

*The League of Women Voters of Arizona recognizes the inequities of the local school property tax.*

*Therefore, the League supports these measures:*

- Decrease reliance on the local school district property tax.
- Utilize statewide taxes for support of public school education.
- Require development impact fees to be paid to local school districts.
- Continue use of trust land monies.
- Maintain a policy of local control on spending decisions.
- New monies should be additional funds and not supplant present state funding.

*The League of Women Voters of Arizona also supports the following aspects of funding for public schools:*

- School districts in Arizona retain ability to bond for building or renovation of schools and for capital expenditures.
- School districts retain the ability to hold override elections.
- Bond and override elections are determined by a simple majority vote.
- Legislature levies taxes for schools by a simple majority vote.]
- Realistic allowances are made for inflation.
- Continued centralized collection and distribution of funding to local school districts enabling distribution of these funds to provide:
  - o a certain basic amount of money for each student,
  - o financing over and above the basic amount to ensure equal opportunity for each child,
  - o equal or equivalent maintenance of buildings,
  - o equal or equivalent supplies,
  - o strong leadership and quality teaching.

*The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports the principle that the governmental entity closest to the school district constituency can best make decisions that will enhance the equal educational opportunity of all students. Therefore, the League suggests these policies:*

- The state distributes public school funds equitably to school districts and set minimal general educational guidelines without inhibiting local decision making.
- Local school districts determine how funds are allocated in school district budgets.
- Citizen participation is essential, including funding and representative decision making. The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports policies and practices that encourage responsive government and informed citizen participation in the school district budgeting process. Therefore, the League supports the following:
  - The school district budget format should call for specific information, such as program detail, salary schedules, and capital improvement programs.
  - The school district budgeting schedule should include citizen input in time to allow for citizen influence on the allocation of funds in the budget.
  - Advisory committees, open to all citizens in the school district community, should provide citizen input into the budgetary process.

### **LWVUS Positions**

**Federal Role in Public Education.** Support federal policies that provide an equitable, quality public education for all children pre-K through grade 12.

## **LWVUS Principles**

The League of Women Voters believes that democratic government depends upon informed and active participation in government and requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible.

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

The League of Women Voters believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing, and coordination among the different agencies and levels of government.

The League of Women Voters believes that responsible government should be responsive to the will of the people; that government should maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation.....

## LWVUS Education Position

### Quality Education.

The 1974-76 LWVUS Program included the phrase "equal access to...quality education," reflecting League recognition that "equality" and "quality" are inseparable. However, the LWVUS has never undertaken a process for determining a common League definition of quality education that could serve as a basis for action nationwide. Therefore, when the definition of quality is a key factor in a state or local community, a local or state League must conduct its own study rather than relying on the LWVUS position to take action. Many Leagues that have member agreement on quality education in specific terms use their positions to support an array of local and state educational reforms. A number of Leagues have used this position to oppose private school vouchers. The LWVUS is a member of the National Coalition for Public Education, which opposes vouchers.

### Tuition Tax Credits.

The 1978 Convention directed the national board to oppose tax credits for families of children attending private elementary and secondary schools. Convention action was based on League support for equal access to education and support for desegregation as a means of promoting equal access. The League is concerned about the negative impact that tuition tax credits would have on the public schools by encouraging flight, particularly from desegregated schools. The League also supports federal efforts through Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulation to deny tax-exempt status to racially discriminatory "segregation academies."

### **LWVUS position on Resource Management:**

In 1972, Convention delegates voted to "evaluate land use policies and procedures and their relationship to human needs, population trends and ecological and socioeconomic factors." The three-year land-use study focused on achieving optimum balance between human needs and environmental quality. Members agreed in 1975 that land ownership implies responsibilities of stewardship and consideration of public and private rights. They concluded that every level of government should share responsibility for land planning and management, and that federal policies should enhance the capabilities of other levels

The League's Position Resource management decisions must be based on a thorough assessment of population growth and of current and future needs. The inherent characteristics and carrying capacities of each area's natural resources must be considered in the planning process.

To assure the future availability of essential resources, government policies must promote stewardship of natural resources. Policies that promote resource conservation are a fundamental part of such stewardship.

The League supports comprehensive long-range planning and believes that wise decision-making requires:

- adequate data and a framework within which alternatives may be weighed and intelligent decisions made;
- consideration of environmental, public health, social and economic impacts of proposed plans and actions;
- special responsibility by each level of government for those lands and resources entrusted to them;

Land Use:

The League supports:

- management of land as a finite resource not as a commodity, since land ownership, whether public or private, carries responsibility for stewardship....
- identification and regulation of areas impacted by public or private investment where siting results in secondary environmental and socioeconomic impacts;
- review of environmental, social and economic impacts of major public and private developments;