



East San Diego County League of Women Voters

OCT/NOV 2011

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



Now that the summer is behind us we can get down to the work we have ahead of us for the fall. We are very excited to be participating in the National League study, "Role of the Federal Government in Public Education". There are several roles for our local League during the study process and our own Education Director, Elana Levens-Craig, has been working with the San Diego League committee to prepare the local Leagues to complete the consensus questions. Elana will be the facilitator for our sessions.

We will conduct our study sessions in October and November and respond to the consensus questions in November. The National Committee will analyze the data from the consensus and write the position paper for LWVUS. It is a wonderful opportunity for us to contribute on a national level.

Please mark your calendars and participate in the study on October 29 at noon and November 19 at 11 a.m. at the Helix Water District. We will be conducting the East San Diego County study sessions on Saturdays with the hope that we will have a greater turn out. As an extra incentive, lunch will be provided! You can expect to receive a phone call reminder a few days prior to the first session.

I would also like to remind our active members that all dues should be paid by the end of October. Thank you to all members who have already paid. I will be sending out reminders to those who have not responded.

I am looking forward to seeing all of you at the Education Study sessions.

October/November Calendar

October 13, 5 pm – Board Meeting @ Helix Water District

October 26, 11:30 am – City Lunch (See flyer)

October 29, noon – First Education Study Meeting @ Helix Water District

November 19, 11 am – Second Education Study Meeting @ Helix Water District

November 19, 10 am – Board Meeting @ Helix Water District



This is a reprint of an article from the City League Newsletter.

WHY ARE LEAGUERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY STUDYING THE FEDERAL ROLE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION?

We all know that local Leagues study public education issues. For example, the LWVSD at the last annual meeting adopted a position on Early Childhood Education based on three years of study of the issue.

League members are aware that the California state government has the principal responsibility to provide for the public education of all its students. Recognizing that fact, the LWVC undertook an update of its educational positions in 2004.

That study motivated California's delegates to the last LWVUS convention to lead the push for the adoption of the current national item, the Role of the Federal Government in Public Education. The majority of delegates to that convention agreed with the California delegation that the LWVUS has not kept pace with the growing importance of federal activities in public education, and a new LWVUS consensus needed to be developed around the major issues facing public education in the United States today. Joanne Leavitt, from the LWV Santa Monica, became the co-chair of this national study. She had been the chair of the LWVC updated study of education.

The LWVUS has actively supported public education since it was founded. At the present time, the LWVUS is working on several positions on education that were adopted by national consensus in previous years. A short summary of these positions follows:

- **INTEGRATION** "The League is committed to racial integration of schools as a necessary condition for equal access to education. Bussing became one of the

means of achieving school desegregation.

- **QUALITY EDUCATION** "The 1974-75 LWVUS program included the phrase 'equal access to...quality education' reflecting League recognition that 'equality' and 'quality' are inseparable."
- **TUITION TAX CREDITS** "The 1978 convention directed the national board to oppose tax credits for families of children attending private elementary and secondary schools. The League is concerned about the negative impact that tuition tax credits would have in the public schools by encouraging flight, particularly from desegregated schools."
- **FEDERAL PROGRAMS** "The League supports a range of federal education programs. Some are designed to meet the special needs of the poor and minorities. Others are designed to give women and minorities equal educational opportunities."
- **TITLE IX** "In 2003 the League responded to an effort to scale back Title IX" (the women's equity in sports law).

For a more complete list of the many activities that the LWVUS has taken on education issues, Google League of Women Voters United States Education Positions or click on

<http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=14208>

Fran Venn, Education Committee

Enclosed in this newsletter are the consensus questions that we will be studying this fall. See the calendar for meeting dates.

**LONG TIME LEAGUE MEMBER
EMMELINE ELLIS PASSES AWAY**



Emmeline Ellis died at the age of 90 on July 10, 2011. Emmeline had been a member of the East San Diego County League of Woman Voters since her retirement from her Social Services work at San Diego County in the 1980s.

