



Rebecca S. Pringle
President

Princess R. Moss
Vice President

Noel Candelaria
Secretary-Treasurer

Kim A. Anderson
Executive Director

February 7, 2023

Committee on Education and the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of our 3 million members and the 50 million students they serve, we appreciate this opportunity to offer comments for the record for the committee's February 8 hearing on education.

NEA members across our nation are dedicated to providing all students—White, Black, brown, Asian American and Pacific Islander, LGBTQ—with a high-quality education and the support they need to thrive. The educators of NEA believe in nurturing students' natural curiosity and imagination and instilling a love of learning that will serve them well throughout their lives.

In a recent survey, 80 percent of parents with children in public K-12 schools said they were satisfied with their children's education. They appreciate that educators are striving to connect with, support, and mentor students who have a variety of gifts and challenges. They want all of us to come together in addressing the issues that truly matter, instead of being distracted by issues that ignore what matters most: promoting democracy by preparing children for citizenship and cultivating a workforce that can compete in the global marketplace.

To nurture students, we must have schools and campuses that are safe spaces for students as well as educators. In addition, they must: be well-resourced and fully staffed with qualified and dedicated educators who can provide one-on-one attention; offer the latest technology, textbooks, and learning materials; offer a well-rounded, inclusive curriculum that encourages critical thinking and creative problem-solving and features arts, music, physical education, and robust extra-curricular activities; and provide support services, such as healthy school meals for all students and after-school programs for students who need them. While federal resources remain essential, particularly for students and communities most in need, it is critical that the federal government not act like a national school board by interfering with the autonomy of educators to do their jobs, and instead work with parents and local communities to make important education decisions.

Instead of focusing on divisive and distracting issues, we encourage our elected leaders to work with educators, parents, and students themselves to strengthen our public schools, get students the one-on-one support they need, keep students safe by keeping guns out of schools, address educator retention and recruitment, and ensure students are learning the skills needed to succeed in our diverse, complex world.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association