










2017 Legislative Session Scorecard

The League of Education Voters is dedicated to improving policies and funding for public education in Washington state. We engaged with community members, partner organizations, and policymakers in the most recent legislative session to advance policies that work for kids and address the court's McCleary decision to ensure ample public investment. The scorecard below highlights some of our key legislative priorities and the results. We know that the end of a legislative session or the passage of a bill is not the end of our work, but rather a step in a continuing journey to bring every Washington student an excellent public education – from early learning through higher education – that provides the opportunity for success.

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|  | <p>FUNDING</p> | <p>LEV asked for a long-term, sustainable education funding solution to the Supreme Court's <u>McCleary decision</u>.</p> <p>The legislature increased K-12 funding by \$7.3 billion over the next four years. During 2017 - 2021, the state property tax will assume the cost of teacher salaries and other costs associated with educating a child in the classroom, and local levies will be limited to enrichment programs such as after-school sports, zero-hour band programs, or coach salaries, and reduced to a cap of \$1.50 per \$1000 of property value or \$2500 per student. In the Supreme Court's <u>2016 order</u>, justices noted that the K-12 funding had to be regular and dependable in addressing K-3 class size reduction and teacher compensation. There is strong evidence to suggest this plan does that.</p> |
|  | <p>EDUCATOR COMPENSATION</p> | <p>LEV asked for a system that attracts, retains, and supports qualified and effective educators, which include teachers, paraeducators, and principals, while addressing needs for equitable access to quality instruction.</p> <p>The legislature increased beginning teacher salary to at least \$40,000, moved the cost of hiring K-12 staff to the state, provided more resources for mentoring and professional development, removed the staff mix formula that created statewide funding inequities, added 3 regional salary enhancement levels that will increase base salary by 6%, 12%, or 18% based on school district housing values, and allowed local districts to provide salary enhancements to STEM (science, technology, engineering and math), special education, and bilingual education teachers and staff associates.</p> |
|  | <p>STUDENT SUPPORTS</p> | <p>LEV asked for an increase in programs and funding targeted toward students who need it most, providing both academic and non-academic supports for students to improve outcomes and make progress in closing the opportunity and achievement gaps.</p> <p>The legislature increased overall funding by approximately \$500 million over the next four years for programs that close achievement gaps, such as the Learning Assistance Program (LAP), Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program (TBIP), and Special Education. Other student programs such as Highly Capable and Career Technical Education (CTE) also received additional funding.</p> |

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|  | <p>EARLY LEARNING</p> | |
| | <p>LEV worked with our coalition partners in the Early Learning Action Alliance (ELAA) to ask for additional funding to increase access and participation in high-quality early learning programs across the state.</p> | <p>The legislature made significant progress towards the coalition’s goal* of adding \$25 million to serve 1800 more children in 2017-2018, and allocated \$12 million toward increasing the reimbursement rate for providers by 6 percent. A new Department of Children, Youth and Families has been created to consolidate and coordinate early learning with other social services.</p> <p>*still awaiting capital budget on facilities</p> |
|  | <p>HIGHER EDUCATION</p> | |
| | <p>LEV asked for additional funding to serve all students eligible for the State Need Grant, resulting in 23,000 additional scholarships.</p> | <p>The legislature partially met the ask by allocating \$12 million to fund 875 more students, increasing State Need Grant award amounts at nonprofit private four-year universities to equal the University of Washington award amount, continuing to fully fund the College Bound Scholarship, and offering a \$15 million Opportunity Scholarship state match.</p> |
|  | <p>ACCOUNTABILITY</p> | |
| | <p>LEV asked for an accountability system that provides transparency for families on school budgets and student outcomes, measures student and school success meaningfully, and provides effective state- and district-level supports for struggling schools.</p> | <p>The legislature created new reporting requirements from school districts around use of local levies, salary expenditures, and supplemental contracts. The State Auditor’s authority was also expanded to check compliance with the newly enacted restrictions on use of local enrichment levies.</p> |
|  | <p>LOCAL GOVERNANCE</p> | |
| | <p>LEV asked for a simple majority for bonds, so districts can better address local facilities needs did not gain any traction in the 2017 legislation session.</p> | <p>A joint resolution did not gain any traction in the 2017 legislation session.</p> |

The stoplights above indicate a green light for a significant advocacy progress made toward a legislative goal, a yellow light for some progress made, and a red light for no advocacy progress this session.

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