

LEAGUE OF EDUCATION VOTERS™

Who we are

The League of Education Voters (LEV) is a non-partisan organization that partners with parents, students, and civic leaders who believe in a quality education from cradle to career. LEV is the only Washington-based organization working to improve public education from early learning through higher education. We shape the debate, build powerful coalitions, and grow the grassroots to achieve meaningful reform and ample, equitable, and stable funding resources for education.

Our story

LEV was founded in 2001 by Washingtonians to support an education system that provides all students an equal opportunity for success.

Working on behalf of students, LEV has successfully led the charge on many of the landmark funding and policy decisions helping improve the education landscape in Washington.

- LEV worked with partners to successfully pass a statewide initiative which amended the state constitution to only require a simple majority vote for school levies—this initiative has added billions of dollars to fund public education!
- LEV also worked to bring nearly \$500 per pupil into every school in the state by supporting the passage of I-728 and defended an important education revenue source with the defeat of I-1033 aimed at lowering property taxes.
- LEV was the lead plaintiff in the successful effort to overturn I-1053, the initiative requiring two-thirds legislative approval to raise revenue or close tax loopholes.

All of this work is done with the goal of creating a seamless public education system that serves every student in Washington state.

Recent accomplishments

Legislative and policy accomplishments during 2013 included:

- Increase of \$1 billion in funding for the 2013–15 biennium, which includes doubling the number of students enrolled in full-day kindergarten and participating in WaKIDS; increasing investments to close the opportunity and achievement gaps, and eliminating the crippling cuts to higher education.
- Legislation to transform school discipline requires data be collected, disaggregated, and publicly available, and suspensions and expulsions be capped at a year.
- Increase of enrollment in Washington's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program.
- Legislation to develop a tiered system of intervention and support for persistently low-achieving schools to become more accountable.



Updated January 2014

Working to improve public education in Washington state
from cradle to career with ample, equitable, and stable funding

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2014 Legislative agenda

The 2014 legislative session is a “short” session and is scheduled for 60 days. Given the relative stability of the economy and the impending 2014 elections, most indications are that the session will indeed end on time and any new budget expenditures (other than transportation) will be slight.

Many expect a quiet session. The League of Education Voters (LEV) will not be quiet.

LEV’s overarching goal is to ensure ample, equitable, and stable funding that supports the best P–16 public education system in the United States and ensure progress addressing vexing issues that keep low-income students and students of color from succeeding in school.

We will continue to work to prepare our earliest learners to enter the K–12 system ready to learn; build an accountable, responsive K–12 system; support policy and programs that close the opportunity and achievement gaps; establish the requirement for a meaningful high school diploma; and support programs that ensure students’ ability to succeed in technical, 2-year, or 4-year colleges. During short sessions budget work is typically minor, so most effort is in the policy arena.

Specifically, we will work on:

- Increasing access, affordability, and effectiveness of high-quality early learning programs through support for previous legislation
- Implementing full-day kindergarten
- Supporting programs to close the opportunity and achievement gaps (i.e., discipline reform, culturally responsive instruction, academic supports, ELL certifications, and extended learning opportunities).
- Protecting student aid and expanding access to quality post-secondary opportunities
 - Supporting the Dream Act
 - Expanding access to four-year degrees at regional universities and two-year colleges
 - Increasing coordination between K–12 and regional community and technical colleges (STEM/Course Equivalency/Career and College Ready)
 - Building support for the College Bound Scholarship program
 - Expanding options to earn college credits in high school
- Creating a college- and career-ready high school diploma
- Ensuring Washington state maintains its waiver from No Child Left Behind
- Supporting effective implementation of the Teacher Principal Evaluation Pilot (TPEP) as a tool to improve instructional practices and educational outcomes for all students, especially students of color, low-income students, and other students who traditionally are underserved by the public school system.

Other areas of effort

LEV is a leader and partner on other initiatives in Olympia. LEV will continue to support:

- Addressing developmental education and remediation in our community and technical colleges
- Efforts to address our regressive tax code to create a more equitable and stable tax system for Washington state

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