

2008 Presidential Candidate Comparison

	Hillary Clinton (D)	John McCain (R)	Barack Obama (D)	NEA
Private School Vouchers	<p>Opposes</p> <p>“I have always believed in public school choice. I am adamantly opposed to vouchers. I will fight them with every breath in my body. There is no evidence that vouchers work for students that come from disadvantaged backgrounds. And in addition to the fact that they don’t work and the evidence isn’t there to support their extension, vouchers would mean the end of the public school system, and I believe, an erosion of our democracy that we would regret deeply... When it comes to charters and magnets, we’ve got to experiment. We’ve got to have different approaches.”</p> <p><i>Remarks to NEA Representative Assembly, 7/3/07</i></p>	<p>Supports</p> <p>“We don't have a choice in competition. We need it in K through 12. We need more charter schools. We need vouchers where it's approved by the local state and school boards. We need to have clearly home- schooling if people want that. We need to reward good teachers and find bad teachers another line of work. We need to have all of these compete.”</p> <p><i>Republican Presidential Debate, 12/12/07</i></p>	<p>Opposes</p> <p>““Senator Obama has always been a critic of vouchers...Throughout his career, he has voted against voucher proposals and voiced concern for siphoning off resources from our public schools.””</p> <p><i>New York Sun, 2/25/08, reporting based on Statement from Campaign, 2/20/08</i></p> <p>Pronouncing himself a skeptic of private school vouchers, he said: “My view is you’re not going to generate the supply of high-quality schools to meet the demand.... If there was any argument for vouchers, it was ‘Let’s see if the experiment works,’” he said. “And if it does, whatever my preconception, you do what’s best for kids.”</p> <p><i>Editorial Board Interview, Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel, 2/13/08</i></p> <p>“I ... oppose the use of public funds – through vouchers, tax credits, or other – to pay for tuition at private or religious schools. We need to invest in our public schools and strengthen them, not drain their fiscal support.”</p> <p><i>NEA’s 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire</i></p>	<p>Opposes</p> <p>NEA opposes voucher plans, tuition tax credits, K-12 education savings accounts, or other programs that use tax monies directly or indirectly to subsidize private pre-K-12 education in schools that are not academically or fiscally responsible to the taxpayer. These programs have not been proven effective, and undermine support needed to fund public education adequately; contribute to racial, economic, and social segregation; and threaten the constitutional separation of church and state. Instead, NEA supports proven school improvement strategies that help ensure great public schools for every child.</p>

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Charter Schools	<p>Supports</p> <p>“I have always believed in public school choice. ... When it comes to charters and magnets, we’ve got to experiment; we’ve got to have different approaches.”</p> <p><i>Remarks to NEA Representative Assembly, 7/3/07</i></p>	<p>Supports</p> <p>“Choice and competition is the key to success in education in America. That means charter schools, that means home schooling, it means vouchers, it means rewarding good teachers and finding bad teachers another line of work. ... I want every American parent to have a choice, a choice as to how they want their child educated, and I guarantee you the competition will dramatically increase the level of education in America.”</p> <p><i>Political Transcript Wire, 12/10/07</i></p>	<p>Supports</p> <p>“I’ve consistently said we need to support charter schools. I think it is important to experiment, by looking at how we can reward excellence in the classroom.”</p> <p><i>Politico, 2/12/08</i></p>	<p>Supports public charter schools with certain quality assurance provisions</p> <p>Charter schools and other nontraditional public school options have the potential to facilitate education reforms and develop new and creative teaching methods that can be replicated in traditional public schools for the benefit of all children. Public educational opportunities for every American must be preserved and strengthened, and NEA supports innovation in public education. However, charter schools must be held accountable to the same student achievement standards as traditional public schools, and fiscal transparency and integrity and other oversight principles must be enforced.</p> <p>Charter schools should employ only highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals, as those terms are defined under NCLB, and recognize that those employees are public employees with constitutional and statutory rights identical to those of other public employees.</p>

