EDUCATION POSITION
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The League of Women Voters of Southern New Mexico (LWVSNM) supports education as the foundation for a strong and viable democracy. As a minority majority, multicultural, and multilingual state, New Mexico must incorporate the principle of educational equity in its practices and policies to ensure the highest level of academic achievement for each and every student. The public education system should 1) impart to students an understanding of the nature of democracy and encourage their role as participants in their community and beyond, 2) develop each student's ability to think critically, 3) provide each student with the skills necessary to function successfully in a complex global 21st century society.

LWVSNM is committed to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) and therefore believes that every student should have access to a high-quality, equitable publicly funded education regardless of gender identity, race, culture, ethnicity, family income, beliefs, immigration status, or geographical location. Each student should be respected as an individual in learning environments that value diverse cultures. An equitable education includes learning practices, curricula, and assessments that are culturally and linguistically responsive for each and every student. Equity also applies to educators who deserve a salary in line with other university degreed professions.

A high quality, equitable educational system includes meaningful 21st century goals and skills, knowledgeable and skillful educators, integrated supports for all students, early and continuing rigorous culturally rich learning opportunities, bilingual and multilingual learning, competitive educator salaries, and adequate, equitable funding. LWVSNM supports focusing on six elements and their sub-elements which will provide high quality, equitable education systems that result in student achievement necessary for an informed democracy, a productive workforce, and a humane and enlightened society. Those elements are as follows:

1. STUDENT OUTCOMES AND LIFELONG LEARNING

2. EDUCATORS, which includes Teacher Preparation and Professional Development; Educator and School Practices; and Educator Practices for Development of Civic Engagement

3. PRE-K-12 EDUCATION, which includes Educational Content, Delivery, and School Climate; Innovative and Culturally Responsive Practices/Processes for Assessment of Learning; Early Childhood Education and Care (birth-grade 3, families, and communities); and Graduation Readiness and Post-Secondary Education

4. NONTRADITIONAL SCHOOLS, which includes Community Schools, Virtual, Home Schools, and Charter Schools

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

6. PUBLIC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT, GUIDANCE, AND FUNDING, which includes Boards of Education, New Mexico Public Education Department (PED); and Finances and Funding.

EDUCATION POSITION ADDENDUM

The addendum describes educational practices that support advocacy for the LWVSNM Education Position. The following six topics describe fundamental concepts necessary to achieving the position.

1. **STUDENT OUTCOMES AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

   1.1   View preschool, elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education as a continuum leading to lifelong learning;

   1.2   Develop life skills such as problem solving, decision-making, collaboration, communication, independent inquiry and critical thinking, relationship-building, resilience, and resourcefulness;

   1.3   Develop knowledge, confidence/self-esteem, and skills needed for success;

   1.4   Cultivate broad understanding and appreciation of history and visualize prospects for the future;

   1.5   Practice aesthetic awareness and creative abilities;

   1.6   Exhibit awareness of the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of participating in a multicultural/multilingual democratic society;

   1.7   Establish understanding of basic economic principles and the need to manage individual resources on a day to day basis for the benefit of both present and future generations;

   1.8   Understand the importance of each individual's work in local, national, and global economies;

   1.9   Show standards of conduct that reflect a concern for the opinions, values, aspirations, and well-being of all individuals and groups;

   1.10   Embed civics education at all levels;

   1.11   Ensure student self-assessment of learning through reflection about accomplishments and goals that lead to independent learning;

   1.12   Advocate for oneself and view seeking help as something normal and needed by everyone;

   1.14   Be a lifelong learner, with curiosity, a passion to explore, a willingness to take reasonable risks, and adapt to change;

   1.15   Instill a desire to support others, organizations, and communities, and to address societal barriers to equitable opportunities;

   1.16   Embrace outside resources for schools to achieve lifelong equitable outcomes for all stakeholders.

2. **EDUCATORS** (teachers, administrators, and staff)

   2.1   **Educator Preparation and Professional Development**

   2.1.1 Implement measures to improve the preparation, recruitment, professional development, and retention of quality educators with in-depth knowledge in core academic subjects, languages, and learning strategies;

   2.1.2 Recruit a group of educators who are diverse and representative of the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students they will be teaching and are committed to equity focused education;

