



THE VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CENTRAL YAVAPAI COUNTY

LWVCYC@gmail.com P. O. Box 11538, Prescott, AZ 86304-1538 October 2011

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League of Women Voters of Central Yavapai County

Presents

The Role of Federal Government in Education - A National Study Part I: Common Core Standards & Assessments

Saturday, October 8, 2011
9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Las Fuentes Resort Village
1035 Scott Drive, Prescott, AZ 86301

- What are the pros & cons of having National Common Core Standards?
- What is a norm assessment vs. a holistic assessment?
- What is the effect of mandated vs. voluntary programs?
- What are the pros & cons of a national curriculum?
- What happens to those who do not meet core standards?



LWVCYC Website: <http://centrallyavapai.az.lwvnet.org>

President's Message



Greetings members – I know you are out there, but we were woefully underrepresented at our educational and stimulating September general meeting on Charter Schools. A lot of you were travelling; however, that does not account for the noticeable lack of participation by our members. We don't expect you to attend every general meeting, but it sure would be good to have twice as many members at each one of those meetings.

So, with that in mind, please mark your calendars for October 8 and November 12 to attend a two part LWVUS program study on the role of the Federal government in K-12 education. Alice Harris has done an amazing job of putting together an active committee and steering the group in the right direction. We need you to be there to give this study the consideration that it should have.

Don't forget another special Meet and Greet event on Wednesday, December 7. Last year we had 40 nonprofit organizations set up displays at tables, and share their stories with those in attendance. This is a special opportunity to meet with local elected officials who are always included in the mix.

Please stay involved – we need your support.

Vicky McLane

LWVUS Study: The Role of Federal Government in Public Education

Our October and November general meetings will be devoted to the topic of the federal role in public education. The study focuses on pre-K through grade 12 public education and is limited to issues of equity, funding and standards/assessment. Our meeting in October will focus on the first part of this national study, the issue of common core standards.

There will be speakers from our local education community providing information on the following questions:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of having national common core standards?
- What happens to students who do not meet common core standards?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of a national curriculum?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of using assessment data to award or sanction schools or teachers?
- What are the effects of mandated versus voluntary programs?

During the second part of the meeting you will have a chance to make decisions with regard to the consensus questions, which are also included in this Voter.

Background study materials from LWVUS were emailed to you on Sept. 11, and are again attached to this newsletter. **For those without email**, you may read the materials online at the library from our website: google LWVCYC, go to website, click on "STUDIES," click on "The Role of the Federal Government in Education." In addition our study committee prepared some additional background information, which follow.

Alice Harris

Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Congress passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 on April 9, 1965, as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's "War on Poverty."

American leaders began discussions on improving the educational system during the Truman, Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations as the Cold War pressed the need to make certain that American students were competitive with those in other countries. President Kennedy developed proposals to ensure every American was to receive a good education, regardless of religious, racial or class background. During Johnson's tenure the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed, and the ESEA addressed the educational issues of that Act.

Congress has reauthorized the ESEA several times since its initial passage, most recently in 2002. The law consists of five titles providing funding to 90 percent of the nation's public and parochial schools.

Title I	Provides funding and guidelines for educating "educationally disadvantaged" children. These programs are intended to meet the special educational needs of "educationally deprived" children and school districts with high concentrations of such students, who typically are from poor families.
Title II	Provides money to purchase library materials and audio/visual equipment. Title II also includes a provision stating that the government can have no say in what specific materials libraries purchase.
Title III	Provides funding for programs designed to meet the educational needs of students "at risk" of school failure, including after-school, radio and television, counseling, and foreign language programs.
Title IV	Provides funding for college and university research on education.
Title V	Provides funding to individual departments of education.

Terri Farneti

Race to the Top

Beginning in 2010, the Obama Administration presented states with a challenge and opportunity to compete in a federal based reward program called "Race to the Top." This program was specifically designed to encourage education reform and to embrace innovative approaches to teaching and learning in America's schools. Backed by a \$4.35 billion investment, the goal is to help prepare our students to graduate ready for college and career, and to enable them to out-compete any worker, anywhere in the world.

According to whitehouse.gov, the reform areas predominately emphasized in the Race to the Top program include the following:

1. Designing and implementing rigorous standards and high quality assessments:
Accomplished as states work together toward a system of common academic standards that build toward college and career readiness.

2. Attracting and keeping great teachers and leaders in America’s classrooms: Accomplished by expanding effective support to teachers and principals, reforming and improving teacher preparation, revising teacher evaluation, compensation and retention policies, and working to ensure that highly talented teachers are placed in the schools where they are needed most.

3. Supporting data systems that inform decisions and improve instruction: Accomplished by implementing a statewide longitudinal data system, assessing and using data to guide instruction and making data accessible to key educators.

4. Using innovation and effective approaches to turn around struggling schools: Accomplished by asking states to prioritize and change persistently low-performing schools.

5. Demonstrating and sustaining education reform: Accomplished by promoting collaborations between business leaders, educators and other stakeholders to raise student achievement, expanding the support for high-performing public charter schools, re-energizing math and science curriculum, and promoting other situations favorable for innovation and reform.