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Pay Teachers Based on Student Test Scores; Pay Teachers Based on Other Factors	<p>Opposes Individual Pay for Test Scores, but Supports School Wide Performance Pay</p> <p>“I want to provide funding to school districts for financial incentives to bring experienced teachers to underserved areas. And I’ll support funding to increase the salaries of teachers and other staff members in schools...where children face problems, but where they’re making gains. I believe that it’s the whole school, as a team, and if the whole team is doing well and children are improving, then the whole team should get a financial bonus.”</p> <p><i>Congressional Quarterly Transcript, 11/27/07</i></p> <p>“[T]he school is a team, and I think it’s important that we reward that collaboration.”</p> <p><i>CNN Debate transcript, 11/15/08</i></p> <p>Sen. Clinton supports additional pay for mentoring or professional development that will help the whole school.</p> <p><i>Interview with NEA President Reg Weaver, September 2007</i></p> <p>www.hillaryclinton.com/news/release/view/?id=4403, 11/27/07</p>	<p>Supports</p> <p>“I would do anything I could to hold teachers and schools more accountable. I would reward teachers on the basis of performance.”</p> <p><i>Associated Press, 4/13/07</i></p> <p>Support teacher testing and reward teachers with merit pay? McCain answered “yes.”</p> <p><i>2004 National Political Awareness Test, Project Vote Smart, www.vote-smart.org</i></p>	<p>Opposes Traditional Merit Pay, but Supports Some Forms of Performance Pay</p> <p>“What teachers object to” is having “some standardized test that determines how much a teacher’s going to get paid in the classroom. That’s not what we’re proposing. We’re going to provide a pathway, a career ladder, so that there are a number of steps they can take to boost their pay.”</p> <p><i>USA Today, 11/21/08</i></p> <p>Obama supports additional pay for additional responsibilities and skills, as well as to attract teachers to hard-to-staff schools.</p> <p><i>Interview with NEA President Reg Weaver, September 2007</i></p> <p>“[W]e can find new ways to increase pay that are developed with teachers, not imposed on them and not based on some arbitrary test score. That’s how we’re going to ... start treating teachers like the professionals you are.”</p> <p><i>Remarks to NEA Representative Assembly, 7/5/07 (also reported in TIME article, 2/14/08)</i></p> <p>“Teachers should be better compensated, with both a more competitive base salary and professional compensation systems designed with the help and agreement of teachers’ organizations. Compensation systems can provide salary incentives for demonstrated knowledge, skill and expertise that move the mission of the school forward and reward excellent teachers for continuing to teach.”</p> <p><i>Obama Education Plan</i> http://www.barackobama.com/issues/pdf/PreK-12EducationFactSheet.pdf</p>	<p>Opposes Pay for Test Scores, but Supports Some Forms of Alternative Compensation</p> <p>NEA opposes federal mandates that require teachers to be paid additional compensation based in whole or in part on test scores, or based on subject shortage areas.</p> <p>NEA supports ideas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Funding for programs to attract caring and qualified teachers to high-need hard-to-staff schools; --Additional pay for achieving National Board certification; --Additional pay for accepting additional responsibilities such as peer assistance or mentoring, for additional knowledge and skills, and for advanced credentials/degrees related to their teaching assignments or school mission; or --Additional pay for extended contract years, extended days, and extra assignments. <p>NEA believes all pay systems must be collectively bargained and jointly developed. Where collective bargaining does not exist, school employee involvement and agreement is necessary for success of pay system.</p>

