



## 2024 Issue Paper: Education

### Priority Statement

The priorities for education are to review and update the Prototypical School funding model to meet the needs of today, fully fund Special Education, and provide equitable education for all, including incarcerated foster youth.

### Positions

The LWVWA Program in Action lists the following positions on K-12 public education:

- The state has the responsibility to determine uniform educational standards and to provide ample and equal opportunity for education. (K-12-1)
- The state has the responsibility for amply funding both education and those social services needed to ensure that every child, regardless of race, color, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or disability, is ready to learn and safe in his or her educational environment. (K-12-2)
- All programs mandated by the legislature should be fully funded by the state. (K-12-3)
- Citizen participation should be encouraged at all levels. (K-12- 8)

### 2024 Legislative Session

During the 2024 legislative session the League will support a review and update of the Prototypical School Funding Model (PSFM) to meet the needs of today. Legislation adopted in 2011 implemented the PSFM, providing new staffing allocations. However, funding levels for most staff positions have remained the same since 2011. 2022 legislation did increase the formulas for physical, social, and emotional support by increasing the number of school nurses, social workers, psychologists, and counselors in the PSFM over three years. More needs to be done.

As we have done over the last several years, League will support full funding of Special Education. Most school districts have to use levy dollars to provide the support these students are entitled to. This is the responsibility of the state, not local taxpayers.

Article IX of the Washington State Constitution states: "It is the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders, without distinction or preference on account of race, color, caste, or sex." A November 5, 2023 article in the Seattle Times revealed that only 14% of incarcerated foster youth earn a high school diploma. They should be protected by our Constitution and receive education services while incarcerated. We expect a bill during the 2024 session to correct this wrong.

We will also be watching bills from 2023 that we supported: HB 1109 providing funding for evaluations for special education during the summers, SB 5102 concerning school library information and technology programs, and SB 5020 amending compulsory attendance laws to begin at age 6 rather than 8.

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