

## Education Committee Report – February 2025

Denise Gaumer Hutchison, Chair

The Education Committee wasn't able to meet in January due to a conflict with my work. If someone would like to be the chair of the Education Committee, please [email me](#). My work schedule is such that it is sometimes hard for me to plan the committee meetings and keep moving our activities forward. I will gladly share the committee leadership with anyone on the team.

Public education in NE Wisconsin is showing a lot of activity. We should all be closely monitoring federal action and identify potential webinars we can attend to stay informed. This is a budget year for the state of Wisconsin, which means fiscal support of public schools will be up for discussion AGAIN! The Wisconsin legislature has over \$4 billion dollars in reserves that could be supporting public schools throughout our state. Members will have opportunities to testify at joint finance regarding funding for public education and a number of other issues.

Our membership requested a keynote speaker in Green Bay to talk about school vouchers and their impact on our communities in the Greater Green Bay area. Dr. Suzanne Eckes from UW Madison's *Education Leadership & Policy Analysis* is willing to come make a presentation. She is available the following dates: March 13, 18, 19, 20, 31 and April 2, 10, 18, 30. Please let me know your thoughts on those dates, and we will invite her to come to Green Bay.

A number of school board elections are coming up in February for the primary and in April for the general election. Green Bay Area Public Schools and Howard Suamico will have primaries; the DePere districts will not. Wisconsin will also have a primary for Secretary, State Department of Public Instruction. One candidate is actively supporting charters and privatization. The two other candidates are the current secretary and a superintendent at a public school district in Southcentral Wisconsin. (Go to [VOTE 411](#) to see information about the candidates.)

Josh Cowan, author of *The Privateers*, was in Milwaukee last week talking about his book. Please remember Lynn Gerlach, one of the Education Committee members, read the book and wrote an extensive analysis of it, [which you can read here](#). It would be great for us to hear from her again about this book. You will see that the new federal administration is taking a very aggressive position on expanding vouchers to the detriment of our public schools. We will keep an eye on what is happening. Plan to attend the school board candidate forums for Green Bay and Howard Suamico in early March.

All of the public schools in NE Wisconsin have taken a wonderful position of protecting all the children who are attending our public schools.

The Supreme Court race is also going to be important for public education as there are some cases potentially headed to the Supreme Court. Again, we'll be keeping our eyes on these issues.

Hope you are planning on attending *Lively Issues* on February 22 at 10:30 a.m. at the Brown County Library main branch. We'll discuss all the topics the League is working on, and education will be one of them. Your input is so valuable.

In the meantime, be safe, be watchful, speak out where you are comfortable regarding the bad positions being taken on public education, and get ready for *I LOVE MY PUBLIC SCHOOLS WEEK*, February 24-28. See the "mark your calendar" section of the newsletter for the date and time of our next Education Committee meeting, which will be via Zoom.