She discovered her passion for social work while with the Red Cross so she studied at Washington University in St. Louis, then returned to Wyoming, where she was born, as a state child welfare worker. She is survived by her husband Al, two children, and three grandchildren.

In League Emmeline served on committees that were health or education related. She and Ruth Collins and Helen Morey prepared the VOTER for mailing for many years. We miss all of them.

LEAVING A LEGACY

Including the League of Women Voters Education Fund in your will is among the easiest ways to offer support of the LWVEF's work for years to come. We suggest the following language to include the League as a beneficiary of a will or trust: " I give, devise,

and bequeath to the League of Women Voters Education Fund, a charitable organization formed in the District of Columbia, with offices at 1730 M Street, NW, Washington, DC, 20036, {the sum of \$___ } {___ percentage of my residuary estate}." If you already have a will, you can have your attorney add a codicil to include the LWVEF. After you've added the League, please contact the [Development office](#) by email so we can list you as a member of our Carrie Chapman Catt Legacy Society.

YOUR CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS

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New Facts for Voter booklets have been printed. Please contact Donna Bartlett-May if you would like a hard copy or a digital copy.

Her email is dbartlettmay@aol.com



SMARTVOTER, your resource for election information at smartvoter.org



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INTERESTED IN JOINING LWV OR MAKING A DONATION?

Please check one or more:

- One-Year Individual membership @ \$60.
- Household (for two members who share an address) @ \$85.
- I am unable to join the League at this time but enclose a contribution.
- Please send me more information.

Your Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

E-Mail address _____ Home Phone _____

Please make check payable to the League of Women Voters and return with this application to the return address above. (Note: We send only League-related information and do not share our mailing list.) For more information, call (619) 463-0243.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE

Looking Backward and Forward



Wednesday, October 26, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Tom Ham's Restaurant, Harbor Island

Lunch and Program \$23

11:30-12:10 — Buffet Lunch

12:10-12:25 — Play Reading: "Who Were Those Amazing San Diego Suffragists?"

12:25-1:15 — Conversation between Anne Hoiberg and Dr. Doreen Mattingly, Associate Professor, Department of Women's Studies, San Diego State University, about the past and present of the Women's Movement.

1:15-1:30 — Celebrating the 75th anniversary of the founding of the League of Women Voters in San Diego. A commemorative booklet will be available.



LWV Luncheon — Looking Backward and Forward — Wednesday, October 26

Name(s) _____

Address _____ Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Send a check for \$23 each to the LWVSD office, 4901 Morena Blvd, Bldg 100, Suite 104, San Diego, 92117

Or register on our website with Paypal www.lwvsandiego.org
Click on 'donate' button, 'amount' \$23, 'purpose' October Luncheon

Deadline October 24

Role of the Federal Government in Public Education

One thing that the Education business is known for is a lot of terms and acronyms. So as we listen to speakers and read articles, we are bound to come across a lot of these. Let's practice in order to prepare ourselves. And what better way to learn some of them than with a vocabulary quiz. Let's see how you do.

Match the term with the description that is closest to its meaning:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1. AYP | A. Non-competitive awards based on formula |
| 2. Categorical Funding | B. How much a student must know to be considered proficient |
| 3. Common Core Standards | C. Federal funding aimed at instructional materials |
| 4. Compensatory Education | D. List of what students are expected to learn |
| 5. Content Standards | E. Referring to the process of teaching |
| 6. Curriculum | F. State account checking progress of students |
| 7. Cut Scores | G. Federal funding aimed at low-income students |
| 8. ELL | H. Education awarded to special-needs students |
| 9. ESEA | I. Educational plan including goals and objectives |
| 10. Formula Grant Programs | J. Scores that separate test-takers into categories |
| 11. IDEIA | K. Federal funding aimed at women's sports |
| 12. No Child Left Behind | L. Law that is the major federal fund for education |
| 13. Norm-referenced tests | M. Federal funding aimed at educational research |
| 14. Pedagogical | N. Federal funding for specified high-needs students |
| 15. Performance Standards | O. Federal law requiring education for disabled children |
| 16. Race to the Top | P. Goals of learning |
| 17. Title I | Q. Compares students with their peers by percentile rankings |
| 18. Title II | R. Students who do not have English as first language |
| 19. Title IV | S. ESEA reauthorization act by President Bush |
| 20. Title IX | T. ESEA reauthorization act by President Obama |



