



2020 ISSUE PAPER: EDUCATION

Position Statement

Priority Statement: Ensure that the State fully funds K-12 education and increases funding for student support services.

LWVWA positions on Education are:

- The state has the responsibility for amply funding both education. and those social services needed to ensure that every child is ready to learn and safe. (K-12 – 2)
- All programs mandated by the legislature should be fully funded by the state. (K-12 – 3)
- Maintenance and operation costs of local school districts should be fully funded by the state. The state should also contribute to the costs of in-service training. (K-12 – 4)

For the last 14 years, LWVWA has been a partner with NEWS (Network for Excellence in WA Schools) in the McCleary lawsuit against the state over ample funding of K-12 education. By 2018, the state had finally provided billions of dollars of new funding, and the Supreme Court relinquished its jurisdiction over the case on June 7, 2018. NEWS will continue as an organization to ensure that ample funding is enforced.

Summary of Issues for the 2020 Legislative Session

During the 2020 legislative session LWVWA will be advocating for full funding for Special Education and increased funding for student support staff (nurses, counselors, social workers, etc.). We will also be watching for bills tied to the State Charter School Commission's Legislative agenda of access to state level levy equalization funding (the current law doesn't allow them to run levies or access levy dollars from school districts) and state level facilities support (the Superior Court and Supreme Court ruled that Charter School access to the School Construction Fund unconstitutional).

We will focus on these bills from last session that are still alive for 2020:

- [SB 5315](#) Would have increased the number of nurses, social workers, psychologists, counselors and other student support staff who support the mental, behavioral and physical health and safety of students.
- [SB 5395](#) Would have required comprehensive sexual health education in all schools. The Senate passed this bill 28-21, and it was heard in the House Education Committee on March 12, but no vote was taken. This would have required a curriculum that is evidence-informed, inclusive for all students, age appropriate, and is consistent with the state health and physical education learning standards. School districts must grant a parent's request to have their child excused from this class.

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