitch for her legislation to give congressional representation to the District of Columbia.

The speakers voiced the usual complaints about a stingy Congress not appropriating enough money for education. In fact, federal spending on Title I (for low-income schools) has increased 51% from $8.8 billion in the Clinton administration to $13.3 billion this year.