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No Child Left Behind (NCLB)	<p>End</p> <p>“I will the end the unfunded mandate known as No Child Left Behind. And, together, we will come up with a 21st-century educational system for our children, where we look at each individual child and try to decide what we need to do to lift that little boy or girl to his or her God-given potential.”</p> <p><i>CQ Transcripts Wire, Washington Post, 2/12/08</i></p> <p>“[NCLB] needs significant reform. First, I think we must change the way students are measured... Children are taking too many tests and the tests are becoming the curriculum. I would like to see schools use growth models, which measure the progress of every child... I believe in accountability, but I think standards and assessments alone will not solve the problems facing our schools. I am also deeply concerned about the narrowing of the curricula that I am hearing about in local communities... I think we have to do more in NCLB to ensure that all children receive a well-rounded education, and that the classes that entice children to want to stay in school do not get eliminated. I am also concerned about the one size fits all approach to fixing troubled schools. [I]t is very problematic that we are spending \$500 million on supplemental services even though the instruction is not necessarily aligned to a school’s curriculum and the providers are not necessarily held accountable for demonstrating that they are impacting measurable results.”</p> <p><i>NEA’s 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire</i></p>	<p>Fix</p> <p>“There’s a lot of things that need to be fixed about No Child Left Behind, but just to say what was a bipartisan agreement, as we all know, and was the first real attempt at trying to gauge and reward performance, including teachers, as well as students in America, I think would be a mistake. But should we sit down and fix it? Yes. And we should do it in a bipartisan fashion and recognize that the first -- the first challenge that I think this nation has is to provide a qualified workforce.”</p> <p><i>Political Transcript Wire, 2/22/08</i></p> <p>“No Child Left Behind — everybody likes to criticize it. It needs to be fixed, but it was a great beginning. It was a great way of gauging performance.”</p> <p><i>PBS, “The Charlie Rose Show,” 11/27/07</i></p> <p>At a town hall meeting in Guilford, NH, Senator McCain stated that NCLB should be fixed – especially in the areas of testing students with disabilities and non-English speaking students – but that the law should not be repealed.</p> <p><i>NEA Press Release, 6/5/07</i></p>	<p>Overhaul</p> <p>“I do not accept passing a law called No Child Left Behind and then leaving the money behind. I do not accept an education policy where a child in southwest Virginia starts at a disadvantage because her parents can’t afford quality pre-school. I do not accept teachers working at Dunkin Donuts to make ends meet, or reaching into their own pockets to pay for school supplies. Every child in America should have the opportunity to succeed, from birth through college.”</p> <p><i>Associated Press and BlackAmericaWeb.com, 2/11/08</i></p> <p>“Unfulfilled funding promises, inadequate implementation by the Department of Education, and shortcomings in the design of the law have limited its effectiveness and undercut its support among many people who care deeply about our schools and students... [W]e have spent too much time preparing students for tests that do not provide any valuable, timely feedback on how to improve a students’ learning. Creativity has been drained from classrooms as too many teachers are forced to teach fill-in-the-bubble tests. We need tests and measurements, but we should ensure that they are useful to improve student learning... Good teachers with the tools to do their jobs should not have to teach to the test. They should be able to teach a rich curriculum.”</p> <p><i>NEA’s 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire</i></p>	<p>Overhaul</p> <p>NEA believes that ESEA reauthorization must involve significant input from educators.</p> <p>The laws goals are vitally important. However, Congress must shift away from the law’s one-size-fits-all accountability system, and its emphasis on punishment, to one that supports educators in improving student learning, rewards success, and provides meaningful assistance to schools most in need of help. Five priorities are crucial to these goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Accountability that rewards success and supports educators to help students learn; --Smaller class sizes to improve student learning; --Quality educators in every classroom and school; --Students and schools supported by engaged parents, families, and communities; and --Resources to ensure a great public school for every child.

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Change No Child Left Behind's Use of a Single Standardized Test to Measure Student Success	<p>Supports</p> <p>"I do not want to treat our children like they're little test takers."</p> <p><i>McAllen Monitor, 2/21/08</i></p> <p>"What I do not appreciate about "no child left behind" is it is kind of a one size fits all approach where children are turned into little test takers and teachers into test givers and it seems like that's an end in itself. ... The curriculum gets narrowed. A lot of it gets dropped. ... And at the end of it what do you have? You have a snap shot of a classroom and a school."</p> <p><i>CNN transcript, 1/13/08</i></p> <p><i>NEA's 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire</i></p>	<p>Supports Testing Changes for Students With Disabilities and English Language Learners</p> <p>"It's [NCLB] got a lot of problems. We've got to sit down and fix those problems, particularly with [testing ELL] minorities," McCain said.</p> <p><i>Orangeburg (SC) Times and Democrat, 10/10/07</i></p>	<p>Supports</p> <p>"...I want the highest standards in our schools. We have to have high standards, standards of excellence in order to compete in this global economy. But I don't want our standards measured just by a single high-stakes standardized test, because I don't want our teachers teaching to the tests. I want our students learning art, and music, and science, and literature, and social studies."</p> <p><i>CQ Transcripts Wire, 2/19/08, Houston, TX</i></p> <p>"We need a new way of assessing our children."</p> <p><i>Orangeburg Times and Democrat, 1/23/08</i></p> <p><i>NEA's 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire</i></p>	<p>Supports</p> <p>NEA believes that there should be multiple measures of student learning and school effectiveness instead of the current one-day snapshot based solely on standardized tests</p>
Reduce Class Size	<p>Supports</p> <p><i>NEA's 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire</i></p>	<p>Opposes</p> <p>Voted against a federal program aimed at reducing class size.</p> <p><i>Roll Call Vote 103, 5/15/01</i></p> <p>Voted to table an amendment that "would have provided \$11 billion for the hiring of 100,000 new teachers over six years."</p> <p><i>Roll Call Vote 41, 03/11/99</i></p>	<p>Supports</p> <p><i>NEA's 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire</i></p>	<p>Supports</p> <p>NEA believes that class sizes should be reduced to improve student learning.</p>

