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## LEV's 2013 Citizens' Report Card shows mediocre progress

*As the Washington state legislature works to close a \$1.3 billion budget shortfall, the League of Education Voters 2013 Citizens' Report Card shows that the state is not making progress toward creating and investing in excellent schools for all students, earning a C or lower in all categories of data analyzed.*

Seattle –The League of Education Voters released its 2013 Citizens' Report Card today. The biennial report card shows that Washington state is not making progress toward creating excellent schools for all students, earning a C or lower in all data categories analyzed.

The report shows a significant decline in progress toward fully funding schools. It comes as legislators wrangle with how to close a projected \$1.3 billion shortfall in the state's budget and fulfill an order from the state Supreme Court to fully fund basic education. While the report highlights individual school and district bright spots of progress, overall progress has stagnated or reversed.

"This report shows the huge amount of work that still needs to be done for our state's students," Chris Korsmo, LEV CEO said. "We must use these facts as fuel. Bold, systemic change is not easy, but the alternative—doing nothing to improve our education and funding systems—will be much harder for all of us in the long run."

The analysis of more than 32 indicators across five categories of data shows that only one category—Early Learning—maintained its progress from previous reports, while four—STEM, Meaningful High School Diploma, Success After Graduation, and Funding & Accountability—all got lower grades than in previous years.

Particularly alarming is the D+ grade Washington received for funding its schools. In many measures of funding—including public effort and per pupil spending—Washington ranked well below other states and the national average, meaning Washington's students have less support than their peers across the nation.

"If we are committed to ensuring the best education for every student in our state, we have to make investments that reflect our commitment," Korsmo said. "That means the state must provide ample, equitable, stable funding for education."

The 2013 Citizens' Report Card found that:

- 54 percent (24,412) of low-income children eligible for existing **preschool programs** are not being served.
- More than half (51 percent) of all recent high school graduates had to enroll in **remedial math courses** at community and technical colleges in 2009-10.

- Washington is ranked 37<sup>th</sup> in the nation for **on-time graduation rates**, and large gaps in graduation rates between white and Asian students and African American, Latino, Native American, and Pacific Islander students persist.
- At the same time post-secondary education becomes increasingly important, **costs for higher education** are rising. The number of student loans taken out by Washington residents increased by 50 percent from the 2011 Citizens' Report Card.
- Washington ranked 49<sup>th</sup> in public effort for **school funding** relative to individual income, spending only \$35.07 per \$1,000 of personal income on education. The national average is \$43.43.

The entire report card can be found online at <http://www.educationvoters.org/reportcard>

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*The League of Education Voters (LEV) is a non-partisan, nonprofit organization made up of parents, students, and 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 resources for education. [www.educationvoters.org](http://www.educationvoters.org)*