   2.1.3 Provide meaningful, ongoing professional development in technological, multicultural, and social-emotional learning to support students in classroom and online learning;

   2.1.4 Design and implement ongoing professional development that supports educators to challenge the biases of their own thinking;

   2.1.5 Develop higher education curricula and/or professional development for educators that teach the practices of social justice to include restorative justice;

   2.1.6 Develop higher education curricula and/or professional development for educators to successfully plan and implement shared leadership among stakeholder groups;

   2.1.7 Advocate for educator preparation programs to provide consistent high-quality programs;

   2.1.8 Provide robust ongoing educator professional development that results in developing research-based instructional approaches such as holistic, project-based, learning-technology, and constructivist practices;

   2.1.9 Design and implement higher education mentoring programs for new classroom teachers that facilitate the teacher's use of innovative and culturally responsible teaching practices.

2.2   Educator and School Practices

2.2.1   Provide educators with strategies to help them explore the cultural backgrounds of students and develop culturally rich content relevant to their students' experiences;

2.2.2   Train all educators to use effective research-based strategies to guide all student learning;

2.2.3   Provide high-quality mentoring and teaming opportunities for educators within the school district;

2.2.4   Provide social and emotional learning (SEL) training for educators;

2.2.5   Integrate the involvement of teachers with special education expertise in all areas of teaching, assessment and learning practices including school culture, co-teaching, and family engagement;

2.2.6   Share leadership among educators, students, parents, and community members;

2.2.7   Follow due process procedures when terminating educators;

2.2.8   Base assessment of educators' performance on evaluations of the education provided to students, improvements in student academic growth, and professional observations;

2.2.9   Provide bilingual programs that offer instruction in the student's heritage language;

2.2.10   Research and evaluate changes for continuous improvement of results.

2.3   Educator Practices for Development of Civic Engagement

2.3.1   Develop citizen participation and civic engagement skills at each grade level with activities that emphasize justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion;

2.3.2   Emphasize that civic learning experiences are student-led, project-based, real-world, impactful, goal-driven, inquiry-based, non-partisan, and process-focused;

2.3.3   Create a relevant and critical thinking atmosphere for civic engagement project completion that is led by students, reflects students' real-world issues, and is goal-driven;

2.3.4   Incorporate into the curriculum the teaching of problem-solving with relatable and age-appropriate issues.

3. PRE-Kindergarten-12 EDUCATION

3.1   Educational Content and Delivery

3.1.1   Use the Common Core State Standards to drive instruction for knowledge and skills.

3.1.2   Promote flexibility and creativity in addressing and assessing the standards;

3.1.3   Develop and incorporate experiential learning, project-based learning, media and interactive technology literacy;

3.1.4   Develop effective plans for connecting with parents to genuinely engage them in their child's education throughout all grade levels;

3.1.5   Provide appropriate instructional materials and resources (including multicultural and multilingual) to support educators' teaching and students' learning;

3.1.6   Facilitate positive engagement in learning, using a variety of resources to support students socially and emotionally, and to improve academic performance;

3.1.7   Ensure that race, ethnicity, multilingualism, disabilities, and other diverse characteristics are assets and resources in classroom activities reinforcing and modeling what encounters students will have throughout their lives;

3.1.8   Share effective charter, virtual, and traditional public-school innovations to improve the educational system at large.

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3.2   Innovative and Culturally Responsive Practices/Processes for Assessment of Learning

3.2.1   Integrate multiple measures (traditional tests and performance assessments) that are culturally and linguistically appropriate to inform teaching and measure learning outcomes (formative and summative evaluations);

3.2.2   Incorporate student evaluation on student academic/learning progress;

3.2.3   Assess school-wide accomplishments using benchmarks that show progress toward achieving the school district's mission, outcomes, and core values, as well as academics;

3.2.4   Involve all stakeholder groups in the assessment process (students, teachers, parents and administrators), with emphasis on how to make the curriculum and learning environment more equitable/inclusive;

3.2.5   Ensure that methods for including stakeholders in the assessment process are engaging and inclusive for all ethnic groups that are represented in the school population and that build on celebration of student growth.

