

2019 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



League of Education Voters is committed to a legislative agenda in 2019 that reflects our values.

We believe **students come first**. We are focused first and foremost on meeting the needs of every student.

We are dedicated to designing an **equitable education system** that serves all students based on their strengths, supports their needs, and provides the resources they need to be successful.

We are committed to working to **close gaps experienced by historically and systemically underserved students**—including students of color, students in poverty, students qualifying for special education services, students learning English, and students impacted by trauma. We believe this will lead to all students experiencing greater success and reaching their full potential.

The following priorities will help move us towards a more equitable and just education system. »

SUFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE SPECIAL EDUCATION FUNDING

Our current system of providing programming to students requiring special education services is insufficient in both the funding and outcomes for students. LEV and partners are coming together to work to create comprehensive change in how funding occurs, creating equity for small local education agencies, reducing stigma, and providing services that promote inclusion and transition. In 2019, LEV will prioritize:

- Establishing a state funding system that provides sufficient funds for students with disabilities to get the resources they need.
- Improving how we support and prepare educators to better meet the needs of students with disabilities.
- Increasing the accessibility and transparency of special education funding, spending, and student outcome data disaggregated by race and/or disability type to better understand how students are being served.

SUPPORTIVE AND SAFE SCHOOLS

In order to learn, students need to feel like school is a place where they belong, are respected, and are believed in. Creating positive school climates for every student is instrumental in closing opportunity and achievement gaps in our system and improving student outcomes. In 2019, LEV will prioritize:

- Encouraging and enabling districts to create positive, supportive school climates by implementing a multi-tiered system of support framework to identify and meet student needs.
- Providing reliable and consistent access to mental health services for students through either staff or third party providers in every school building.

FAIR LOCAL K-12 FUNDING

The changes made to the K-12 funding system in 2017 and 2018 created new inequitable structures between districts depending on property values and ability to raise local levy dollars. LEV is committed to creating an equitable funding system

that targets resources based on student needs, rather than other external factors. In 2019, LEV will prioritize:

- Creating an even playing field for all districts, regardless of property values by raising the cap for LEA eligible districts to \$2500 per student from \$1500.

HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Early learning in and out of the home ensures students arrive at kindergarten ready to learn and thrive. State investments in early learning close opportunity and achievement gaps by focusing on students who otherwise have limited access to high-quality, early learning opportunities. In 2019, LEV will prioritize:

- Continuing progress in closing income-based opportunity gaps by serving 3,600 more kids in Washington's highly successful ECEAP program.
- Increasing the state's high-return investments in ECEAP and Working Connections Child Care reimbursement rates in order to meet the federally-required reimbursement standard at the 75th percentile of market rates.
- Advocating for a larger investment in home visiting – a research-proven strategy to increase academic outcomes and decrease the likelihood of abuse and neglect.

ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY OPPORTUNITIES

A credential after high school—either a certificate, two-year, or four-year degree—will be necessary for 70% of Washington jobs by 2020. In order to prepare students for family-wage jobs, we need to increase access to, enrollment in, and completion of postsecondary programs—particularly for students that are historically and systemically underserved and underrepresented in our postsecondary institutions. In 2019, LEV will prioritize:

- Increasing equitable access to higher education by full funding of the State Need Grant and continued funding for the College Bound Scholarship.