



The Chicago Voter

League of Women Voters of Chicago
Website - www.LWVChicago.org

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Upcoming Events

- Thursday, September 8
5 to 7 PM
Open House – Kick-Off
Suite 525
- Saturday, September 10
9:30 AM to 12:30 PM
Education Briefing
Room 430
- Monday, September 12
5:00 PM
Executive Board
6:00 PM
Board Meeting
- Wednesday, September 14
5 to 7 PM
Chicago Government in Focus
Union League Club
65 W. Jackson, Chicago

Call 312-939-5949
For more information

President’s Message

September and Labor Day, I often think that in the USA New Year’s Day is Labor Day. The school year begins; theater and music subscriptions begin; football season begins. Janus, the patron of January, was two faced; he faced backward and forward. We look back and thank Lois Snyder for her service as social policy chair and we send her our best wishes as she moves to Indiana to settle near her alma mater. In the past year we lost two devoted League members who worked to better many lives. Clara Fleming served as Health chair and Winnie Slusser served as Education chair.

With September, the League year begins. Looking forward, on September 10 the Education Committee chaired by Pauline Zdonek will present the briefing for the National League study and consensus on education standards and the federal role in education. Participation in the consensus is important as the National League position will direct action that we, a local League, may take at the local and state level. Please attend a unit meeting in September/October to engage in the discussion and development of the Chicago League’s response to the consensus questions.

Don’t miss the September 8 wine and cheese at the League office. New digs in a new year and new things to do.

Margaret

Chicago Government in Focus

Theresa Mintle, Rahm Emanuel’s Chief of Staff will be the first speaker at the new series co-sponsored by LWVChicago and the Union League Club of Chicago. This event will take place on Wednesday, September 14 from 5 PM to 7PM— Reception at 5 PM, Presentation from 5:30 to 6:30. Admission is free. Snacks will be provided and a cash bar will be available. To help us make it a success, we are asking you to tell your friends and neighbors about this exciting new series. We would appreciate an RSVP. You may phone 312-939-5949 or email League@LWVChicago.org.

Voter Registration in Chicago

Voter registration has always been a priority of the League of Women Voters. Perhaps there is less need for League deputy registrars since mail-in forms that can be requested on line have become available. However, we have recently learned that although there are about 1.4 million registered voters in Chicago there are an estimated 460,000 citizens eligible to vote who are not registered. So there is a lot for us to do. If you are already a deputy registrar contact people who move into your area or set up a registration table at a neighborhood location. You can carry a few registration forms to have ready. If you are not yet a deputy registrar training will begin later in September.

Terry Williams, Voter Service Chair

A Gentle Reminder

If you received a notice about your annual dues and have not yet responded, please write your check for \$75 today and mail it to the Chicago League office.

LWVIL

On Tuesday, August 16, 2011, the League of Women Voters of Illinois filed suit in federal court in Chicago seeking to overturn the recently-enacted General Assembly and Congressional district maps in Illinois. The suit claims that the First Amendment rights of the citizens of Illinois are limited because they are not given a fair chance to select their representatives. To learn more about the issue and follow the progress of the suit see www.lwvil.org.

LWV Cook County

Kurt Summers, Chief of Staff to Cook County President Toni Preckwinkle, was the featured speaker at the summer *Lunch & Learn with the League* sponsored by LWVCC. The attendees heard about some of the challenges that faced the new administration when President Preckwinkle took office last December, as well as about the new quarterly management report recently released by the County "Set Targets Achieve Results" (STAR). You can see the STAR Report and comment on the goals, measurements, and results on the Cook County web site: www.cookcountyil.gov. You may also view the Preliminary Budget, the Transition Report and 100-Day Report Card.

The next Lunch & Learn event is scheduled for Tuesday, October 25, and will feature Cook County Forest Preserve General Superintendent Arnold Randall as the guest speaker.

Help Wanted

Do you have the time and the interest in working on the LWVUS Privatization Study, the LWVIL Pension Study, LWVChicago's City Government Study, or LWVChicago's Social Policy Committee? Please let us know.

Great Decisions

The Chicago League has decided to try out a program that a number of other leagues in the area have used successfully. "Great Decisions" refers to a booklet of 8 foreign policy articles and discussion questions published by the non-partisan Foreign Policy Association. We will be putting together groups of interested members and their friends to meet starting early in 2012 once or twice a month to discuss the topics. This is a great way to learn about the world and get to know others! You need know nothing other than what you read in the articles, which are only about 10 pages each.