3.3   Early Childhood Education and Care (birth-grade 3, families, and communities)

3.3.1   Fund sufficiently a broad base of social service agencies, providers, and schools to foster the development of children from birth to age five and prepare them for success in school and life;

3.3.2   Provide early childhood care providers access to resources that are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate through professional and cross-agency partnerships;

3.3.3   Support parents, families, and communities with online, home and other alternative family education;

3.3.4   Emphasize holistic development of preschoolers through programming that supports social, emotional, cognitive, and physical learning;

3.3.5   Provide programs that encourage increased family involvement in the education of their children.

3.4   Graduation Readiness and Post-Secondary Education

3.4.1   Prepare students to successfully enter the workforce and/or acquire a postsecondary education that includes public career-technical, community college, undergraduate, and graduate institutions;

3.4.2   Prepare students for increasingly challenging academic work and explain graduation standards and expectations;

3.4.3   Provide information to middle school and high school students and families regarding academic and financial issues related to attending postsecondary education institutions, including the variety of options and dual credit;

3.4.4   Monitor data for student success in the work place or secondary education and make appropriate applicable structural and curricular adjustments based on the data;

3.4.5   Prepare all students to be successful in a global society by offering and promoting multiple modern language programs in addition to English.

3.5   School Climate

3.5.1   Promote practices that lead to physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being;

3.5.2   Develop healthy lifestyle practices, cultural- and self-understanding, skills in conflict resolutions, stress management, and teamwork;

3.5.3   Ensure a positive, healthy school climate built on relationships with participants including, but not limited to, crime/violence and suicide prevention;

3.5.4   Maintain and use health and social service teams in the schools, with referrals to appropriate community agencies when needed, to identify and work with students and their parents or caregivers.

4.   NONTRADITIONAL SCHOOLS

4.1   Community Schools

4.1.1   Promote powerful student and family engagement;

4.1.2   Encourage collaborative leadership, shared power and voice;

4.1.3   Ensure expanded and culturally enriched learning opportunities;

4.1.4   Provide integrated systems of support by investing in partnerships among other schools, colleges, businesses, hospitals, law enforcement, and communities-at-large that can share human and financial resources;

4.1.5   Provide rigorous community-connected classroom instruction;

4.1.6   Develop a culture of belonging, safety, and care;

4.1.7   Engage individuals in organizational or community problem solving;

4.1.8   Support out-of-school resources for housing, food security, safety, high-quality child care, health, and social services outside of school hours.

4.2   Virtual Schools, Early College, and Alternative Schools

4.2.1   Establish equitable and transparent processes of selecting students to develop a diverse student population;

4.2.2   Develop strategies to foster inclusivity, student-to-student relationships, and student-to-teacher communication;

4.2.3   Offer flexible schedules/calendars and non-traditional course options to fulfill student needs;

4.2.4   Support transitions from one type of school to another, as well as to post-secondary education and/or the work place.

4.3   Public Charter Schools

4.3.1   Offer teaching and learning innovations;

4.3.2   Ensure the appropriate oversight agency monitors fiscal accountability and includes public input into school-based decisions;

4.3.3   Hold charter schools to the same culturally and linguistically relevant standards as traditional public schools in preparing students for college and careers.

4.4   Home Schools

4.4.1   Support students and parents who opt for home schooling;

4.4.2   Support home schooled students who choose to participate in public school classes and extracurricular activities as prescribed under state statutes.

5.   COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

5.1   Collaborate with all sectors of the community, including physical and mental health, to improve public education at all levels;

5.2   Engage all stakeholder groups in the community (e.g., students, teachers, parents, and administrators) to carry out the school district's mission statement and core values at the school level;

5.3   Seek business cooperation in offering work schedules that support school attendance;

5.4   Ask businesses and community organizations to provide support and find work or service opportunities for students, to create incentives to encourage students to develop career skills and graduate from high school and post-secondary institutions;

5.5   Implement programs that increase the engagement of families in the education of students at all grade levels;

5.6   Develop partnerships in order to provide expanded and enriched learning opportunities, student health and social services, active family and community engagement, and collaborative leadership practices.

