



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LOS ANGELES
3303 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 310, Los Angeles, CA 90010
Tel: 213-368-1616; Fax: 213-368-1615

EDUCATION (1966, 1971, 1976, 1977, 1981, 1994, 1995, 2010)

Support of a public school system that meets the needs of our community in the following ways:

1. Finance

Adequate financing; low pupil-teacher ratio; adequate guidance and counseling programs.

The school District should seek creative ways of increasing school revenues including parcel taxes, developers' fees, sale of surplus plants and land sites, parent and community involvement and grant funding.

The School District should accept funds/donations from business with no strings attached.

2. Governance and Accountability

The League of Women Voters of Los Angeles believes that a primary goal of the LAUSD should be the improvement of student outcomes, including increasing the percentage of students who are proficient at each grade level and increasing the percentage of students who graduate from high school. The League believes that there are a number of crucial areas where attention needs to be focused to achieve these goals and therefore supports the following:

- The LAUSD School Board should be enlarged so that it contains both members who represent individual districts and members at large who represent the entire district.
- The School Board should focus on a long-range common vision. It should set policy and goals and assure that senior district management implements the vision, policies and goals of the board. Neither the board nor individual board members should become directly involved in managing the K-12 school system, but should leave that to district management. The School Board and individual members should be evaluated by the media and by the public on how well the board and each member performs.
- Because excellent teacher and school administration performance and accountability are important factors in improving student achievement, the LAUSD must establish and implement regular and meaningful evaluations of teachers, administrators, and

senior management, including the superintendent. The Board must assure that management takes appropriate steps to address inadequate performance, or in the case of the superintendent's inadequate performance, the board must take action.

- Because increased parental/guardian engagement in the educational process contributes to improved student outcomes, the district should foster appropriate outreach efforts to engage parents.
- Because adequate resources at the school level are important to student outcomes, the district should make appropriate efforts to provide every school in the district adequate resources for the classroom, the school plant and for staff development programs.
- It is important for students to feel safe and to be safe in and around each LAUSD school, and therefore the district should employ resources to insure safety in and around each campus. The LAUSD should, as appropriate, work with other governmental agencies to assure student safety.
- Because studies show that making students who are English language learners proficient in English within five years is closely linked to student performance and to high school graduation, the district should determine how to achieve this goal and undertake the necessary steps to achieve this goal.

3. Achievement

Support of a school district organization whose primary goal is the achievement of quality education and an openness to educational change.

Any restructuring plan for student achievement should include a common core of learning:

- Knowing – science and technology, mathematics, history and social science, literature, cultures and languages, the arts, physical development and health;
- Skills - reading writing, speaking, listening and viewing, English proficiency and proficiency in at least one additional language, quantitative skills, reasoning and problem solving, learning, team-work-group skills;
- Values – self concept, motivation, responsibility, interpersonal relations, U.S. and global interdependence, integrity and respect.
- Compensatory programs – for the disadvantaged child and measures that lead to equality of opportunity in education.

4. Assessment

When restructuring, students should be assessed in many ways including State tests, quiz classroom tests, journals, performance based tests, student self-assessment, teacher observation, portfolios.

To determine whether a school plan is succeeding, the following criteria should be included:

- Are students attending?
- Are students learning?
- Are students graduating?
- Are graduating students prepared for success?
- Are objectives of the school plan being reached?

1. Social Services

Each school should deal with the need for social and family services by continuing with current programs which consist of referrals to outside agencies. Should 20% or more of the students fall below the federal poverty level, the State should be urged to call for family centers starting at the elementary schools.

When the local school determines that there is a need for on-site social services, the school should seek funding and services for many possible sources – Los Angeles Unified School District, social and family agencies, medical providers, businesses which are committed to satisfying children's needs.

Support of supplementary services, recreation, library, food, health, transportation and adult education for Los Angeles City School students.

6. Parent and Community Involvement

Clear lines of authority with responsibility readily available; decisions open to public scrutiny; two-way communication among all levels of administration, teaching staff, parents, pupils and community.

Each school plan should set forth, to the fullest extent possible, how parents can be effectively involved in the educational development of their children. Some of the choices for consideration included parenting skills, better communication among parents, teachers and students, parent councils, sharing resources with less affluent schools, regular meetings, matching parents' and teachers' abilities, use of PTA and grandparents' clubs.

Each school plant should detail ways to make parents and the community feel welcome, informed and essential participants in the school's governance, parent leadership, teacher assistance, facilities maintenance and funding. Suggestions include having more open house meetings for parents and communities, satisfying

working parents' and single parents' needs, offering child care and busing or car pooling for parents to school meetings, reaching decisions and democratically, increasing participation and input and using bilingual meetings.

7. Reform Proposals

Agencies or individuals suggesting educational reform should submit a proposal showing the minimum staff development plan necessary to implement the proposal.

The School Reform Plan should include sufficient time for planning, implementing and evaluating the results. There should be sufficient resource material and expertise to implement it, taking into consideration the teachers' other obligations. The plan should also include a statement of specific areas in which staff people will be needed for implementation.

When funds are provided for appropriate staff development activities, it is essential that the activity be an integral part of an ongoing curriculum activity in the school and that the sponsoring agent will employ consultants well versed in the activity.