The October issue of the **Voter** will have more information, including the sign-up form.

Metropolitan Water Reclamation District

On Thursday August 11th, we attended the Board meeting of the MWRD. The main discussion item concerned flooding. The Board discussed the appropriation for a pre-engineering review of a number of creeks that have contributed to recent flooding. One hundred and fifty people from Cicero attended the meeting to voice their concerns about flooding, four of them spoke. The League was welcomed and asked to attend as many Board meetings as possible.

Bernice Fortini and Pat Graunke, Observers

Unit Meetings

Unit 1/5 Downtown – evening
Monday, September 19 – 5:30 pm
LWV Office
Leader – Margaret Herring

Unit 9/11 West Side – daytime
Sunday, September 11 – 2 PM and
Sunday, September 25 – 2 PM
Third Unitarian Church
301 N Mayfield, Chicago
Leader – Joan Morton

Unit 21/35 – North Side
Wednesday, September 21 – 7:30 PM
Home of Carol Ziegeldorf
Leader – Carol Ziegeldorf

Unit 22 Downtown – daytime
Thursday, September 22 – 10 AM
LWV Office, Conference Room
Leader – Bernice Fortini

Unit 66/74 – Montgomery Place – Daytime
Thursday, September 15 – 1:30 PM
Montgomery Place, East Room
Leader – Dorothy Scheff

The Chicago Voter

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Helene Gabelnick	Voter Editor pro-tem

There are 5 Voter Ready background documents from LWVUS related to the Education Study. The first of the 5 documents in this group was in the Summer *Chicago Voter*. The other 4 follow in this *Voter*. All of these are posted on the LWVChicago.org web site.

2. ROLE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN PUBLIC EDUCATION:

WHERE ARE WE NOW AND THE IMPACT UPON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The United States has changed dramatically since the early debates on public schools. The responsibility for education for the common good shifted from mainly local control to state control. Now, in 2011, attention is coming from the federal government and national organizations to control standards.

Congress is currently in a debate and stalemate over the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965 ESEA, reauthorized as “No Child Left Behind” in 2001). Major issues include the purpose and role of the federal government in public education.

Pro: An increased role of the federal government in education ensures equal education opportunities for all children across the country, so that we will be better prepared to compete globally. The federal government has always had a part in distributing funding to state and local school districts for specific needs, so there will be more consistency across the districts and states.

Con: Education has traditionally been a local and state issue. An increased role of the federal government will add to the number of unfunded federal mandates (laws passed with no monetary support). Decisions at the local level best serve the needs of students in the local area.

FUNDING FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

This Brief covers the reasons for the federal role in public education relating to early childhood, the importance of parent education, and the pros and cons related to federal intervention in early childhood education.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) creates standards and guidance for early childhood providers across the country. Their position statements promote and endorse an integrated, well-financed system of early care and education for the learning and development of all children, including children in poverty.

TIMELINE OF MAJOR FEDERAL PROGRAMS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD UP TO 2010	Year	Purpose
Head Start Title	1965	Funded by U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services to provide children from low-income families free access to early education. It also includes children who are at risk and with disabilities.
Even Start Title I, Part B.	1988	Integrated early childhood education to low-income parents for children birth through age 7, integrating adult education and early childhood learning with family literacy programs
Early Head Start	1995	Funded programs for low-income families supporting 2 generations, usually mothers and infants and toddlers.
Title I of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)	Many revisions since 1965	Local education agencies apply to state agencies for approval of the program that is subsequently funded by the federal government.
No Child Left Behind (NCLB)	2001	Promotes the use of Title I, Part A, to fund pre-school programs, recognizing the importance of preparing children for entering school with language, cognitive and early reading skills.
Early Reading First	2002	Extends the goals of NCLB under Reading First to preschoolers.
Special Education preschool grants and state grants programs 3-5	2002	Part of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funding for preschool students ages 3 to 5.
Special Education Grants for Infants and Families	2007	Part C of IDEA (birth to 2 for children with disabilities)
Child Care Development Fund (CCDF)	Many revisions since 1990	The Child Care and Development Fund assists low-income families, families receiving temporary public assistance, and those transitioning from public assistance in obtaining child care so they can work or attend training/education.

