

Group 7 - LWVOR and LWVPDX PROGRAM PLANNING 2021-22

Children's issues, teenage girls at risk, child care, education funding, universal pre-K, Kathy Casto and Audrey Zunkel-deCoursey, co-discussion leaders, Monday, January 25, 2021, at 1 pm

LWVOR POSITIONS

Governance - Fiscal Policy-tax System - School district financing
under Social policy - Child care
Children at risk

LWVPDX POSITIONS

under Education - Public School Districts in Portland
under Education - School funding, p7 (2011)
under Social policy - Teenage girls at risk, p 9 (1995)
no PDX position on child care (We use the LWVOR position)

If there is a topic for which there is no LWVUS, LWVOR or LWVPDX position, the League cannot advocate for public policy changes on that topic. If your group believes we need a position on a topic, you may suggest a study or concurrence with a position from another state or local League. A study, restudy or concurrence must be approved by the membership before it is adopted.

Members also may want to join or contribute to the LWVPDX Interest Group on Education, or form a separate Interest Group on other children's issues, or present an educational event on these or other public policy topics.

Ballot measure 26-214 passed on November 3, 2020, for Universal Pre-K:

Establishes "Preschool for All Program" providing up to six hours of tuition free, developmentally appropriate learning, reflecting best practices. Mis delivery model; half-day, full-day, year-round, school-year schedule options. All three, four year olds with parent, legal guardian residing in County eligible. Equitable access to people of color, historically marginalized communities. Before, aftercare for qualifying incomes. Board to establish provider credentialing requirements, compensating matrix including teacher pay on par with kindergarten teachers, assistants paid \$19.91 per hour in 2022 with adjustments. County neutral on representation, collective bargaining on provider labor relations.

New tax on County residents and taxable income derived within County funds Program: 1.5 percent tax on taxable income over \$125,000 (single) and \$200,000(joint), increasing to 2.3 percent tax January 1, 2026; additional 1.5 percent tax of taxable income over \$250,000 (single) and \$400,000 (joint).

Administration by County Human Services Program), Chief Financial Officer (Tax). Establishes a Board appointed advisory committee for oversight, policy recommendation. Independent

performance audits. Other provisions.

LWVOR and LWVPDX POSITIONS

CHILD CARE Adopted March 1989

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that child care is a social and economic issue that reaches beyond the family into the community. Quality child care needs to be available, accessible and affordable to all families for children of all ages and with differing needs.

- A) The League of Women Voters supports a diverse child care system to accommodate different parental choices and needs. Such a system may include day care centers, group homes, and family day care homes.
 - 1) The State of Oregon should establish appropriate standards to ensure that high quality care exists in all settings. For centers and group homes: these standards should address facilities, staff qualifications, and number of children served. Program, parent/care giver communication, administration and transportation should be included for centers and may also be considered for group homes. There should be flexible guidelines for family day care homes because of the unique character of these facilities.
 - 2) The State of Oregon should enforce mandatory regulations by funding a sufficient number of inspectors.
 - 3) The State of Oregon should set requirements for adequate training for care givers and ensure those training opportunities are available. This could include state provision of training and/or state incentives for others to provide training.
 - 4) City and county governments should participate in enforcing health and fire standards.
- B) Affordable child care should be available and accessible for children with differing needs and in various age groups.
 - 1) While parents have the primary responsibility for choosing child care, a coordinated effort between parents and government, together with providers, employers, and private groups is necessary to deliver quality child care at an affordable price.
 - 2) The State of Oregon should:
 - a) Provide financial assistance for child care expenses to low- and middle-income families based on need. Such assistance could include tax credits for parents with a ceiling based on income.
 - b) Support resource and referral programs.
 - c) Encourage employer involvement in the child care system.
 - d) Encourage development of school-age child care programs.
 - 3) Parents in job training, in school, with special-needs children and/or needing respite care services should be eligible for financial assistance for child care based on demonstrated need.

