

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 high-quality public education from cradle to career. LEV is the only Washington-based organization working to improve public education from early learning through higher education. During the 2014 legislative session, we worked with parents, community members, and educators to ensure measurable progress toward LEV's vision that every student in Washington state receives an excellent public education that provides the opportunity for success.

Our Story

LEV was founded in 2001 by Washingtonians to support a public 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 to 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 2014 include:

- Approval of the College and Career Ready Diploma, to better prepare graduates for life after high school, by updating high school graduation requirements to better align with knowledge and skills needed for their college or career plans.
- Passage of the Dream Act, which expands college financial aid to students regardless of immigration status.
- Creation of the Expanded Learning Opportunities Council to research and recommend solutions to reduce summer learning loss and implement a pilot program for schools with large populations of low-income students to extend the school year.
- Multiple bills to help close the opportunity and achievement gaps.



Updated March 2014

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

www.educationvoters.org

2014 Legislative Accomplishments

Key policy bills passed this session that ensure all students graduate college and career ready, extend eligibility to state financial aid for higher education, and help close the opportunity and achievement gaps in education.

College and career ready high school diploma (SB 6552)

The culmination of eight years of work, the passage of SB 6552 authorizes the State Board of Education to implement their recommended 24-credit high school graduation requirements beginning with the class of 2019. The bill also includes flexibility for implementation and resources and supports for schools and students in completing the updated degree, including: CTE course equivalencies for science and math; delay of the 1,080 instructional hour requirements so that the funding for those instructional hours may be used to support costs related to implementing the new graduation requirements; and increase in guidance counselor allocation.

The Dream Act / Real Hope Act (SB 6523)

The passage of the Dream Act, also referred to as the Real Hope Act, expands college financial aid and makes college more accessible and affordable for students regardless of immigration status.

Reducing summer learning loss (SB 6163)

The passage of SB 6163 creates the Expanded Learning Opportunities Council, which will research and recommend solutions to reduce summer learning loss and implement a pilot program for schools with large populations of low-income students to extend the school year. The three-year extended school year pilot program will lengthen the school year by 20 days starting in 2015–16; eligible schools must have a low-income enrollment of 75% or higher.

Improving access to high-quality early learning options (HB 2519)

The passage of HB 2519 expands access to early learning opportunities for children in the child welfare system and requires the Department of Early Learning and Department of Social and Health Services to develop recommendations for improved collaboration in order to address these children's needs.

Improving transparency and access to information in public education (SB 6062)

The passage of SB 6062 requires each local education agency to publish its employee collective bargaining agreements online within 30 days of any changes.

Improving outcomes for homeless students (SB 6074)

The passage of SB 6074 works to improve educational outcomes for homeless students through better data collection and the use of best practices when training homeless student liaisons.

Improving paraeducator development (SB 6129)

In order to improve career pathways and professional development opportunities for paraeducators, SB 6129 authorizes a work group to design minimum employment standards for paraeducators, recommend professional development, develop a career ladder, and design an articulated pathway for teacher preparation from paraeducator certificates through teacher certification.

Recognizes students with proficiency in languages in addition to English (SB 6424)

The passage of SB 6424 establishes the Washington state seal of biliteracy, which recognizes public high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more world languages in addition to English.

Updated March 2014

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

www.educationvoters.org