6.   PUBLIC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT, GUIDANCE, AND FUNDING

6.1   Boards of Education

6.1.1   Foster a multi-cultural environment of respect, equity, and inclusivity;

6.1.2   Hire and evaluate a superintendent (or charter school lead administrator) who effectively manages the schools, provides teaching-learning leadership, and who develops engaging relationships among all stakeholders;

6.1.3   Add an ex-officio student member to the School Board;

6.1.4   Be cognizant of state-mandated roles and responsibilities with regard to relationships with school personnel and/or operations of the district/school;

6.1.5   Provide high expectations to attract, hire and retain quality educators and staff;

6.1.6 Encourage a shared decision-making process with staff, parents, students, and the public in implementing and attaining Board goals;

6.1.7 Be fiscally accountable and honest stewards of taxpayer dollars;

6.1.8 Ensure adequate funding to make school facilities and learning environments safe and adequately serve students;

6.1.9 Maintain open dialogue with the public, New Mexico's congressional delegation, New Mexico legislators, area tribal leaders, NM School Boards Association, the New Mexico Public Education Department Secretary, NM universities and colleges, educational organizations, area charter schools, local governmental agencies, parent-school organizations, the local business community, and other entities that impact the success of schools and students.

6.2   New Mexico Public Education Department (PED)

6.2.1 Provide support and guidance to all school districts, state-approved charter schools, and home schools with professionalism and clear directions;

6.2.2 Keep students, staff, and families as top priorities when making policies regarding funding; research-based teaching, learning, monitoring, and assessment practices; and school-community connections;

6.2.3 Hold school districts accountable for the expenditure of state and federal funding and for implementing and following all school reporting requirements;

6.2.4 Provide direction and support when monitoring: districts' academic outcomes and growth, mandates outlined in state statutes, regulations, and guidelines, implementation of corrections needed as outlined in the Yazzie/Martinez v. State of NM decision;

6.2.5 Ensure comprehensive support, including funding, to all districts to serve diverse learners — multicultural/emerging bilinguals, special needs, remote/online learners, those living in poverty, those having advanced academic skills, social-emotional and/or behavioral health skills, and living on tribal lands;

6.2.6 Monitor and study enrollment trends, retention and graduation rates, and dropout rates from pre-kindergarten programs through high school in order to determine the most appropriate remedies;

6.2.7 Recruit, hire, and retain a diverse PED workforce who are highly qualified, culturally sensitive, hold current and appropriate educational licenses, and are evaluated in accordance with state statutes;

6.2.8 Research and evaluate changes for continuous improvement of results;

6.2.9 Collaborate and offer training to educational organizations and local School Boards of Education;

6.2.10 Maintain open and honest communication, and be transparent in all matters with the Governor, legislators, members of the Legislative Finance Council, Legislative Education Study Committee, Public Education Commission, Public School Capital Outlay Council, local Boards of Education, other education-related agencies, and the public;

6.2.11 Provide current information and data related to all aspects and demographics of the department and data collected from school districts, and maintain up-to-date information and data through all NMPED portals;

6.2.12 Monitor other states for best practices and adopt those that will benefit local educational institutions, staff, and students.

6.3   Finances and Funding

6.3.1 Compensate professional educators with salaries that are competitive with other states to retain well-qualified, diverse teachers, support personnel, and administrators;

6.3.2 Ensure accountability, transparency, and equity are addressed in the use of public funds for education;

6.3.3 Support sufficient funding and a system of accountability for a high-quality equitable educational system for all students;

6.3.4 Fund charter, alternative, community, and virtual schools equitably with traditional schools;

6.3.5 Ensure local school boards are equitably distributing local, state, and federal funding to address every student's needs;

6.3.6 Fund internet services, broadband, and digital technology infrastructure to support students in high-quality online, hybrid, and remote learning;

6.3.7 Fund career-technical programs and magnet programs/schools in accordance with their increased costs;

6.3.8   Fund programs that support successful transitions from high school to postsecondary education, careers, and work, including dual-credit classes;

6.3.9   Fund in each school, social workers, health care providers, and career counselors as professional educators as recommended by research-based practices;

6.3.10   Fund all state and federal mandates fully so as not to place an undue burden on school district budgets;

6.3.11   Fund public post-secondary education to sufficiently support program offerings, student needs, and appropriate staffing that have a direct relationship to PreK-12 education;

6.3.12   Fund dual-credit or online learning for students who have exhausted opportunities in their local high school;

6.3.13   Fund scholarships, low-interest loans, and loans-for-service to incentivize students' completion of post-secondary degrees and certificates.