

WE CAN AND MUST DO BETTER FOR WASHINGTON STUDENTS



Students from South Shore PreK-8

LEAGUE OF EDUCATION VOTERS (LEV) WAS CREATED 20 YEARS AGO.

So many things in our society have shifted dramatically in the last two decades. But LEV's commitment to putting students first has not.

Our new Strategic Framework demonstrates how students are front and center in our commitment to creating a supportive, safe, and accessible learning environment for every student in Washington state. You can also read about our dedication to listening to and learning from community, our focus on racial equity, our passion around community engagement and advocacy, and much more.

We have accomplished much in the last 20 years. Thank you for being part of the journey. We look forward to the challenges and opportunities ahead.

“In the last year, we have made deep progress around systems reform, focusing on students who experience educational injustice and pursuing racial equity. We are creating new programs that will help lift up parent voices and train others on how to advocate for better schools. Every day I see and hear how the LEV team is supporting students and families, advocating, and creating change for the better. That has not changed since our founding 20 years ago.”

—Lauri Hennessey, CEO



LEV'S UNIQUE NICHE

League of Education Voters is uniquely positioned to take guidance from the perspectives of students and families all across Washington, elevate their voices, and advocate for addressing their needs and concerns. We have field organizers on both sides of the Cascades. Our communications platforms reach all corners of the state with popular LEVinars, active social media channels, and the ability to connect with and empower students, families, and educators alike. Because we have both a c(3) and c(4) tax status, we are able to work “bottom-up” to help develop community-driven policy changes, and then see those proposals through to adoption at both the legislative and administrative levels. As we work to deepen our commitment to equity and undoing systemic racism, this will be operationalized in our organizing and community outreach, our research and information sharing, and our core policy advocacy.

“We are excited about the direction of League of Education Voters. This Strategic Framework outlines our mission and vision, as well as what makes LEV unique. Students and families continue to be at the center of all we do. We’d love to have you join the work ahead.”

— Dr. Tony Byrd, Board Chair

VALUES

Put Students First: Students have an important voice in shaping the education system. Families are critical partners in student success. We commit to working with students, families, and communities – especially Black, Indigenous, and students of color, students with disabilities, students gaining English proficiency, students experiencing homelessness, foster youth, and other historically marginalized students – to identify barriers and formulate solutions together, and we support them in organizing to advocate for their future.

Honor Community Knowledge and Experience: LEV recognizes that communities themselves offer the best definition of the challenges they face and often the best pathways for addressing them.

Embrace Anti-Racism: We are committed to understanding and dismantling historic and systemic racism, which creates stark inequities in education, and being held accountable for our own action or inaction. We are also committed to looking inward at LEV's history, committing to changes, and being accountable for them.



Artwork by students at South Shore PreK-8

VISION

Every student in Washington state has access to an excellent public education that provides equitable opportunities for success.

MISSION

League of Education Voters (LEV Foundation) acts to serve the interests of students and families across the state of Washington to improve education access and quality, particularly those who have been harmed by historical and systemic inequities, by:

- Conducting and sharing research that provides straightforward information to inform students, families, and decision-makers about public education in Washington.
- Working with communities to develop and advocate for policies that eradicate historical and systemic racial disparities and help close the opportunity gap among historically and systemically underserved students and families in Washington.
- Monitoring policies and practices closely to ensure they are implemented in a timely and equitable manner.
- Organizing and mobilizing students and families and ensuring community voices are heard by decision-makers.
- Partnering with stakeholders to advocate for an equitable, high-quality, and fully funded public education.

LONG TERM INTENDED IMPACT

- League of Education Voters will have helped to build a more equitable education system in Washington that puts students first. Opportunity gaps based on race or income will have been reduced or eliminated. The League will have used strong partnerships based on trust to develop solutions focused on community needs to support students and families that have been historically and systemically underserved by our education system.
- Students will feel safe and supported by educators who share their lived experiences. The League and its partners will understand and acknowledge how systemic racism has tilted the scales when it comes to education and will be motivated to dismantle those longstanding and deep-seated barriers.
- Funding for schools will be more stable and equitable.

THREE YEAR BENCHMARKS

By the end of the three-year term of this plan, LEV seeks to accomplish the following:

- Build an increased field presence and strong, trust-based relationships with historically and systematically underserved communities. Invest in community leadership through work like the Promotora model, sharing power, resources, and knowledge for community members to lead the way and drive LEV's and others' policy priorities.
- LEV's internal organizational culture better reflects our values around diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI), and anti-racism, and reflects the future K-12 student population of Washington by:
 - ▶ Utilizing anti-racist recruiting and hiring practices.
 - ▶ Retaining and supporting Staff and Board members by prioritizing a culture built on trust and authentic relationships, where diversity is welcomed and valued, and we honor the distinctions around lived vs. learned understanding of racism, white supremacy, and systemic injustice in our discussions and decision-making.
 - ▶ Continuing to provide ongoing DEI training and counseling.
 - ▶ Staying connected to partners around internal organizational DEI and anti-racism work in order to learn from one another and remain accountable.

Read the entire 2021 Strategic Framework at www.educationvoters.org/strategic-framework



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