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Expand Early Childhood Education	<p>Supports</p> <p>“Finally, I believe we need to start educating children earlier. I have proposed universal access to pre-kindergarten because I believe every child, regardless of parental income, deserves access to high-quality pre-K.”</p> <p><i>NEA’s 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire</i></p> <p><i>Clinton Education Plan</i> http://www.hillaryclinton.com/issues/education/</p>	<p>No Public Information Available</p> <p>Missed 2007 Senate vote to renew Head Start</p>	<p>Supports</p> <p>“Children’s ability to succeed in school relies on the foundation they build in their first three years. Prekindergarten for four-year-olds is important, but it is not enough to ensure children will arrive at school ready to learn,” instead advocating a Zero to Five plan.</p> <p><i>Obama Education Plan</i> http://www.barackobama.com/issues/pdf/PreK-12EducationFactSheet.pdf</p> <p><i>NEA’s 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire</i></p>	Supports
Pay Teachers a Starting Salary of \$40,000 and Education Support Professionals a Living Wage	<p>Supports</p> <p><i>NEA’s 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire</i></p>	<p>No Public Information Available</p> <p>Did Not Return NEA Questionnaire</p>	<p>Supports</p> <p><i>NEA’s 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire</i></p>	Supports

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Increase Federal Education Funding	<p>Supports</p> <p><i>NEA's 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire</i></p>	<p>Opposes</p> <p>Opposed major amendments and appropriations bills that would increase funding for education programs.</p> <p><i>Roll Call Vote 46, 1/31/07;</i> <i>Roll Call Vote 58, 3/16/06</i></p> <p>Stated that it was important to adequately fund public education and to reward good teachers, but he said the issue was more complex than spending more money. "So I'm for spending more money. I'm sure you're for spending more money. But that money has to be spent wisely since it happens to be your tax dollars."</p> <p><i>Associated Press, 10/27/07</i></p>	<p>Supports</p> <p><i>NEA's 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire</i></p>	<p>Supports</p> <p>Supports substantial increases in federal funding of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act/No Child Left Behind Act, particularly Title I.</p> <p>Supports "full funding" of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.</p>
Increase Student Aid for College (Pell Grants)	<p>Supports</p> <p><i>NEA's 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire</i></p>	<p>Opposes</p> <p>McCain voted against the College Cost Reduction Act, which will increase maximum Pell Grant awards to \$5,100.</p> <p><i>Roll Call Vote 272, 7/20/07</i></p>	<p>Supports</p> <p><i>NEA's 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire</i></p>	<p>Supports</p>

