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Parents for Choice in Education Questions UEA Support for Task Force on Merit Pay

Salt Lake City, UT — February 11, 2008 — Parents for Choice in Education wonders if the UEA's support for [a merit pay task force bill](#) is just political pandering, or worse yet, a Trojan horse to stop the task force from carrying out its intended goal: discovering how to implement a compensation system that rewards success in the classroom.

“When a recent Dan Jones poll finds that 70% of Utahns support tying teacher pay to classroom performance, it’s not surprising that the teachers union wants to appear like they support merit pay, too,” says Robyn Bagley, co-chair of PCE’s board.

The UEA, a local affiliate of the National Education Association, has publicly expressed a hope that the task force will investigate an incentive system that is not tied to students' test scores.

“The union’s attempt to separate merit pay from any measurement of student achievement literally takes the ‘merit’ out of merit pay. If it’s not based on student test scores, then it’s not merit pay,” says Robyn Bagley. “Parents have spoken loud and clear. An overwhelming majority want real merit pay, which everyone knows is based on student performance.”

[The 2007-2008 NEA Resolutions](#) clearly state that the “The National Education Association is opposed to the use of merit pay or performance pay compensation systems.” They go on to clarify that teacher compensation “must not be based on education employee evaluation, student performance, or attendance” (section F-10; see section F-8 as well).

“Test scores are already used on a regular basis to determine whether or not our children are learning. Why wouldn't we use that same data to reward our best teachers?” asks Robyn Bagley.

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Parents for Choice in Education is a grassroots organization that advocates quality education for every child. As the leading voice for education reform in Utah, we promote proven market solutions both within and outside the public school system.

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