



THE VOTER

The League of Women Voters®, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy

President's Letter by Joan Eisenhower



As we wrap up our League work for 2011, I would like to acknowledge the work done by our members who attended the Education Study sessions in October and November. We can all be proud of the work we did and the level of our participation.

A special thanks to Elana Levens-Craig for facilitating our sessions. In addition to conducting our East County sessions Elana lent her talents to several other units of the San Diego League to facilitate and guide their consensus meetings. Thank you Anita Reith for serving as our recorder for our sessions and submitting our responses to the LWVUS.

We are moving ahead with the procedure necessary to bring the proposal of the merger of East San Diego County League with the San Diego League to a vote at our annual meeting in May of 2012. Currently, the San Diego League is proceeding with informing their membership of the

proposal in their Voter, and calling for open discussions at the various unit meetings in January. When they have the approval of their members to appoint a committee to explore the merge Donna Bartlett-May and I, along with several members from the San Diego League, will be serving on a By-law Committee to review the By-Laws of each League and present a new set of By-Laws for approval for the merged League. The process is lengthy, but I remain confident that we will accomplish the merge in 2012. Sylvia Hampton (our MTA) had been guiding us and facilitating the process, and we are very glad to have her knowledge and support. Thank you Sylvia.

Finally, I would like to welcome new dual members Teresa Dodd-Butera and Christiana Butera. Teresa and Christiana joined the league from the State web site. We are looking forward to meeting you at one of our upcoming meetings. Have a safe and wonderful

CALENDAR

Saturday, December 10 - Board meeting at 9:00 a.m. followed by the Holiday party and unit meeting. See below for more info



DECEMBER UNIT

Our final unit meeting for this year will be held at Helix Water District on December 10 at 10:00 a.m. We will have a Board meeting at 9:00 a.m. Our legislative districts have been redrawn and we will have maps to show you what district you are now in. This will also be our holiday party and we will squeeze in some program planning.

holiday season. I will see everyone at our December meeting.



NATIONAL EDUCATION STUDY

The first study group for the National Education Study was held October 29 at the Helix Water District. We had 11 in attendance including our most knowledgeable facilitator, Elana Levens-Craig. Elana explained that governors and state education officers developed Common Core Standards which are for math and English and are intended to have students nationwide taught the same so students can move from one part of the country to another and not fall behind.

The group reached consensus on answers to questions four through nine. Questions 1-3 will be addressed at the end.

Question 4 asked for which programs should the standards be mandated in order to obtain federal funding. The group reached consensus that special grant programs such as Race to the Top, all programs under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act where the needs qualify for funding, and all programs receiving federal funding from any source should have the standards mandated in order to obtain federal funding.

Question 5 asked if there should be a national assess-

ment aligned with the common cores standards. The group agreed there should be a way to assess if the standards are being achieved. The second part of the question asked if we answered yes, should implementation be voluntary or federally mandated. The consensus was that it should be mandated, if fully funded.

The logical next step would be to develop a national curriculum to meet the standards and be aligned with the assessment tools. Question 6 was what should national standards lead to? The consensus of the group was that they should lead to a national curriculum that is only suggested but not mandated. It was felt local school districts could them tailor the curriculum to something that would work for them.

Two consortia won \$3.5 million to develop assessments that follow the Common Core State Standards by 2014. Question 7 related to the goals of these groups. We were asked to rank the answers to the question, what role should the national assessment consortia play in student evaluation. The consensus of the group was that the first priority would be to provide an as-

essment system that is aligned to the Common Core Standards. The second role would be to provide comparison data showing progress toward reaching Common Core Standards. The third role would be to provide information to students, parents, teachers and school districts about student achievement. The fourth role would be to provide criteria for determining readiness for college and careers. The last in order of importance was to provide diagnostic information on each child.

Question 8 asked if we have a national assessment, what information is most important to be reported to parents, teachers, students and the community. The groups consensus was that the data should be "criterion referenced" and clearly informative so that teachers, parents, and students know how individual students have mastered criteria established at a national level.

Question 9 asked how information from nationally required assessment data should be used. The consensus was that it should be used to inform districts how their population compares to others similar to theirs.

NATIONAL EDUCATION STUDY (Cont'd)

The second study group for the National Education Study was held November 19 at the Helix Water District. We had 12 in attendance including Facilitator Elana Levens-Craig.

We started with Question 10. The group consensus was that it would be appropriate to use a combination of non-competitive and competitive grants to obtain Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funding.

