



2404 N. Howard Street
Spokane WA 99205

24 February 2024

Board of Directors
Central Valley School District
2218 N. Molter Road
Liberty Lake WA 99019

Dear Board of Directors,

The League of Women Voters Spokane Area wishes to express our concern regarding Resolution 24-02 by which the Central Valley School District Board of Directors unanimously opposed two bills currently before the Washington State Legislature – SB 5462 and HB 2331.

HB 2331 adds a level of protection to instructional materials selected for students to study the cultural and experiential contributions of individuals or groups for whom discrimination is prohibited by law (RCW 28A.642.010 and 28A.640.010). Currently, across the United States, materials of this nature are under constant attack.

SB 5462 expands already existing requirements in Washington regarding curriculum to include “the histories, contributions, and perspectives of historically marginalized and underrepresented groups.” In some states today, legislatures are prohibiting the teaching and learning of the contributions of marginalized and underrepresented groups.

CVSD policies 2020 and 2021 referenced in Resolution 24-02 regarding instructional materials do not provide the level of protection HB 2331 seeks to establish. Therefore, Resolution 24-02 is misleading.

CVSD policies 3207 and 3210 referenced in Resolution 24-02 appear unrelated to instructional materials or curriculum, but deal with nondiscrimination and bullying. Although very

important, these two policies are largely irrelevant to a discussion of SB 5462 and HB 2331.

Furthermore, the LWVSA is concerned that:

– The CVSD Board deliberations related to these matters were made at a meeting of which the public was unaware, violating the spirit, if not the letter, of the open meetings law.

– The “foundational principles” of education in Washington state are not exclusively relegated to the local level as suggested in the first whereas clause of Resolution 24-02. RCW 28A.150.070 states, “The administration of the public school system shall be entrusted to such state and local officials, boards, and committees as the state Constitution and the laws of the state shall provide.”

– Reference in Resolution 24-02 to RCW 28A.150.230(2)(f) fails to recognize that local control must be “consistent with law and rules of the superintendent of public instruction”.

– We noticed an apparent contradiction in the assertions that CVSD already meets the requirements of these proposed bills, and that meeting the requirements of new legislation would place a financial burden on the district.

– The argument about “state overreach” is concerning. The state is responsible for ensuring that the educational needs of all students in the state are met.

– The statement in the letter accompanying Resolution 24-02 that passage of SB 5462 and HB 2331 would “divide” the CVSD community is not, to our awareness, based on any public process to find out what community members actually think about these bills.

Altogether, the statements made in Resolution 24-02 give misleading interpretations of both CVSD policies and Washington state law. The LWVSA believes the CVSD community and state legislators are entitled to accurate information.

Respectfully,

Jean Richardson
President, League of Women Voters Spokane Area

cc Catherine Ahl, LWVWA Issue Chair – Education

LWV positions supporting our expression of concern include:

Washington state position on education: The LWVWA Program in Action lists the following positions on K-12 public education:

- The state has the responsibility to determine uniform educational standards and to provide ample and equal opportunity for education. (K-12-1)
- The state has the responsibility for amply funding both education and those social services needed to ensure that every child, regardless of race, color, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or disability, is ready to learn and safe in his or her educational environment. (K-12-2)
- All programs mandated by the legislature should be fully funded by the state. (K-12-3)
- Citizen participation should be encouraged at all levels. (K-12- 8)

FROM: League of Women Voters Washington. *2024 Issue Paper: Education.* [https://lwvwa.org/resources/Documents/2024IssuePapers/2024 Issue Paper - Education.pdf](https://lwvwa.org/resources/Documents/2024IssuePapers/2024%20Issue%20Paper%20-%20Education.pdf) Accessed 2/21/2024.

National positions on education (relevant excerpts): The League of Women Voters believes that an equitable, quality public education is critical for students. While the League recognizes that there are instances where the federal government's involvement is the only way to achieve universal change (e.g., desegregation, special needs population, gender equity), we also recognize that primary responsibility for public education resides with the states. In accordance with the League of Women Voters' position on Equal Rights, the League continues to support equity in public education for all through:

- Broad guidelines for accountability, leaving implementation to the state and local education agencies.
- Adequate funding for sources that support the broad goals of national standards.

- Mechanisms for local and state funding with adequate federal support for mandates that require less- burdensome, compliance-based reporting and regulations.

FROM: League of Women Voters. *National League: Impact On Issues 2022-2024*. https://www.lwv.org/sites/default/files/2023-02/LWV_ImpactOnIssues2022-2024.pdf page. 133. Accessed 2/21/2024.

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.

FROM: League of Women Voters. *Principles*. https://www.lwv.org/sites/default/files/2018-05/impact_on_issues_2016-2018_principles.pdf Accessed 2/26/2024.

National position on open meetings (relevant excerpt): "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."

FROM: League of Women Voters. *Principles*. https://www.lwv.org/sites/default/files/2018-05/impact_on_issues_2016-2018_principles.pdf Accessed 2/26/2024.