Key: 1.f, 2.n, 3.d, 4.h, 5.p, 6.i, 7.j, 8.r, 9.l, 10.a, 11.o, 12.s, 13.q, 14.e, 15.b, 16.t, 17.g, 18.c, 19. m, 20.k

Consensus Questions

General Questions

These General Questions apply to the overall focus of the study. We think you will find it interesting to ask these questions briefly at the beginning of your consensus meeting(s), record the answers, and then go back to them again at the end of the session. See if opinions have changed during the discussion. While they may seem simple, they are important to developing strong positions. All page numbers are from the PDF versions of the background papers.

1. The current role of the federal government in public education is

Much too small too small about right too large much too large

2. What should be the role of the federal government in public education? (Rank)

- a. To ensure that all students preK-12 receive a quality education.
- b. To develop accountability measures that will study the progress of all students so that they achieve adequate yearly progress.
- c. To mandate Common Core Standards for all students K-12.
- d. To monitor state efforts for funding
- e. To measure teacher effectiveness through test data.

This looks like an easy question but will be very important in forming a strong position for future action.

3. A quality public education is important to perpetuate a strong and viable democracy.

Strongly agree Agree No consensus Disagree Strongly disagree

Common Core Standards

Common Core Standards and the related assessments are an important part of the study with one section devoted just to this. Make sure members clearly understand that these are national standards, developed by the National Governors' Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and are not a federal government mandate, even though acceptance of the standards was a requirement to qualify for "Race to the Top" funding. Remember this is a national study and the question is how these should relate to national programs. This is not the place for a discussion of "our state math standards are better than these," however tempting it may be. Background on pages 3 and 4 of the "Common Core Standards and Assessments" research paper will help with understanding.

Educational standards define the knowledge and skills students should possess at critical points in their educational career.

Curriculum is an educational plan that spells out which goals and objectives will be achieved, how to achieve those goals and what topics should be covered as well as the methods and materials to be used for learning and evaluation.

There is a logical progression from standards to assessments based on these standards to curriculum aligned with the standards and tests. How much of a role do we think the federal government should have in this continuum? (see pdf page 3 of Common Core Standards paper)

4. Currently the governors and state education officers have developed Common Core Standards that are national but not federal. Should the standards be mandated of the states in order to obtain federal funding? (Choose one)
 - a. Special grant programs such as Race to the Top
 - b. All programs under Elementary and Secondary Education Act where the needs qualify for funding.
 - c. All programs receiving federal funding from any source
 - d. All of the above
 - e. None of the above

This is a key follow-up question to the previous one. If your group rejects the national standards, then the answer will be easy. If they accept the common core standards, then this will be an important discussion. Pages 7-9 of the "Common Core Standards" paper discuss the assessments that are being developed. The first question is simply – are these assessments needed, and the second question is how should they be utilized? Here you may want to discuss the comparisons of states that are published by different organizations each year and how they are usually based on different tests in different states. There is also room for discussion of the costs of these tests and whether those costs should be fully covered if mandated. Be sure to also consider the costs of tests originated by the state and local districts. (see pdf pages 1-6 Common Core Standards)

5. Should there be a national assessment aligned with the common cores standards?

Yes | No

a. If Yes, Should implementation be voluntary or federally mandated? (choose one)