Question 11 asked if the federal government's role is the concern of the "common good" then how should mandates and grants be handled. The group consensus was that a combination of funded mandates and grants should apply.

Question 12 asked the group to rank the list under equity in public education means equitable access to:

1. high quality teaching/learning.
2. adequate and current learning materials.
3. clean and well maintained physical facilities.
4. food and health care.
5. secure housing.
6. safe and secure neighborhoods.

Question 13 asked the group to choose an answer between strongly agree and strongly disagree with the statement that ESEA should remain targeted toward poverty and special needs. The group chose agree.

Question 14 asked for the same answer to the statement that the federal government has a role in supporting early childhood education, birth to 5, for all children. The group strongly agreed with the statement.

Question 15 asked for the same answer to the statement federal support for early childhood education programs should include funding for parent education and support regarding child development, child health and nutrition, and access to other support services, such as mental health as needed. The group strongly agreed that this funding should be extended to all children.

Question 1 asked about the current role of the federal government in public education. The consensus was that the role is too small with a minority feeling it is just right.

Question 2 asked what the

role of the federal government should be and gave a list to be ranked. The consensus was:

1. to ensure that all students preK-12 receive a quality education.
2. to mandate Common Core Standards for all students K-12
3. to develop accountability measures that will study the progress of all students to they achieve adequate yearly progress.
4. to monitor state efforts for funding.
5. to measure teacher effectiveness through test data.

Question 3 asked for a strongly agree to strongly disagree to the statement that a quality public education is important to perpetuate a strong and viable democracy. The group strongly agreed.

This was an excellent opportunity for discussion of public education and we express our sincere appreciation to Elana Levens-Craig for facilitating the discussion and providing us with great background information that was very helpful in answering the questions.

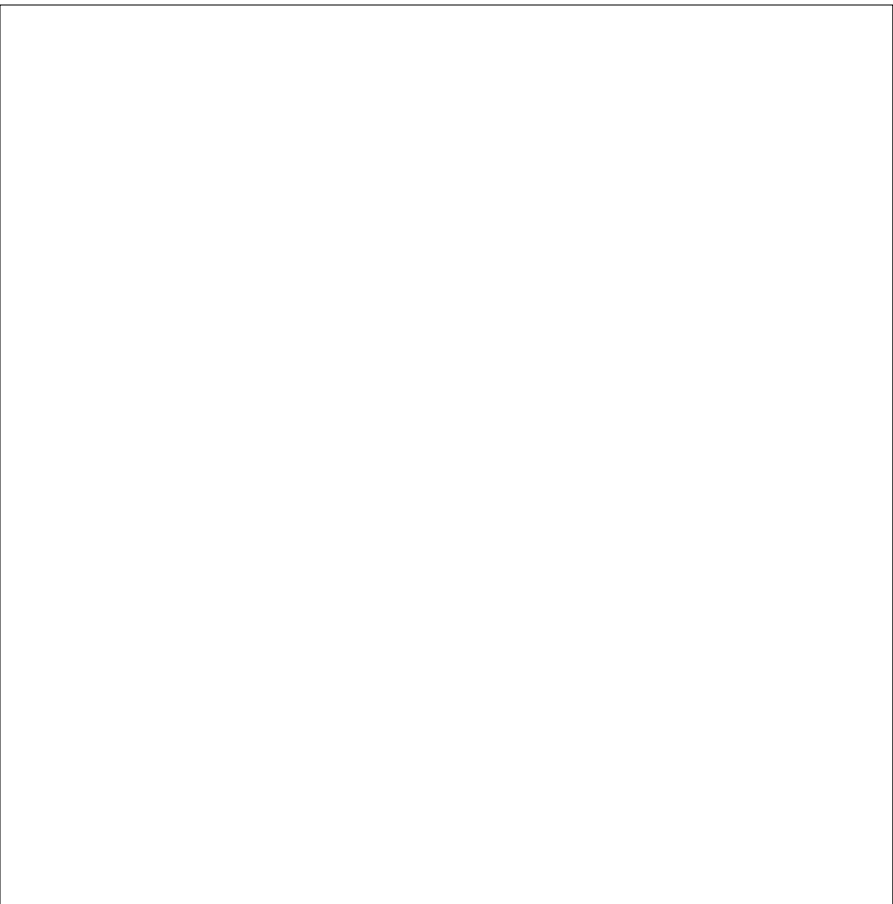
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