Child care givers should be awarded recognition commensurate with their responsibilities. The State of Oregon should take a leadership role in elevating the professional status of child care givers and ensuring adequate compensation.

National Position (adopted in 1988): “Support programs, services and policies at all levels of government to expand the supply of affordable, quality child care for all who need it, in order to increase access to employment and to prevent and reduce poverty.”

Children at Risk

LWVOR Adopted January 1995

1. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports comprehensive statewide, locally based programs and services for teen pregnancy prevention and for teenage parents. Such programs and services should include elements of the following:
 - family planning services,
 - school-based health centers,
 - parenting skills’ education,
 - cooperation/coordination among agencies providing services,
 - evaluation and accountability measurements,
 - easy and appropriate access to information and services,
 - mentoring and counseling for teenagers and their parents, including peer counseling,
 - community involvement and support groups,
 - abuse prevention,
 - male responsibility in teen pregnancy prevention,
 - broad public education, and
2. The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes the state should have the primary responsibility for funding programs addressing teenage pregnancy prevention and teen parenting. Elements to be included, but not limited to, are:
 - equitable funding of programs for young women and young men,
 - adequate funding for state agencies with responsibilities to children,
 - cooperative efforts with the private sector,
 - funds earmarked for community programs, urban and rural, which provide after school and weekend activities for teens, and
 - shared funding responsibility, when appropriate, among state, local and private sources.
3. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports development of required curriculum for all school districts relative to teen pregnancy and parenting, accompanied by implementation requirements, which covers, but is not limited to,

the following areas:

- comprehensive, age-appropriate family life sexuality education K-12,
 - parenting skills education,
 - specialized education programs for pregnant teens and teenage parents, and
 - teacher training at the baccalaureate level and as continuing education.
4. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports programs directed to assist pregnant teens and teen parents. These programs include the following:
- job training and adequate wages,
 - involvement and financial support requirements for fathers,
 - counseling to break the cycles of abuse, poverty, and teen pregnancy,
 - health care, including prenatal care,
 - accessible, affordable housing,
 - child care,
 - transportation access,
 - completion of secondary education, and
 - self-esteem enhancement, career opportunities, and transition to self-sufficiency.

Updated Position on Children at Risk

LWVOR Adopted 2015

In the Spring of 2015, League members throughout Oregon studied early childhood education, discussed consensus questions posed by the LWVOR study committee, and submitted their views to the state League. Those views were combined to formulate the following position, which can now be used for advocacy by local Leagues as well as the LWVOR Action Team.

LWVOR Children at Risk Position Statement: The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that the early years of a child's life are crucial in building the foundation for educational attainment and greatly impact success or failure in later life. Early intervention and prevention measures are effective in helping children reach their full potential. The League supports policies, programs, and funding at all levels of the community and government that promote the well-being, encourage the full development, and ensure the safety of all children. These include:

- Nutrition and food access for vulnerable children and families
- Access to affordable, safe, and stable housing
- Early screening (physical, dental, mental, and behavioral) for all children; early prenatal care and ongoing health care for children (physical, mental, dental)
- Access to affordable, quality child care (see LWVOR Child Care position) Access

to early literacy and pre-school programs, including but not limited to Early Head Start and Head Start

- Programs for mental health and addictions treatment for parents
 - Family support, including but not limited to home visiting, parenting classes, and family relief nurseries
 - Comprehensive services for children with developmental and cognitive disabilities
 - Use of evidence-based practices in child welfare and foster care
 - Programs to reduce poverty by providing parents with assistance in job training and education
- Policies and legislation to reduce racial or ethnic minority status inequities

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that governments, at all levels, have a responsibility to oversee and coordinate a comprehensive network of services to maximize children's readiness to be successful in school while optimizing available resources.