1. Voluntary
2. Mandated
3. Mandated, if fully funded

b. If No, what other accountability measures might you suggest? (choose one)

1. Continue to allow the states to develop their own assessments.
2. Suggest that the local education districts use their own assessments or adopt one that is a nationally norm-referenced assessment such as the *Stanford Achievement Test* or *Iowa Test of Basic Skills*.
3. Suggest that districts use a portfolio type of assessment where student projects and activities would be scored holistically

A potentially logical next step could be to develop a national curriculum that would meet the standards and be aligned with the assessment tools. Carefully consider this in light of answers to the two previous questions and strive for a consistent answer. What should the federal role be? Is this different from a national role that is not mandated? (see pdf page 11 Common Core Standards and Glossary)

6. National standards should lead to: (choose one)

- a. A nationally mandated curriculum to be aligned to the national standards and assessments.
- b. A national curriculum that is only suggested but not mandated.
- c. A suggested structure for states and local education agencies to develop their own curriculum.
- d. No national curriculum.

This question concerns the current two consortia who have won \$3.5 million to develop assessments that follow the Common Core State Standards by 2014. This is where streams get mixed, as they have received a federal grant to prepare assessments based on national standards. What should be the goal(s) of these groups? (see pdf page 7 Common Core Standards)

7. What role should the national assessment consortia play in student evaluation? (Rank order)

- a. Provide an assessment system that is aligned to the Common Core Standards.
- b. Provide comparison data showing progress toward reaching Common Core Standards.
- c. Provide criteria for determining readiness for college and careers.
- d. Provide information to students, parents, teachers and school districts about student achievement.
- e. Provide diagnostic information on each child.

This question focuses upon the purpose of a national assessment program. The purpose of any mandated, nationally normed (see Glossary) test has been much debated. This goes to the much debated parts of NCLB, to value-added statistical models for evaluation of teachers, merit pay and similar topics often in the news. Be prepared here for discussion that may be highly charged. But it is important to know if we have consensus on these items. (pdf pages 8-11 Common Core Standards)

8. Data from the national assessments are often difficult for parents, teachers and others to understand. If we have a national assessment, what information is most important to be reported to parents, teachers, students and the community? (choose one)

- a. Data should be "norm referenced" (where students are ranked) for district comparison only.
- b. 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.
- c. Data should be used to determine "cut" scores knowing if students have mastered requirements for special grade

levels.

9. Information from nationally required assessment data should be used to (Choose one):
- Sanction schools not measuring up to the specific levels
 - Reward schools that achieve high scores
 - Rank teachers based on student test score data
 - Reward teachers who have exemplary scores
 - Inform districts how their population compares to others similar to theirs.

If you are taking consensus in two sessions this would be the end of session one. This is the time to go back and review the first question with this group and to check that the recorded consensus is that agreed upon by your members.

Funding and Equity

This part of the study deals more with the traditional federal involvement in public education and how it has evolved. You might want to briefly review the history paper and Timetable posted on the lwv.org website. Allow time to fully discuss these questions: whether members think federal funds should be distributed mostly based on need, population and enrollment or they should be given only to those who best qualify for competitive grants. How should mandates and funding be related, or should they? What should the relationship be? One example of a mandate attached to funding was the requirement to lift the cap on the number of charter schools to qualify for Race to the Top funding. This is an area that will require time. (pdf pages 7-8 Equity and funding)

10. In the past most of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funding has been non-competitive based on need. All/Any Schools that prove they fall under the federal guidelines for funding receive those funds. However, competitive grants are now being proposed to states/districts who meet certain federal requirements, such as Race to the Top. Which would be appropriate: (choose one)
- Non-competitive funding for all applicants meeting requirements
 - A combination of non-competitive and competitive grants
 - Competitive grants only
 - No federal funding

Mandates are not always a bad thing. Integration was a mandate, so was Title IX (gender equity). Most school administrators would emphasize the need for federal mandates to be federally funded. Some are; some, like Head Start, are only expected to do what the funding allows. Others, such as Special Education, have never been fully funded. Think carefully about this one. What is the "common good"? (see pdf pages 3-5 Equity and Funding)

11. If the federal government's role is the concern of the "common good" then: (choose one)
- Mandates only should be sanctioned.
 - Mandates and funding should both be provided.
 - Funding should be provided through grants only.
 - A combination of funded mandates and grants should apply.
 - No mandates should be required and limited grants for innovation available.