Pros: From an economic standpoint, achieving equity builds lasting value. Heckman’s (2010) research shows that inequality in the development of human

capabilities produces negative social and economic outcomes at every level and can be prevented by the proper investment in people. Early childhood education,

particularly for disadvantaged children and their families, levels the playing field to provide equal opportunities for success. Every dollar invested in early childhood education returns ten cents on the dollar annually for the life of a child, a 10 percent per year return on investments. Furthermore, solid economic returns are possible, providing investments come early and are comprehensive, cohesive, and sustained over time, because it shapes the future and builds equity. Heckman warns that investing later chains us to fixing the missed opportunities of the past that are very costly. Heckman’s research clearly documents the

impact of quality early childhood education upon later success in school, and beyond, in health and in economic advantages for society in general.

Cons: Reasons against the federal involvement in early childhood basically come from providers of childcare centers as well as legislators. Some argue that universal preschool will be too expensive to support and that it will take away funding for K-12 grades. Educators who own and manage private preschools raise concerns that parents will choose “free” preschools instead of private ones.

**3. THE HISTORY OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN PUBLIC EDUCATION:
WHERE HAVE WE BEEN AND HOW DID WE GET HERE?**

Where Have We Been?

From the very beginning of our Republic, a well-educated citizenry was thought to be essential to protect liberty and the general welfare of the people. Even before the Constitution was established, the Land Ordinance of 1785 and the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 included responsibilities of the nation for an education system. Education has long been considered a national concern by the federal government. Through federal action, education has been encouraged and financially supported from the first Northwest Ordinance in 1785 to the present. Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution granted Congress the power to lay and collect taxes to provide for the general welfare of the United States. It is under this “general welfare” clause that the federal government has assumed the power to initiate educational activity in its own right and to participate jointly with states, agencies and individuals in educational activities.

During the first century of our new nation, Congress granted more than 77 million acres of the public domain as an endowment for the support of public schools through tracts ceded to the states. In 1841, Congress passed an act that granted 500,000 acres to eight states and later increased land grants to a total of 19 states. The federal government also granted money,

such as distributions of surplus federal revenue and reimbursements for war expenses, to states. Though Congress rarely prescribed that such funds be used only for schools, education continued to be one of the largest expenses of state and local governments so the states used federal funds whenever possible for education.

Two of our constitutional amendments played an important role in public education. In 1791, the 10th Amendment stated, “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.” Public education was not mentioned as one of those federal powers, and so historically has been delegated to the local and state governments.

In 1868, the 14th Amendment guaranteed rights to all citizens by stating, “all persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens in the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the law.”

Included below is a brief historical overview of federal involvement in public education.

HISTORY OF THE ROLE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN PUBLIC EDUCATION: TIMELINE			Explanation
Event	Date		
Land Ordinance & Northwest Ordinance	1785/1787		Requirement of a system of public education to be established in each township formed under a specified formula. Regulated monies raised via taxes and selling or renting land.
Land Grants	1841/1848		Congress granted 77+ million acres of land in the public domain as endowments for support of schools. Federal government also granted surplus money to states for public education.

Early philosophy – first six presidents		Discussion of a national university and urging of federal involvement in public education. Seen as critical to preparation for citizenship in a republican form of government.
First Morrill Act otherwise known as the Land Grant Act	1862	Donated public lands to states to be used for the endowment to support and maintain at least one college with specific purpose of teaching branches of agriculture, mechanic arts and industrial education.
The original Department (Office) of Education established	1867	Began to collect data – information on schools and teaching that would help states establish effective school systems.
Second Morrill Act	1890	Gave the Office of Education responsibility for administering support for the original system of land-grant colleges.
Smith-Hughes Act	1917	Promoted vocational schools
Lanham Act Impact Aid laws	1941 1950	Eased the burden on communities affected by presence of military and federal installations: payments to school districts.
GI Bill	1944	Provided post secondary education assistance to GIs returning from World War II
George-Barden Act	1946	Provided funding for agricultural, industrial and home economics training for high school students
National Defense Education Act	1958	In response to Soviet Sputnik. NDEA included support for loans to college students in science, mathematics and foreign languages.
Elementary and Secondary Education Act	1965	Established comprehensive set of programs including Title I of federal aid to disadvantaged.
Title IX	1972	Prohibited discrimination in education based on gender.
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act	1973	Prohibited discrimination based on disability.
Department of Education cabinet level agency	1980	Recognized the important role of public education in our country.
Educational Testing Service (ETS) and NAEP	1983	Federal government transferred responsibility for administering the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) to ETS: the nation's report card.
Nation at Risk	1983	Report indicating that the USA was falling behind in education achievement.
President G.H. Bush	1989-1992	"Indian Education Bill of Rights" K-12 Drug awareness model Advisory committee on Hispanic education America 2000 education reform program Work began on national standards
President W. Clinton	1993-1999	Academics 2000 offered grant to states / local school districts for innovation. Teach for America.
President G.W. Bush	2001-2008	Reauthorization of ESEA –No Child Left Behind.
President Barack Obama	2009 -	President Obama's Blueprint for Reform – Reauthorization of ESEA. Race to the Top: Grants awarded to states with innovative ideas that accepted the Common Core Standards.

