

## **NEA President Lily Eskelsen García:**

“Going into 2020, educators are looking for a candidate who will champion our nation’s public schools and worker rights -- someone who will partner with parents and educators to ensure every student, no matter what zip code they live in, has access to quality public schools.

“We applaud Senator Warren’s plan to strengthen America’s public schools and ensure that every student has the opportunity to get a quality public education. Warren’s plan is rooted in respect for our nation’s educators, and recognizes that those who know the names of the kids in their classrooms should be making education decisions. Her plan renews Senator Warren’s promise to appoint someone with experience working in our public schools as Secretary of Education.

“And Warren rightfully seeks to stop the privatization of our public schools by banning for-profit charters and ending the federal funding for expanding charter schools. She plans to stop diverting money from our public schools and focus on putting students, rather than profits, first.

“Senator Warren, along with the other candidates, witnessed how educators have used the power of their collective voice in the #RedForEd movement. And now NEA’s 3 million members will use this power to elect a champion for students and our neighborhood public schools to the White House.”

Additionally, Warren’s plan calls for:

- Paying educators like the professionals they are and funding schools adequately.
- Reducing class sizes so that every student can have the personal attention they need to learn.
- Quadrupling funding for Title I; conditioning the extra funding on states adopting more progressive funding formulas, while imposing tougher transparency requirements on its use to better understand what investments work best, and encouraging states to use Title I funds on integration efforts of their own design.
- Helping 25,000 public schools transition to community schools; investing an additional \$25 billion to improve school facilities on top of related commitments in other plans, such as clean energy; and fully funding BIE schools to support major construction and repair backlogs.
- Establishing more school-based health centers through a \$25 billion capital fund for communities that are in health professional shortage areas.
- Recognizing that policies around housing, clean energy and broadband deployment need to be discussed when talking about boosting education outcomes for our students.

As educators continue doing their homework to learn about each of the candidates, praise for any candidate’s proposal should not be seen as an endorsement of that candidate by the NEA. As America’s largest union and largest organization of educators, NEA will continue engaging in conversations with all candidates as we vet them to determine who has the best ideas for ensuring all students, regardless of where they live, receive support, tools, and time to learn.

Educators are trusted and powerful voices in every community. NEA represents 1 in 100 Americans, and 1 in 39 voters comes from an NEA household. NEA members are located in every U.S. congressional district, including key battleground states, which makes them key electoral influencers.

**AFT President Randi Weingarten:**

“Sen. Elizabeth Warren's plan for our nation's public schools would be a game changer for our public schools and the 90 percent of America’s students who attend them. Like so many of the other candidates’ education plans we have praised, this one is bold and thorough and lays out tangible steps and resources that are critical for all students to thrive. What distinguishes this plan is that it is obvious it’s drawn through the lens of someone who has spent time as a teacher in a classroom.

“Warren’s plan would provide a much-needed jolt of investment in America's public schools. It is focused, first and foremost, on creating and cultivating the vibrant, safe and welcoming environments kids deserve, and on providing educators the voice and supports they need as professionals to help their students learn and thrive. That is why her proposal to strengthen collective bargaining is so important.

“Quadrupling funding for schools serving children who live in poverty, keeping the original promise of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to children with special needs, and investing in 25,000 community schools that meet the social and emotion needs of children and serve as neighborhood hubs would be transformational. We have been calling for these kinds of community schools for over a decade, and this proposal would be a massive tipping point for meeting the needs of all our children, particularly those in rural and urban areas. So too would the plan’s investment in school infrastructure, which would ensure that students and teachers are not forced to endure lead in their drinking water, buckling floors or other unsafe conditions in school that hurt teaching and learning.

“Warren’s plan rightly elevates the rights of teachers to come together and use their voice to advocate for what their students need, like the educators in Chicago are doing right now. It would ensure educators are not burdened by student loan debt. It’s a plan focused on supporting students from birth to college and career, and on supporting teachers throughout their careers through “grow-your-own” programs—which allow teachers to come up from within their communities and learn from other great teachers—and through increased opportunities for collaboration and quality professional development.

“It's a stark reversal of years of austerity and failed quick-fix reforms that have defunded public schools, hollowed out the teaching force, prioritized testing over learning, and failed to meet the needs of our children and the promise of public education. It puts checks and balances in place to combat the effort by corporate interests to privatize and monetize our public schools. And the Warren plan stops charter schools from having a competitive advantage over public schools by, among other things, not serving disadvantaged kids, by ending discriminatory practices. It allows school districts to serve as charter authorizers, holding charters to the same transparency and accountability standards as public schools, ending discriminatory practices, considering the

financial impact and strain on resources being used for charters, banning for-profit charters and ending federal funding for expansion of charters. It categorically rejects the DeVos agenda to divert much-needed resources from our public schools by rejecting for-profit charters and vouchers of any form.

"With a focus on equity and excellence for every child and every school, this a transformational plan would enable educators to have the resources and agency and training to do the jobs we love. It would help us fulfill the promise and potential of public education as the foundation of our democracy and the great equalizer of opportunity in our nation."

[Kevin Welner, Professor, University of Colorado, School of Education:](#)

"The Warren plan for education is grounded in high-quality research evidence that showed why we must consistently and seriously invest in our children if we hope to close the opportunity gaps that cause so many of our children to never reach their full potential. It's a refreshing turnaround from the useless and even harmful quick fixes that have plagued our schools for decades."

[Derek Black, Professor, University of South Carolina, School of Law:](#)

"Senator Warren has clearly taken a very careful look at the cold hard reality of persistent unequal and inadequate funding in our nation's schools. A multi-generational national problem cannot be fixed overnight or by the federal government alone, and this plan wisely does not try to. Instead, it asks states to help themselves and gives them the resources, incentives, and tools they need to do it. It is the first idea I have seen in a long time with the potential to change the status quo in a way that could make U.S. schools the envy of the world."

[Michelle Valladares, Faculty Affiliate, University of Colorado:](#)

"By drawing lessons from best practices and research, Senator Warren has developed a positive and progressive vision for public education in America. Her careful thinking about how best to fulfill the federal government's commitment to advancing both learning and equity for our children is exciting."

"In this plan Senator Warren is providing a proactive framework for educating all of America's students. Her careful attention to ensuring that the rights of low income students, students of color, students with disabilities and LGBTQ students is inspiring and needed!"

"Senator Warren's education proposal promises an unprecedented investment in our country's future. By centering our children, particularly those who have historically been marginalized, and basing her proposal in research she is suggesting a complete turnaround from the current administration's policies."

[Janelle Scott, Professor, University of California, Berkeley, Graduate School of Education and African American Studies Department:](#)

"This comprehensive, evidence-based plan puts educational quality over quantity, children's learning and well-being over profit, and understands that educational excellence and equity go

hand-in-hand. It provides strong protections for the misuse and commodification of student data, and ensures smart regulations that will support and strengthen democratically controlled, community-centered schools and school systems that teach and reach every child. And it understands and provides pathways for a high-quality teaching force.”

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