Equity is a word that has had an evolving definition (see Glossary). It is not the same as equal funding as there is a growing awareness that some students are more expensive to educate than others. Others talk about "adequacy," "equity of opportunity" and "opportunity to learn" – ideas that deal with access to what is deemed necessary in order to have an equal opportunity, opportunities that are often denied children of poverty. While not all of these may be considered the responsibility of the local educational system, is it a federal responsibility to tackle them? Is it a local responsibility? Should these non-academic issues be considered? This is more fully discussed early in the "Equity and Funding" paper. (see pdf pages 3-4 and 8-10 Equity and Funding)

12. Equity in public education means equitable access to: (Rank order)
- high quality teaching/learning
 - adequate and current learning materials
 - clean and well maintained physical facilities
 - food and health care
 - safe and secure neighborhoods
 - secure housing

Traditionally all federal funding has been aimed at special groups, those that were deemed underserved by Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) authorizers. These may be minorities – those with disabilities, living in poverty, not speaking English as a primary language or with other identifying characteristics. Each population and its justification are

discussed in the paper on special populations. Many of these numbers are growing nationwide, and funding does not always keep up with the growth. The question is, should this funding still be targeted to individual groups? Or should it be either block granted, where it can be used for multiple purposes, and/or blended into the general fund? (see pdf pages 1-4 Equity and Funding and all pages of Special Populations on Equity and Funding)

13. Currently Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funding is considered "categorical" rather than for general use. This means that it can only be used with special populations for special purposes. ESEA should remain targeted toward poverty and special needs.

Strongly agree Agree No consensus Disagree Strongly disagree

Much current educational research emphasizes the role of early childhood education in giving all children an even start when entering kindergarten. The question here is the role of the federal government: Should it play a role in extending this to all children? (see pdf pages 1-5 Early Childhood)

14. The federal government has a role in supporting early childhood education, birth to 5, for all children?

Strongly agree Agree No consensus Disagree Strongly disagree

15. Federal support for early childhood education programs (e.g.Head Start, Title I, Special Education, Early Start) should include funding for parent education and support regarding child development, child health and nutrition, and access to other supportive services, such as mental health as needed.

Strongly Agree Agree No consensus Disagree Strongly Disagree

- b. This funding should be extended to :

All children only those with special needs special needs first

GLOSSARY

Adequacy of funding: This is an attempt to define the cost of an education, which would use research and identified methods to enable a high percentage of students to reach or exceed mandated performance levels.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP): This is a statewide accountability system, negotiated separately by every state with the U.S. Department of Education and mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 which requires each state to ensure that all schools and districts make Adequate Yearly Progress.

Assessments (Formative vs. Summative):

Summative Assessments are given periodically to determine at a particular point in time what students know and do not know in order to make a decision or determine a grade. Many associate summative assessments only with standardized tests such as state assessments, but they are also used as an important part of district and classroom programs.

Formative Assessments are part of the instructional process. When incorporated into classroom practice, they provide the information needed to adjust teaching and learning while they are happening. In this sense, formative assessments inform both teachers and students about student understanding at a point when timely adjustments can be made. These adjustments help to ensure students achieve targeted standards-based learning goals within a set time frame.

Common Core Standards (CCS): The Common Core Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers. The initiative is sponsored by the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). As such, the initiative is a national one and neither developed nor funded by the federal government.

Compensatory education: Compensatory education is a legal term used to describe future educational services which courts award to a special needs student under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA) when a school district has failed to provide a free and appropriate public education that meets their needs.