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Expand Healthcare, Create Universal Health Insurance	<p>Supports</p> <p>“... [My plan] will cover everyone... Now it’s not only about the 47 million uninsured. Millions of insured Americans don’t get the health care they paid for. We have a lot of people who, all of a sudden, their child needs an operation and the insurance company won’t pay for it. Well, we’re going to make it clear that there will be no parent who ever is told no when it comes to getting health care for their children.”</p> <p><i>Democratic Presidential Debate, 9/9/07</i></p> <p>“This is not government run. There will be no new bureaucracy... If you have private insurance you like, nothing changes -- you can keep that insurance. If you like the doctor you have, you can keep seeing that doctor. If you like the hospital where you receive care, you can keep receiving care at that hospital. If, however, you don’t have health insurance or you don’t like the insurance you have, you can choose from the same ... private plans that members of Congress choose from.”</p> <p>Clinton’s plan would provide tax credits to help families pay for health care, guarantee coverage, and promote portability.</p> <p><i>Speech, Des Moines, IA, 9/17/07</i></p>	<p>Supports Expanding Health Care, Opposes Universal Insurance</p> <p>“I believe that every American should have affordable and available health care.... But I’m not going to mandate that they do. And obviously mandates mean you’re going to ratchet up the cost dramatically.”</p> <p><i>CNN, 2/16/08</i></p> <p>“While we reform the system and maintain quality, we can and must provide access to health care for all our citizens – whether temporarily or chronically uninsured, whether living in rural areas with limited services, or whether residing in inner cities where access to physicians is often limited.”</p> <p><i>www.johnmccain.com, January 2008</i></p> <p>McCain says he thinks affordable health care can be made available to all Americans without a mandated universal system. "I think it's a warmed-over proposal that we rejected back in the early 1990s, and I'm certainly not interested in raising people's taxes," McCain said, adding he also is opposed to requiring everyone to buy health insurance coverage. "We've got to make health care affordable and available. There's plenty of ways to do that."</p> <p><i>United Press International, 6/10/06</i></p>	<p>Supports</p> <p>“[B]y the end of my first term ... we’re going to have universal health care for every single American... And there are going to be some basic principles: that coverage has to be universal, that we’re going to have to save costs and get more bang for our health care dollar, that employers, government and individuals are all going to have to put up something...”</p> <p><i>Presidential Forum, 3/24/07</i></p> <p>“[M]y emphasis is on driving down costs, taking on insurance companies, making sure they are limited in the ability to extract profits and deny coverage; that we make sure the drug companies have to do what’s right by their patients instead of simply hoarding their profits.”</p> <p><i>Democratic Presidential Debate, 6/3/07</i></p> <p>Obama’s plan offers subsidies to individuals to buy into a national pool, and expands Medicaid and the State Children’s Health Insurance Program.</p> <p><i>NEA’s 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire</i></p> <p><i>The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation</i> <i>(www.health08.org/sidebyside.cfm)</i></p>	<p>Supports</p> <p>NEA supports a national health care policy that will mandate universal coverage with the highest quality health care at the lowest possible cost.</p>

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Privatize Social Security	<p>Opposes</p> <p><i>NEA's 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire</i></p>	<p>Partially supports</p> <p>McCain “supports supplementing the current Social Security system with personal accounts – but not as a substitute for addressing benefit promises that cannot be kept.”</p> <p><i>McCain Tax Cut Plan, http://www.johnmccain.com/Informing/Issues/OB8E4DB8-5B0C-459F-97EA-D7B542A78235.htm</i></p> <p>“Look, what Americans need is some straight talk. Every man, woman and child in America needs to know it's going broke, and we've got to do the hard things. We've got to fix it for the future generations of Americans. Don't we owe that to young Americans today? I say we do. It's got to be bipartisan. And you have to go to the American people and say we won't raise your taxes. We need personal savings accounts, but we got to fix this system.”</p> <p><i>Republican Presidential Debate, 10/21/07</i></p>	<p>Opposes</p> <p><i>NEA's 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire</i></p>	<p>Opposes</p> <p>NEA opposes any effort to privatize Social Security. Privatization carries great risk and will reduce benefits for future generations. It will drain money from the current system that is needed to pay today's retirees, while subjecting retirees' financial security to the unpredictability of the market.</p>
Protect Education Employee Rights (EFCA)	<p>Supports</p> <p><i>NEA's 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire</i></p> <p>Co-sponsored Senate version of Employee Free Choice Act (S. 1041)</p> <p>Voted to end debate on EFCA so that vote on passage could proceed.</p> <p><i>Senate Roll Call Vote <u>2007-227</u>, 6/26/07</i></p>	<p>Opposes</p> <p>“I am strongly opposed to ...the so-called Employee Free Choice Act of 2007. Not only is the bill's title deceptive, the enactment of such an ill-conceived legislative measure would be a gross deception to the hard-working Americans who would fall victim to it.”</p> <p><i>Congressional Record, Senate floor consideration of H.R. 800, 6/27/07</i></p>	<p>Supports</p> <p><i>NEA's 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire</i></p> <p>Co-sponsored Senate version of Employee Free Choice Act (S. 1041)</p> <p>Voted to end debate on EFCA so that vote on passage could proceed.</p> <p><i>Senate Roll Call Vote <u>2007-227</u>, 6/26/07</i></p>	<p>Supports</p> <p>NEA believes that attaining and exercising collective bargaining rights are essential to the promotion of the needs of students and educational professionals. The Employee Free Choice Act recognizes the rights of private sector workers to choose a union and protects against discrimination or intimidation for workers who exercise their right to organize.</p>