National Position, adopted 1994: The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that early intervention and prevention measures are effective in helping children reach their full potential. The League supports policies and programs at all levels of the community and government that promote the wellbeing, encourage the full development and ensure the safety of all children. These include:

- child abuse/neglect prevention;
- teen pregnancy prevention;
- quality health care, including nutrition and prenatal care;
- early childhood education;
- developmental services, emphasizing children ages 0-3;
- family support services;
- violence prevention.

Teenage Girls at Risk

LWVPDX (1995)

The League of Women Voters of Portland, Oregon supports equal access to appropriate services for at risk girls and boys. These services should be comprehensive in nature and should include outreach, treatment and follow-up. We support:

- Appropriate services that include consideration of gender, developmental phase, intellectual capacity, cultural identification, sexual orientation, as well as mental and physical clinical considerations.
- A comprehensive service directory plan that includes outreach, emergency services, case management, individual and family counseling, housing and

follow-up. Effectiveness of these programs should be evaluated periodically.

- Emphasis on early detection and prevention of child abuse.
- The teaching of parenting skills.
- Strategies to prevent teenage pregnancy which include the following:
school-based health centers, sex education programs, teacher training, and the availability of a range of contraceptives at the school-based health clinics.
- Group homes and improved foster care for youth under age 16 in need of housing. Group homes as part of transition services for youth leaving residential treatment programs.
- Gender specific drug and alcohol treatment programs.

Exemptions to the General Property Tax. (Section 2)

LWVOR Updated 1999

School District Financing. The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes:

1. The major portion of the cost of public schools should be borne by the state.
2. The state should provide sufficient funds to give each child an equal, adequate education.
3. All specifically state mandated programs should be financed by the state.
4. Local districts should be allowed funding alternatives to provide educational programs.
5. Apart from state mandates, local control of the educational programs should be maintained.
6. A stable state system for financing public schools is crucial for long range planning.

School Funding

LWVPDX (2011, 2000)

The League supports adequate and sufficient funding of public education with public money. While the League of Women Voters of Portland recognizes that the major responsibility for funding public schools has shifted to the state level, the League supports local measures when necessary to ensure quality education.

Therefore, the League supports:

1. Using local taxes such as local property tax and business income taxes to augment the funding provided by the State.
2. Using grants and other temporary funding for professional development, pilot

projects, or for other one-time needs.

3. Using a combination of local, state, federal or private sources of funding for special education for the gifted and physically, emotionally, and mentally challenged students.
4. Allowing private funds to be raised in support of individual schools, provided those funds are shared across the district in an equitable and transparent manner.
5. Tracking and making available to the public information in an understandable format, including class size, per-pupil expenditures, costs for educating special-needs students, or other cost data.
6. Employing the services of a chief financial officer to provide strong, transparent fiscal leadership.
7. Participation by local schools and their communities in budget discussions via site-based management.

EDUCATION - Public School Districts in Portland

LWVPDX (2011, 2006 revised, 1980, 1979, 1976, 1975, 1973, 1972, 1971, 1969, 1968)

The League of Women Voters believes that public schools should provide a quality education for all children to develop the greatest potential in each individual, and that public education is critical to the success of our city.

Therefore, the League supports:

1. A quality basic education provided for all students, with services available in an equitable way so that all students have access to comparable services, regardless of circumstances such as income, race, ethnicity, geographical location, or family background.
2. Programs or services provided by districts which offer an alternate approach or focus for students with different learning needs, including a strong mix of off-site and on-site vocational education programs.
3. Teacher evaluation that improves teaching quality and student learning.
4. Grade organization that is determined by a number of factors, including evidence-based research, student needs, logistical impacts, and community input.
5. Adherence to set school boundaries with few exceptions, which may be based on educational, emotional, behavioral, or medical criteria, and offering all students access to a consistent and broad spectrum of classes.
6. Creative approaches to achieve diversity in school populations.
7. Changes in the school education structure (use of buildings) which positively affect the quality of education and which take into consideration the preservation of neighborhoods and the needs of the community.
8. Adequate physical facilities, with buildings and all facilities meeting state and local standards.