Cut scores: The cut score on a test (or on multiple tests) is the score that separates test takers into various categories, such as a passing score and a failing score, or a selected score and a rejected score. For example, the cut score on most state driving exams is 70%, meaning that anything below that score is a failing grade, and anything above that score is a passing grade.

de facto: in effect; for all intents and purposes

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) or No Child Left Behind (NCLB): The Act is an extensive statute that funds primary and secondary education, while explicitly forbidding the establishment of a national curriculum. It also emphasizes equal access to education and establishes high standards and accountability. In addition, the bill aims to shorten the achievement gaps between students by providing each child with fair and equal opportunities to achieve an exceptional education. As mandated in the Act, the funds are authorized for professional development, instructional materials, resources to support educational programs and parental involvement promotion. The Act was originally authorized through 1970; however, the government has reauthorized the Act periodically since its enactment. The current reauthorization of ESEA is the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, named and proposed by President George W. Bush. The ESEA also allows military recruiters access to 11th and 12th grade students' names, addresses and telephone listings when requested.

Equity of funding: An attempt to equalize educational opportunities by sharing resources with equal access across schools.

Equity vs. Equality: Equity connotes fairness, rather than equal funding because there is a growing awareness that some students are more expensive to educate than others. Some educators talk about "equity of opportunity" and "opportunity to learn," ideas that deal with access to what is deemed necessary to have an equal opportunity, opportunities that are often denied children of poverty.

English Language Learner (ELL) has replaced the term ESL English as Second Language learner. These are students who do not have English as their first language.

Federal vs. National Initiatives refers to both mandates and funding. A national program is one that was developed by a national organization. For example the Common Core Standards were developed by an initiative of the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), and neither was required, promoted or funded by the federal government. Federal refers to those programs that are funded and/or mandated by the federal government. For this study, the Common Core Standards are a national initiative, but the federal government has required it for the grant program, "Race to the Top." There have long been national standards developed by professional organizations like the National Council of Teacher of Math, English, etc. But to date, there have not been federal standards.

Formula Grant Programs are noncompetitive awards based on a predetermined formula. These programs are sometimes referred to as state-administered programs.

Funding (Categorical vs. General): Categorical funding refers to the funding under the Elementary and Secondary Act which is awarded to districts with specified populations of high needs learners, for example Native Americans, special needs, poverty, etc. General funding is awarded for all children regardless of economic or social category.

GDP: Gross Domestic Product is the market value of all goods and services produced in a country over a period of time.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA) is a United States federal law that governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education, and related services to children with disabilities. It addresses the educational needs of children with disabilities from birth to age 18 or 21 in cases that involve 13 specified categories of disability. The current law is the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997 commonly referred to as IDEA.

Norm-referenced Tests vs. Criterion-referenced Tests: Norm-referenced tests are those that are interpreted by rank ordering children so that on a particular test children are compared to their peers, typically with percentile scores. Criterion-referenced tests are interpreted by comparing student scores to certain objectives or criteria.

Peer-reviewed journal is an academic journal edited by acknowledged experts in the broad field. When an article is submitted, an editor sends it to people who are specialists researching the topic addressed in the paper. Based on their feedback, the editor tells the prospective author whether the article is accepted for publication. Some articles are returned for revisions and may be resubmitted to the approval process.

Pedagogical: referring to the process of teaching

Race to the Top: Race to the Top, abbreviated R2T, RTTT or RTT, is a \$4.35 billion U.S. Department of Education program designed to spur reforms in state and local district K-12 education. It is funded by the ED Recovery Act as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and was announced by President Barack Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan on July 24, 2009.

Racial Achievement Gap: This terminology describes differences in educational performance between groups of students compared by race or ethnicity.

Standards and Curriculum:

Content standards establish the goals of learning whereas curriculum is the "how" to implement the standards or goals with specific