4. THE ROLE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN PUBLIC EDUCATION: EQUITY AND FUNDING

Public school funding comes from many sources – federal, state and local taxes as well as grants provided by both governmental and nongovernmental agencies. The federal government adds less than 10 percent to local education budgets, yet it contributes significantly to the rules for how the funding is used. Additionally, the United States invests 5 percent of the GDP in public education. Nearly half of the k-12 education funding in the United States is intended to come from the states, drawn from a combination of income taxes, fees and other taxes. However, some states resemble Illinois, where the state's share is only 27 percent. The remainder usually comes from local property taxes.

EQUITY

States that rely heavily on property taxes to fund education tend to have large inequities in school funding, which mirror the inequity of wealth in society-at-large. Hurst (2007) noted that inequities in wealth stem from the fact that wealthy people earn much of their income from investments and/or inherited funds, while the poor earn all of their income from jobs and they spend it on food, shelter, transportation, etc. In the United States, the wealthiest 20 percent own 84 percent of the total wealth.

Inequities in school funding reflect housing patterns. During the past 50 years since *Brown vs. Board of Education*, schools have become re-segregated (Ladson-Billings, 2006). Currently, three-fourths of the Black and Latino/a students attend schools that are predominately non-white.

ADEQUACY

Since 1990, rather than looking at equity, most lawsuits have focused on adequacy—whether a state is providing local districts with just enough funding and resources to give all students a basic education. Odden and Picus (2008) developed a model calculating the cost of an adequate education. They defined an adequate education as one that includes factors such as a full-day kindergarten, core class sizes of 15 for grades K-3, 25 for grades 4-6 and specialist teachers. The cost of an adequate education varies. For instance, more money is needed to educate students from impoverished communities and students with special needs.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

When schools are not funded adequately, this has a long-lasting impact. For instance, Darling-Hammond (2010) noted that dropouts cost the country at least \$200 billion a year in lost wages and taxes, costs for social services and crime. Since the 1980s, national investments have spent three times more on the prison system than on education. Data show that the national average for educating a child is \$9500, while it costs \$43,000 per year to keep a person incarcerated. With 5 percent of the world's population in the United States, we house 25 percent of the world criminals (Kang & Hong, 2008).

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND (NCLB)

In 2001, President George W. Bush signed the reauthorization of Elementary and Secondary Education Act, “No Child Left Behind,” which was intended to close achievement gaps, particularly for minority children. However, data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reveal that scores were higher in math and reading for minority students before NCLB. One provision of NCLB permitted parents to remove a student from a low-performing school and transfer to another, better performing school. They would receive a voucher which would pay some of the cost of attending another school – public or private. Additionally, courts and education agencies stepped in to “remediate.” The sanctions imposed by NCLB had the effect of punishing or threatening punishment to low-performing schools and teachers, sending them the message that they were incompetent and that they should not have the right to make decisions about how to educate students. Studies showed that threatening

public schools and teachers with punishment had harmful effects on students who remained in the public schools.

