



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF DELAWARE

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PRESENTATION TO
THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
ON THE FY 21 BUDGET REQUEST
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NOVEMBER 2019

The League of Women Voters follows the functioning of our public schools, as we advocate for access to a high quality and appropriate education for all students.

We call your attention to three issues: First, the supplemental funding for K -3 students who need “basic special education”. Epilogue language in the FY 2020 Budget provides a limited amount of funds for such students, and we urge that at least the same – but preferably more - be included in the Governor’s Recommended FY 2021 budget. The amount available during the current year is inadequate – although it is better than no funding at all, and we applaud that. A significant body of research shows that early intervention can enable these children to take their first step on the pathway to success.

Second, we think that the FY20 Opportunity Funding constitutes progress in the right direction. However, this funding is not recurring and only provides an additional \$500 per English learner and \$300 per low-income student, or about 2-3% more per student. Research suggests that this amount needs to be 100% to 200% more. We would like these amounts to increase and become part of the recurring funding system.

Third, we support wellness clinics in high-need elementary schools. The FY2020 Budget funded one or two such clinics, but **every** “high-need” elementary school should have a clinic. On-site medical staff can offer children immediate care – care that many of them would not otherwise get until they need to go to an emergency room.

We hope to see additional funding in the Governor’s Recommended FY 2021 budget for these issues. We believe such funding will put these children on a pathway to prosperity instead of a pathway to poverty.

On behalf of the League, I thank you for making education a high priority and for investing in programs to ensure that all Delaware students have access to the necessary early steps on the pathway to success.