9. School districts' decisions on future use of land and buildings based on a plan that takes into account population projections, physical conditions, land use designations, and community needs, with coordination between the City of Portland's Comprehensive Plan and relevant infrastructure facility plans.

10. Effort made to generate income to offset the costs of maintaining desirable underused facilities. Public announcements of all district facility plans, including all underused or not-in-use facilities, with adequate information and opportunity for public discussion and participation in the decision-making.

For reference - not for recommendations

HOMELESS YOUTH

LWVOR Adopted 2007

Parents are legally responsible for their children. When parents are unable to fulfill that responsibility, the League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that communities and governments at all levels have a responsibility to provide programs and services to meet the needs of runaway and homeless youth. In order to help families stay together, prevent youth homelessness, and reduce the need for more expensive future services, the LWVOR supports providing services such as family crisis counseling, child care, parenting education, mental health and addiction treatment, low-cost housing, and health care. When youth are separated from their families, the LWVOR supports providing services to these youth, such as shelter, food, education, health care, mental health and addiction treatment, plus outreach to encourage youth to use services. Older youth need additional services, such as assistance with independent living skills and with finding employment and more permanent housing. These services may be provided by government or by private organizations that receive government and/or private funding. Coordination of these services is necessary to avoid duplication and service gaps. Youth should be served regardless of their race, color, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability. All levels of government should have funding responsibility for preventive and supportive services to families and homeless youth. Private organizations are encouraged to provide funding and services. Government funds should be adequate and allocated according to demonstrated need. Agencies must show that their programs are effective.

Juvenile Justice

1. The general goals and characteristics of the juvenile justice system should be to:
 - Protect the public.
 - Stress programs for prevention, early intervention and treatment for delinquents and at-risk youth. These programs should provide care, guidance, treatment and control to promote the child's welfare.
 - Provide fair and impartial procedures.
 - Promote personal responsibility and accountability for one's delinquent acts.
 - Reform and rehabilitate offenders.
 - Promote swift and decisive intervention.
 - Maintain an open and accountable system.
 - Stress alternatives to detention or incarceration.
2. We believe that mandatory minimum sentencing for a broad range of juvenile crimes is not a desirable goal of the juvenile justice system. The justice system should have some flexibility to consider a youth's family circumstances and personal history. There should be guidelines for sentencing to encourage equal sentences for equal offenses, but these should not be mandatory.
3. We support the adoption of a "second look" concept for 15-to 17-year-olds convicted of Measure 11 offenses. The purpose of this "second look" should be to encourage rehabilitation. The decision to reduce a sentence should be made in a court hearing before a judge and based on testimony from a panel of professionals acquainted with the case.
4. Although the over-representation of minorities in the Multnomah County Juvenile Justice system is due in large part to societal problems, we agree with justice officials that the justice system should work to correct this imbalance in the following ways suggested by Krisberg and Austin in their publication *Reinventing Juvenile Justice*:
 - Increase the ethnic balance in law enforcement, probation and court agencies.
 - Require cultural sensitivity training for police, probation officers and judges.
 - Establish drug treatment programs and make them readily available.
 - Create job training and placement programs.
 - Increase involvement of minority communities in police work.
 - Establish family support services in minority communities.
 - Build mentoring programs for at-risk youth.
5. Services of the justice system, such as parent effectiveness classes, should be

extended to family members of youth involved with the justice system. Punishment of parents for the acts of their children should occur only after all other efforts have proved ineffective. An array of possible penalties in addition to financial fines should be available to provide a flexible response to gaining parental cooperation.

6. Youth under the age of 18 should not be subject to automatic waiver to adult court. Youth under 15 should be assumed incapable of understanding the legal system adequately to stand trial in adult court. All other juveniles should be evaluated for their competency to stand trial before being turned over to the adult court system.