Supporters of NCLB appreciate the increase in accountability for schools and teachers as well as the focus on low scoring sub-groups. Critics of NCLB decry the lack of federal funding for many of the Act's mandates, the emphasis on penalties, the reliance on standardized tests, and the lack of attention to gifted students as well as to subjects such as science, social studies and the arts. One goal of NCLB has been to offer choice to parents whose children attend poorly performing schools. However, large-scale studies of voucher school students have revealed little difference in their performance compared to public school students with similar backgrounds, and having vouchers has not raised the performance of the most needy students (Rouse & Barrows, 2009). Furthermore, many (Holland, 2011) argue that the NCLB goal of 95 percent of students meeting state standards in reading and math by 2014 is unrealistic.

RACE TO THE TOP (RTTT)

Race to the Top was signed into law by President Barack Obama in 2009. This program shifted the basis of awarding funds to emphasize competition. Competitive grants reward reform planned in the winning states. Funding is flexible as long as states demonstrate grant dollars are aligned with the agenda outlined in their winning applications. Only twelve states received funding through RttT.

Two of the requirements met by states that received RttT funding were (1) improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance and (2) lifting the cap on the number of charter schools that could be created.

While both these funding requirements can be effective, neither is foolproof, and each addresses only one part of the problems schools face. For instance, research studies show that promising increased pay based on teacher effectiveness is not an effective incentive. Furthermore, research showed there is a problem when teacher performance evaluation is based only on student scores in standardized tests.

Although there is no question that some charter schools are effective, they have not been the panacea many expected. They were originally proposed as an opportunity for educators to test research-supported methods for reaching hard-to-educate children, and some have done quite well. However, a large-scale research study funded by pro-charter advocates revealed that only 17 percent of the 2403 charter schools had significantly more growth in test scores

compared to traditional public schools, and, in fact, 37 percent showed significantly less growth (Center for Research on Education Outcomes, 2009). Furthermore, many charter schools do not admit and/or retain students who need increased support, e.g., students

from impoverished communities and students with special needs.

The progress of the U.S. Department of Education's Equity and Excellence commissions can be tracked through

www2.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/eec/index.html.

5. THE ROLE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN PUBLIC EDUCATION: LEGISLATION AND FUNDING FOR THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

In 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was passed by Congress. ESEA was the center of President Johnson's War on Poverty and was influenced by the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The children who were covered by ESEA in 1965 included those who were disabled and covered by an amendment to the original ESEA (Title IV – Aid to handicapped children).

Within the next decade, the education of disabled children was funded by a separate law: the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (EAHCA). Over a 35-year span, the law was reauthorized and became the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the latest of which was reauthorized in 2004 and called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA). The upcoming reauthorization of ESEA will also influence how IDEIA is administered and practiced. IDEIA has four sections that cover the Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE) of 6.6 million disabled children who are age 0-21.

- Part A (General Provisions)
- Part B (Assistance for Education of All Children with Disabilities)
- Part C (Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities)
- Part D (National Activities to Improve Education of Children with Disabilities)

Mandates in Special Education Funding

Funding requires adherence to the federal mandates. The most important mandate is the zero-reject policy, under which no child is turned away from educational services. To qualify for special education service, a student must be classified with one (or more) of 13 disabilities now covered by IDEIA. The definition of "a child with a disability" is found in the United States Code, Title 29 1401(3) (A):

3) *The term 'child with a disability' means a child— (i) with mental retardation, hearing impairments (including deafness), speech or language impairments, visual impairments (including blindness), serious emotional disturbance (referred to in this chapter as "emotional disturbance"), orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, or*

specific learning disabilities; and (ii) Who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.

The federal government demands that states submit plans for the distribution of monies to local agencies for direct instructional programming that adhere to federal mandates. Under each state's laws, an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) is constructed for each child receiving services. The purpose of an IEP is to assure the student of a FAPE, as ensured by law. The child is to be placed in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for education.

In order to qualify for federal funds, state and local agencies are bound to federal guidelines to specify identification procedures and the placement of disabled children. State grant applications for federal funds must include a plan for distribution of the funds to local education agencies (LEAs), as well as sufficient time for the general public to review and comment on the state plan. LEAs receive allotments from the state for their district special education needs. The shortfall in funding then needs to be addressed by the local education agencies.

CURRENT FUNDING CHALLENGES

Federal Underfunding: *The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (1975)* included legislation for funding local programs through state distribution of 40 percent of the cost. "Full funding" (40 percent) has never happened; the actual amount has varied. There were federal funds covering from 8 to 10 percent of the cost to states ten years ago, according to Katsiyannis, et al. (2001). The FY 2012 U.S. Department of Education Budget lists 17 percent as the current figure, with an estimated \$1,765 cost per pupil. The allotment has increased 1.7 percent in the FY 2012.

