

President Eskelsen-Garcia and NEA Leadership,

It has come to our attention that there will be a motion from NEA leadership to consider a Presidential Primary Endorsement for Hillary Clinton.

We, the members of the NEA BATs Caucus, feel it is important to share our views with you and hope that in the future, there is a venue for active, working caucuses, to participate fully in the process.

Therefore, we the undersigned members of the NEA BATs Caucus, hereby request that the National Education Association make NO PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY ENDORSEMENT.

In the last several decades, our public education system has come under fire and been attacked by those who would systematically destroy OUR GREAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS through corporate designs and privatization. They do so through a political system influenced, manipulated, and controlled by corporate reformers who seek to profit from our students while undermining the foundation of our strong union presence. We strongly believe that continued support of candidates who have aligned themselves with the very people who are perpetrating these efforts is neither wise nor prudent.

Furthermore, we believe that a candidate worthy of the support of NEA must agree to the following points:

First, an unyielding, solid commitment, both verbal and written, to pursue a robust public education system, advocating for excellence and equity for all students as well as working conditions for educators that advance the profession;

Second, that educators are viewed not as mere “workers,” but as experts in our field and are treated as such;

Third, that a business-style view of education is recognized as the failure it is and would be replaced with a student-centered vision that is objectively evaluated and openly transparent;

Fourth, the adoption of a new approach that supports and invests in public education infrastructure and modernization.

These are not commitments to be made lightly by any candidate, and no less should be accepted by the NEA and its members. As it stands, no current candidate has made such commitments. Therefore, we feel that NO PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY ENDORSEMENT of any candidate should be made.

We believe in our union. We want to believe that actions taken by our union leadership reflect the values and wishes of its members. In light of the looming Friedrichs vs. CTA decision, threatening the ability to collect agency fee, we hope that our members feel respected in the actions taken by leadership on this question of primary candidate endorsement.

We ask that our leadership hear this message and refrain from making a Presidential Primary Endorsement.

In Solidarity,