



UEA Member Information

Provided by the Utah Education Association for the benefit of its members.

Why does the NEA recommend political candidates?

In a recent column, National Education Association President Dennis Van Roekel pointed out that “the majority of all public policies that affect educators’ needs and student learning in their classrooms are formulated by elected officials or political appointees.” At the request of members, the NEA examines candidates’ positions on issues impacting members, particularly their positions on public education and labor. NEA representatives then vote whether or not to recommend a candidate.

Why does the NEA recommend Sen. Barack Obama for U.S. president?

The announcement by the NEA to endorse Sen. Barack Obama for U.S. president was made following an extensive process to determine which candidate(s) most closely aligned with the views of NEA members:

- A questionnaire was sent to each candidate during the primary election asking their views on issues important to NEA members;
- A committee reviewed the positions of all candidates;
- All primary candidates from the major political parties were invited to speak at the 2007 NEA Representative Assembly—those who chose to speak included Gov. Mike Huckabee and all the Democratic primary presidential candidates at the time (Sen. McCain declined);
- Nearly 10,000 educators, representing the NEA’s 3.2 million members, officially voted on July 4, 2008, to endorse Sen. Obama as part of the NEA’s Representative Assembly.



The NEA Web site contrasts Sen. Obama and Sen. McCain on issues that matter most to NEA members, including:

- » Sen. Obama opposes using public tax dollars to provide financial support to private schools. Sen. McCain is already on record with votes supporting vouchers.
- » Sen. Obama has made it clear that the Bush Administration’s No Child Left Behind law must be changed. Sen. McCain has been crossing the country saying he’ll expand the very provisions of NCLB that the nation’s educators cite as its greatest flaws, most especially its one-size-fits-all high-stakes testing provisions.
- » Sen. Obama has said repeatedly that, while teachers need to be held accountable for what goes on in the classroom, every teacher deserves a living wage. Sen. McCain has called for paying teachers based on student test scores.
- » Sen. Obama supports reducing class size to improve student achievement. Sen. McCain has voted against attempts to reduce class size as too costly.

2008 Presidential Candidate Comparison


On The Issues NEA Members Care About,
The Choice Is Clear

NEA Supports Barack Obama for President

	NEA	BARACK OBAMA (D)	JOHN MCCAIN (R)
Expand Health Care, Create Universal Health Insurance	Supports	Supports	Supports Expanding Health Care, Opposes Universal Insurance
Protect Employees’ Rights to Organize (EFCA)	Supports	Supports	Opposes
Increase Minimum Wage	Supports	Supports	Opposes
Pay Teachers a Starting Salary of \$40,000 and Education Support Professionals a Living Wage	Supports	Supports	No Public Information Found Did Not Return NEA Questionnaire
Increase Student Aid for College (Pell Grants)	Supports	Supports	Opposes
Increase Federal Education Funding	Supports	Supports	Opposed Bills to Increase Funding, but Says He Supports Adequate Funding
Increase Funding for IDEA	Supports	Supports	Supports
No Child Left Behind (NCLB)	Overhaul	Overhaul	Tweak
Private School Vouchers	Opposes	Opposes	Supports
Pay for Test Scores	Opposes Pay for Test Scores, but Supports Some Forms of Enhanced Compensation	Opposes Pay for Test Scores, but Supports Some Forms of Enhanced Compensation	Supports Pay for Test Scores
Reduce Class Sizes	Supports	Supports	Opposes
Expand Early Childhood Education	Supports	Supports	No Public Information Found
Sponsor Bill to Repeal GPO/WEP	Supports Bill	Yes	No
Privatize Social Security	Opposes	Opposes	Partially Supports
Protect Women from Pay Discrimination (Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act)	Supports	Supports	Opposes

For details on their voting record visit www.nea.org/educationvotes



For more information about NEA’s political efforts, visit www.nea.org/educationvotes.