Increasing enrollment: Special education enrollment has grown, from 3.8 million in 1973 to 6.6 million in 2011. Federal special education support increases for FY 2012 are held at 1.7 percent over FY 2011.

Maintenance of effort: Because of severe financial straits, more states are applying for waivers to the spending requirement by the federal government for special education funding. The waiver, called a Maintenance of Effort (MOE) has not been easily obtained and involves holding a spending pattern based on the previous year. Waivers were given to Iowa, West Virginia, and Kansas last year; waivers are pending for New Jersey, South Carolina and Alabama (Shah, 2011).

Inclusion and training: Currently, ninety-five percent of disabled children are educated in inclusive classrooms, the rest being educated in separate classes, institutions or at home. An increase in inclusion practices is a strong possibility for fund-strapped districts (Shah, 2011). The balancing act – attention to finances, while providing for children’s needs – continues to be precarious, and it is also critical to provide teachers with quality in-service training.

Special Education Legislation Milestones		RESULT
DECADE	CASE/LEGISLATION	
1950	1954: Brown v. Board of Education	Paved the way for special needs children to receive better education, but at this time children were still denied an education based on their disability.
1960	Bureau of Education for Handicapped Created. 1965: Elementary and Secondary Education Act became law.	No funding for handicapped under federal or state law. Amendment to original ESEA Title IV – Aid to handicapped children.
1970	1972: PARC v <i>Pennsylvania</i> and <i>Mills v. Board of Education</i> 1973: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act became law. 1974: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) became law. 1975: Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) became law,	Ruled: Disabled have equal rights. Protected disabled individuals from discrimination due to disability. Parents gained access to all information maintained by a school district on their students. Free appropriate public education for all handicapped students.
1980	1986: Addition of <i>Handicapped Children’s Protection Act</i> to EAHCA.	Mandated that all school students and parents have rights under both Section 504 and EAHCA.
1990	1990: EAHCA amended and called <i>Individuals with Education Disabilities Act</i> (IDEA). 1996: IDEA reauthorized.	IDEA reauthorized. Additions include students to be included in state and national assessments, inclusion (Least Restrictive Environment, LRE). Regular classroom teachers now required to take part in an Individual Education Plan (IEP) team.
2000	2001: No Child Left Behind became the title of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. 2004: Reauthorization of IDEA (P.L. 101-476) now called IDEIA.	Accountability at state and local levels required. School districts are required to provide more instruction and interventions to help prevent enrollment in special education. Response to Intervention (RTI) gains momentum as a screening tool. Students are expected to take responsibility for their behavior and are subject to the same rules as the rest of the students.

In this **Voter**, as in the **Summer Voter**, we have published articles on the various topics to be studied in the upcoming education consensus. The articles in the **Voter** summarized many different aspects of each topic. However, as the issues presented in the consensus are incredibly complex, we encourage all members to seek out additional information, either by reading the full education studies published on the LWVUS website (www.lwv.org), or by doing their own reading and research.

On the following pages you will find the consensus questions that will be discussed and debated at your unit meetings this fall. Please take time to read the questions over and carefully consider them. This will give you an idea of where you might want to focus your reading and additional research. Additionally, please bring these documents with to your unit meetings, as they will provide excellent reference material.

Pauline Zdonek, Education Chair

**To participate in this Education Consensus you should attend a unit meeting.
Bring this copy of the consensus question with you.**

LWVUS Federal Role in Public Education Study, Consensus Questions Part 1

Questions 4 through 9, Core Standards

4. Currently the governors and state education officers have developed Common Core Standards that are national but not federal. Should the standards be mandated of the states in order to obtain federal funding? (Choose one)

- a. Special grant programs such as Race to the Top
- b. All programs under Elementary and Secondary Education Act where the needs qualify for funding
- c. All programs receiving federal funding from any source
- d. All of the above
- e. None of the above

5. Should there be a national assessment aligned with the common cores standards?

Yes, No

If Yes, Should implementation be voluntary or federally mandated? (choose one)

- a. Voluntary
- b. Mandated
- c. Mandated, if fully funded

If No, what other accountability measures might you suggest? (choose one)

- a. Continue to allow the states to develop their own assessments.
- b. Suggest that the local education districts use their own assessments or adopt one that is a nationally norm-referenced assessment such as the *Stanford Achievement Test* or *Iowa Test of Basic Skills*.
- c. Suggest that districts use a portfolio type of assessment where student projects and activities would be scored holistically

6. National standards should lead to: (choose one)

- a. A nationally mandated curriculum to be aligned to the national standards and assessments.
- b. A national curriculum that is only suggested but not mandated.

c. A suggested structure for states and local education agencies to develop their own curriculum.

d. No national curriculum.

