

## **PROPOSAL FOR NEW K-12 EDUCATION STUDY FOR 2025-27 BIENNIUM**

Please review the following proposal for a new K-12 Education Consensus Study during the 2025-27 biennium. The study will focus on the Education of Exceptional Students, Career and Technical Education, and Safety in Schools. In the Program Planning Report due February 1, 2025, Local Leagues are being asked to list names of people who will serve on the study committee. Please direct any questions to Jean Pierce at [Advocacy@lwwor.org](mailto:Advocacy@lwwor.org).

### **1. Study Title: K-12 Education**

- \* Education of Exceptional Students
- \* Career and Technical Education
- \* Safety in Schools

### **2. Listing of similar existing LWVOR positions.**

Currently, LWVOR has positions on

- Fiscal policy related to school funding
- Children at Risk
- Child care
- Post Secondary Education

Five K-12 positions are being proposed for acceptance by concurrence at the 2025 convention:

- Assessment and high-stakes testing,
- Attracting and retaining well-qualified teachers
- Charter schools
- Civic education
- Public funds for private schools

### **3. Timeliness of study topic.**

It is fair to anticipate that bills which did not pass recently will be re-introduced. They addressed:

- Increasing funding for students with disabilities
- Creating a Talented and Gifted Education Account in the State Treasury
- Certification of Career and Technical Education teachers
- Studying funding for placing law enforcement officers in schools

### **4. Study Scope**

**WHO:** Jean Pierce will lead the K-12 study committee. She is looking for a member of each local League to serve on the committee.

**WHY:**

Investing in K-12 education accounts for 28% of Oregon's budget. Currently, these 3 K-12 topics are not addressed in LWVUS or LWVOR positions, but there is legislation that has been proposed recently regarding each. The League needs to be able to advocate about these important issues.

Other states have studied and approved positions so that they could take action on relevant legislation, but the positions they have adopted do not appear to be appropriate for Oregon. Each of these topics is of deep concern to parents and educators: meeting the individual educational needs of students with exceptionalities, preparing students not only for higher education but also for the world of work, and ways that we can keep our children safe in schools – including whether guns should be in schools.

## **WHAT: (Examples of topics likely to be addressed)**

### **Students with Exceptionalities**

- Define – include gifted and talented, children with physical, cognitive, emotional, behavioral, or mental health needs that affect progress in schools
  - Equitable access to education so that students can learn to their fullest capacity
  - Best Practices regarding mainstreaming, age-based grade assignments (retention and acceleration), etc.
  - Appropriate and ongoing training of teachers
  - Role of students, families, and community in creating school policies and practices
  - Adaptive Transportation
  - Any schools receiving public funding must meet needs of students with exceptionalities
- **Career and Technical Education**
    - Elementary/Middle/High
    - Career guidance by trained counselors
    - Part of an equitable program of education
    - Fund programs that support successful transitions from high school to careers, and work
    - Relationships with businesses
    - Student and family engagement in policies
  - **Safety in schools**
    - Safe environment – building design
    - Who can bring a gun into a school -
    - School Resource Officers
    - Support research about the effects of arming school personnel
    - Privacy
    - Limit young people’s access to firearms
    - Preventing violence - programs that emphasize self esteem, conflict resolution, mental health resources etc. harassment and bullying
    - Supporting research-based initiatives/activities that have shown to reduce school shootings.
    - Student, family, and community engagement in policies

## **WHEN, HOW, and WITH WHOM:**

During 2025-26, The study committee will

- Contact Rebecca Goldman from the US League and other state action chairs to learn about relevant advocacy engaged in by other state Leagues (what might arise in Oregon)
- Contact other state Leagues to request access to research from their studies
- Conduct searches for relevant research
- Contact relevant respected national organizations to determine best practices
- Interview recognized experts to get more nuanced insight into best practices
- Interview Oregon legislators to determine issues which they anticipate arising relative to K-12 education.
- Create a report of their findings,

During 26-27, the study committee will

- Create consensus questions
- Share the approved report and questions with local Leagues
- Answer questions of local Leagues

**6. Estimated time required to complete study.** Any timetable may be modified by the state Board or Council and is binding on the study committee, which must try to meet the Board's directives as far as possible.

2 years

**7. A reference to the Principles of the League of Women Voters.**

The League of Women Voters believes every citizen should be protected in the right to vote; **every person should have access to free public education that provides equal opportunity for all**; and no person or group should suffer legal, economic, or administrative discrimination.

**8. Explanation of how the proposed issue contributes to League program and appeals to member interests.**

LWVOR needs to be positioned to support or oppose legislation that affects close to 80,000 special education students, 33,000 talented and gifted students, and close to 40,000 secondary students in career and technical education. Further, school safety affects all K-12 students. The recent study of Child Care in Oregon demonstrates the importance that League members assign to the treatment and protection of our children.

**9. Any anticipated cost to LWVOR for study completion, publication and source of funding.**

\$1500 for staff time, printing, mailing.

**10. Explanation of government action needed and possibility of position implementation.**

See Question 4