

2020 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



Students at South Shore PreK-8

In the 2020 legislative session, League of Education Voters will prioritize policies to help lay the foundation of an equitable educational system that provides what students need, when and where they need it.

We believe **students come first**, and 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 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 RESOURCES FOR EVERY STUDENT RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Our current funding formula does not provide funding for all of the nearly 170,000 students requiring special education services in our state, nor does it account for their varying needs. LEV and partners are coming together to work to create comprehensive change in how funding occurs and how services are provided — creating equity for small local education agencies, reducing stigma, and providing services that promote inclusion and transition — ultimately improving outcomes for students. In 2020, LEV will prioritize:

- Establishing a state funding system that provides sufficient resources for every student with a disability by lifting the 13.5% cap on funded enrollment.

SUPPORTIVE AND SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS FOR EVERY STUDENT IN K-12 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 2020, LEV will prioritize:

- Providing reliable and consistent access to mental health services for students through either staff or third party providers in every school building.
- 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.

EQUITABLE LEVY AND LOCAL EFFORT ASSISTANCE STRUCTURES TARGETED TO STUDENT NEEDS

The changes made to the K-12 funding system in recent years increased the role district property value plays in education funding and reaffirmed inequities in the local levy system — directing more funding to high-property value districts rather than high-need districts. This impacts the types of programming and opportunities students have access to. LEV is committed to creating an equitable funding system that targets resources based on student needs. In 2020, LEV will prioritize:

- Reforming the local effort assistance program to account for student and community needs, rather than just property values.

HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FOR EVERY EARLY LEARNER

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. Equally as important is ensuring that students have a successful transition into kindergarten and supports in K-3 to maintain the gains from high-quality pre-K and address the needs of those who did not have access. In 2020, LEV will prioritize:

- Increasing access to high-quality, affordable, culturally and linguistically relevant early learning – including childcare and preschool – that meets family needs and choice by building a cohesive early learning and childcare system with supports for families and a well-compensated, highly-trained workforce.
- Investing in closing access and opportunity gaps in early grades by restoring K-3 class-size reduction funds that districts have lost access to if unable to reduce class sizes, and repurposing for targeted gap closing efforts.