7. What role should the national assessment consortia play in student evaluation? (Rank order)

- _____ a. Provide an assessment system that is aligned to the Common Core Standards.
- _____ b. Provide comparison data showing progress toward reaching Common Core Standards.
- _____ c. Provide criteria for determining readiness for college and careers.
- _____ d. Provide information to students, parents, teachers and school districts about student achievement.
- _____ e. Provide diagnostic information on each child.

8. Data from the national assessments are often difficult for parents, teachers and others to understand. If we have a national assessment, what information is most important to be reported to parents, teachers, students and the community? (choose one)

- _____ a. Data should be “norm referenced” (where students are ranked) for district comparison only.
- _____ b. Data should be “criterion referenced” and clearly informative so that teachers, parents, and students know how individual students have mastered criteria established at a national level.
- _____ c. Data should be used to determine “cut” scores knowing if students have mastered requirements for special grade levels

9. Information from nationally required assessment data should be used to (Choose one):

- a. Sanction schools not measuring up to the specific levels
- b. Reward schools that achieve high scores
- c. Rank teachers based on student test score data
- d. Reward teachers who have exemplary scores
- e. Inform districts how their population compares to others similar to theirs.

LWVUS Federal Role in Public Education Study, Consensus Questions Part 2

Questions 1 through 3 and 10 through 16

1. The current role of the federal government in public education is: (select one)

Much too small, too small, about right, too large, much too large

2. What should be the role of the federal government in public education? (Rank)

___ a. To ensure that all students preK-12 receive a quality education.

___ b. To develop accountability measures that will study the progress of all students so that they achieve adequate yearly progress.

___ c. To mandate Common Core Standards for all students K-12.

___ d. To monitor state efforts for funding

___ e. To measure teacher effectiveness through test data.

3. A quality public education is important to perpetuate a strong and viable democracy. (select one)

Strongly agree, Agree, No consensus, Disagree, Strongly disagree

10. In the past most of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funding has been non-competitive based on need. All/Any Schools that prove they fall under the federal guidelines for funding receive those funds. However, competitive grants are now being proposed to states/districts who meet certain federal requirements, such as Race to the Top. Which would be appropriate: (choose one)

a. Non-competitive funding for all applicants meeting requirements

b. A combination of non-competitive and competitive grants

c. Competitive grants only

d. No federal funding

11. If the federal government's role is the concern of the "common good" then: (choose one)

a. Mandates only should be sanctioned.

b. Mandates and funding should both be provided.

c. Funding should be provided through grants only.

d. A combination of funded mandates and grants should apply.

e. No mandates should be required and limited grants for innovation available.

12. Equity in public education means equitable access to: (Rank order)

___ a. high quality teaching/learning

___ b. adequate and current learning materials

___ c. clean and well maintained physical facilities

___ d. food and health care

___ e. safe and secure neighborhoods

___ f. secure housing

13. Currently Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funding is considered "categorical" rather than for general use. This means that it can only be used with special populations for special purposes. ESEA should remain targeted toward poverty and special needs. (select one)

Strongly agree, Agree, No consensus, Disagree, Strongly disagree

14. The federal government has a role in supporting early childhood education, birth to 5, for all children. (select one)

Strongly agree, Agree, No consensus, Disagree, Strongly disagree

15. Federal support for early childhood education programs (e.g. Head Start, Title I, Special Education, Early Start) should include funding for parent education and support regarding child development, child health and nutrition, and access to other supportive services, such as mental health as needed. (select one in each part)

a. Strongly Agree, Agree, No consensus, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

b. This funding should be extended to: (select one)

All children, only those with special needs, special needs first

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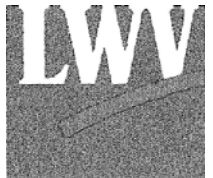
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