

A Note About the Current LWVC Education Position

The purpose of this study is to update the LWVC education position, which was adopted in 1985. As part of the study, the committee reviewed the work of the previous study committee and the positions that resulted from it. We were continuously impressed by the quality and depth of both their research and the printed study materials.

The 1983 study committee is to be commended for developing positions that are still relevant and useful 20 years later. However, there have been many changes (see page viii of the Study Guide), some of which this study will address.

Please review the position for familiarity. It is included with both the Leader's and Study Guides. The statewide consensus will determine whether there will be changes to the positions.

CURRENT EDUCATION POSITION

Adopted 1973; Updated 1985; Last Readopted May 2003

POSITION IN BRIEF: *Support a comprehensive kindergarten through twelfth grade public education system which meets the needs of each individual student; challenges all students to reach their highest potential; develops patterns of lifelong learning and responsible citizenship.*

Support a system of funding which is adequate, flexible, equitable, reliable; derived from a combination of revenue sources; distributed fairly to ensure equal access to public education for all students.

Support formulating broad general guidelines at the state level and developing and implementing program at the local level.

Curriculum

1. Joint responsibility for coordinated curriculum planning in which the state develops broad guidelines for a common core curriculum and the local district develops a comprehensive challenging curriculum which:

- a. includes the state minimum requirements;
- b. meets the needs and challenges the abilities of all students in the district;
- c. reflects priorities set in the local community.

Guidelines

2. State policies, guidelines, and standards for curriculum should encourage the local districts to:

- a. develop a broad curriculum;
- b. provide for an appropriate range of student abilities and interests;
- c. evaluate feasibility of proposals and effectiveness of curriculum.

Program

3. Educational programs should have sufficient resources to provide all students with:

- a. command of basic skills;
- b. competence in complex skills;
- c. exposure to broad common body of knowledge;
- d. appreciation and respect for one's own cultural heritage and that of others;
- e. preparation for leading productive lives;
- f. sufficient instruction to develop competence in speaking, reading, and writing English;
- g. services needed to ensure a school environment conducive to learning;
- h. a process to identify special needs and provide appropriate services to meet those needs;
- i. a variety of challenging learning opportunities.

Personnel-State Level

4. Responsibility at the state level for:

- a. developing guidelines for recruiting, training, certifying, and retraining teachers which maintain high standards;
- b. including early and extensive experience in the classroom in the teacher training system;
- c. developing guidelines for evaluation which are fair, rigorous, and frequent with high standards for retraining teachers and with effective procedures for removing ineffective teachers;
- d. allocating sufficient funds to provide adequate and appropriate salaries for teachers and administrators;
- e. maintaining a financially sound teacher retirement system;
- f. regulations governing tenure which permit a fair, rigorous, and frequent evaluation system.

Personnel-Local Level

5. Responsibility at the local level for:
- a. maintaining high performance standards for teachers and administrators;
 - b. implementing a fair, rigorous, frequent evaluation system;
 - c. providing opportunities for retraining and professional growth for teachers;
 - d. ensuring adequate and appropriate salaries and benefits;
 - e. providing a work environment which is conducive to good teaching;
 - f. providing incentives for excellence in teaching;
 - g. sustaining community support and recognition for educators and education;
 - h. providing the appropriate notice and access for the community to the collective bargaining process;
 - i. utilizing, when possible, collaborative approaches to collective bargaining.

Finance

6. Responsibility at the state level for:
- a. primary funding of public education, with provision for as much local control as possible over local schools;
 - b. a flexible, equitable system of adequate and reliable funding derived from a combination of tax sources that includes a portion of the property tax;

- c. developing a school finance system that incorporates a multi-year mechanism and enables orderly, timely, effective budgeting and negotiating processes at the local level;
- d. developing a process for forward funding of the educational budget with decisions made in the year before implementation;
- e. equitable distribution of general purpose funds based on student population;
- f. general purpose funding which is sufficient to provide a comprehensive and challenging program for all students;
- g. separate and appropriate funding of programs for students with special needs;
- h. an equitable funding system that encourages local control;
- i. full funding of mandated programs and procedures to avoid encroachment upon the general educational program;
- j. periodic review of state mandated programs;
- k. permitting districts access to supplementary funds for meeting locally determined needs with due regard to equity;
- l. a uniform system of budgeting and accounting;
- m. opposition to expenditures by the state for vouchers to non-public schools.

Governance

7. Implementation of a system of educational accountability for both finances and student progress in which:
- a. the local district is accountable to its community and state;
 - b. the state is accountable to its citizens.

State Level

8. Responsibility at the state level for:
- a. setting broad education goals and policies;
 - b. formulating long range plans for the statewide system;
 - c. determining minimum standards and guidelines for evaluating student progress;
 - d. a state educational code which defines state responsibilities and allows local decision making;
 - e. developing broad guidelines for instructional materials selection;
 - f. school building safety standards.

Local Level

9. Responsibility at the local level for:
- a. setting long range community goals and interim objectives;
 - b. long range planning for the district;
 - c. formulation, implementation, and evaluation of programs;
 - d. effective implementation of mandated programs;
 - e. involvement of the community in the assessment of local educational needs and goals.
10. State and local responsibility for providing public access to decision making in public education.