

A WAY FORWARD

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA 2015

The League of Education Voters (LEV) proposes a vision for public education that guarantees that every Washington student has the opportunity for a high-quality education from early learning through the first two years of college.

We **can** and **must** do better for Washington's students.

In 2015, LEV will work to ensure that increases in education funding—as a result of *McCleary v. Washington* or other efforts—are ample, equitable, stable, and targeted toward evidenced-based strategies that improve access and outcomes for all students. LEV's work will prioritize the promotion and implementation of strategies that are proven to close the opportunity and achievement gaps.

EARLY LEARNING

Children in high-quality early learning programs are more prepared for kindergarten, more likely to graduate high school, healthier, more likely to be employed, and report higher income. Early learning priorities include:

Early Start Act. Increase the quality of childcare and preschool programs for low-income families in Washington through a combination of incentives and requirements. The Early Start Act creates tiered reimbursements, enhanced coaching and mentoring, and improves financial stability for early learning providers.

Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP). Fully fund ECEAP by the 2018 deadline and expand it in order to extend high-quality preschool to the 30,000 low-income Washington students not yet served.

K-12 EDUCATION

Teachers make the biggest school-based difference in a child's education. Effective school leadership plays a significant role in the academic

results of students building-wide. Strategic investments in K-12 teacher compensation and professional learning are necessary to close gaps and improve outcomes for all kids. K-12 education priorities include:

Compensation. Support the state taking on full responsibility for teacher pay. This will make salary increases more uniform statewide, facilitating more equitable compensation for teachers from district to district and freeing up local levy funding for supplemental program costs.

Professional development. Expand high-quality, job-aligned professional learning, team collaboration, and planning.

Increase starting teacher salaries. Changes to our state's compensation system are necessary to attract and retain high-quality educators.

Implementation fund. Ensure that systemic policy changes are implemented with fidelity and that teachers and principals receive adequate support.

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



2015 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Two-thirds of Washington jobs in four years will require some sort of postsecondary degree. To preserve and promote access to higher education for all Washington students, we must continue to support the state's investments in financial aid and scholarships, while keeping college tuition affordable. Postsecondary education priorities include:

State Need Grant. Fully fund this financial aid program to aid 34,000 eligible low-income Washington residents seeking postsecondary education or training. Include Real Hope recipients.

College Bound. Continue to support this successful scholarship program for low-income 7th and 8th grade students.

Postsecondary education or training for every Washington student. Build on the success of the College Bound Program and provide two years of postsecondary education or training, tuition-free, for each low-income student.

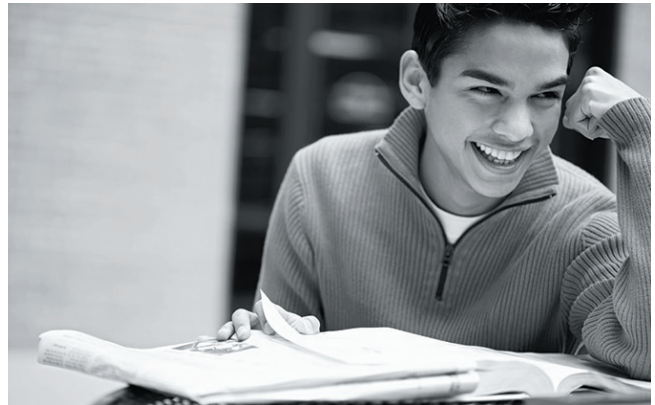
OTHER AREAS OF EFFORT

LEV is a leader and partner on other initiatives in Olympia and will continue to support the implementation of key policies including: public charter schools, Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards, Smarter Balanced assessments, the College and Career Ready Diploma, and school discipline.

New policies in 2015 could include breakfast after the bell, social-emotional learning standards, and specific initiatives to close the opportunity and achievement gaps.

GET INVOLVED

Join us as we work toward an ample, equitably, and sustainably funded public education system that provides all Washington students with the opportunity for success.



BUDGET PRIORITIES

In budgeting for the 2015–2017 biennium, LEV priorities include:

- Funding for the Early Start Act and continued ECEAP Expansion
- *McCleary*: Ensure that increases in education funding are equitably and adequately invested, sustainable, and targeted for evidenced-based strategies that improve student access and outcomes.
- Teacher compensation
- Statewide levy reform
- State Need Grant, College Bound Scholarships, and maintenance-level funding to keep tuition raises low or non-existent
- Additional revenue to avoid cuts to essential social services

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