Since its initiation in 2010, the U.S. Department of Education has received numerous responses and comments regarding the outcome of this challenging reform program. All comments regarding Race to the Top can be viewed at www.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/index.html.

Juliana Goswick

Definitions of Key Assessment Terms:

1. **Criterion-referenced assessments** are designed to measure a student’s learning of specific information or tasks. The specific information is the criteria. For example, a traditional, multiple-choice math test where a student receives 100% for getting all the answers correct is a criterion-referenced test.
2. **Norm-referenced assessments** measure a student’s performance in relation to the performance of a known group of peers. The Iowa tests are an example of a norm-referenced assessment. If a child scores in the 98th percentile in math on the Iowa test that does not mean the child got 98% of the answers correct. It means they scored as well or better than 98% of the children taking the same test.
3. **Portfolio assessments** are collections of teacher observations and student work that show how a student is progressing in their learning. Portfolios are created over time and are used to highlight a student’s strengths and their areas for growth.
4. **Holistic assessments** look at the whole picture of what is being assessed. Specific skills are not targeted as the only aspects to be assessed. A middle-school science teacher who does not consider grammar and punctuation when grading a research paper is not grading holistically. A PhD student’s research, doctoral thesis, and subsequent defense of the thesis could be considered a holistic assessment.

Samples of the Common Core Standards:

Grade	Subject	Standard
1	Reading – Process of Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes). • Distinguish long from short vowel sounds in spoken single-syllable words. • Orally produce single-syllable words by blending sounds (phonemes), including consonant blends. • Isolate and pronounce initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in spoken single-syllable words. • Segment spoken single-syllable words into their complete sequence of individual sounds (phonemes).
4	Math – Algebraic Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find all factor pairs for a whole number in the range 1–100. Recognize that a whole number is a multiple of each of its factors. Determine whether a given whole number in the range 1–100 is a multiple of a given one-digit number. Determine whether a given whole number in the range 1–100 is prime or composite.
Middle School (6-8)	Reading - Informational Texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate quantitative or technical information expressed in words in a text with a version of that information expressed visually (e.g., in a flowchart, diagram, model, graph, or table). • Distinguish among facts, reasoned judgment based on research findings, and speculation in a text. • Compare and contrast the information gained from experiments, simulations, video, or multimedia sources with that gained from reading a text on the same topic.
High School (9-12)	Math – Trigonometry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Derive the formula $A = 1/2 ab \sin(C)$ for the area of a triangle by drawing an auxiliary line from a vertex perpendicular to the opposite side. • Prove the Laws of Sines and Cosines and use them to solve problems. • Understand and apply the Law of Sines and the Law of Cosines to find unknown measurements in right and non-right triangles (e.g., surveying problems, resultant forces).

The standards listed are not all the standards found in the listed subject area for the grade identified. They are only a sample of what is on the entire list.

Anne Jacobson

CONSENSUS QUESTIONS

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE U.S.

The Role of Federal Government in Public Education 2011

Common Core Standards

4. Currently the governors and state education officers have developed Common Core Standards that are national but not federal. Should the standards be mandated of the states in order to obtain federal funding? (Choose one)
- Special grant programs such as Race to the Top
 - All programs under Elementary and Secondary Education Act where the needs qualify for funding.
 - All programs receiving federal funding from any source
 - All of the above
 - None of the above
5. Should there be a national assessment aligned with the common cores standards?
Yes / No
- If Yes**, Should implementation be voluntary or federally mandated? (Choose one)
 - Voluntary
 - Mandated
 - Mandated, if fully funded
 - If No**, what other accountability measures might you suggest? (choose one)
 - Continue to allow the states to develop their own assessments.
 - Suggest that the local education districts use their own assessments or adopt one that is a nationally norm-referenced assessment such as the Stanford Achievement Test or Iowa Test of Basic Skills.
 - Suggest that districts use a portfolio type of assessment where student projects and activities would be scored holistically.
6. National standards should lead to: (choose one)
- A nationally mandated curriculum to be aligned to the national standards and assessments.
 - A national curriculum that is only suggested but not mandated.
 - A suggested structure for states and local education agencies to develop their own curriculum.
 - No national curriculum.
7. What role should the national assessment consortia play in student evaluation? (Rank order)
- Provide an assessment system that is aligned to the Common Core Standards.
 - Provide comparison data showing progress toward reaching Common Core Standards.
 - Provide criteria for determining readiness for college and careers.
 - Provide information to students, parents, teachers and school districts about student achievement.
 - Provide diagnostic information on each child.

8. Data from the national assessments are often difficult for parents, teachers and others to understand. If we have a national assessment, what information is most important to be reported to parents, teachers, students and the community? (choose one)
 - a. Data should be “norm referenced” (where students are ranked) for district comparison only.
 - b. Data should be “criterion referenced” and clearly informative so that teachers, parents, and students know how individual students have mastered criteria established at a national level.
 - c. Data should be used to determine “cut” scores knowing if students have mastered requirements for special grade levels.

9. Information from nationally required assessment data should be used to (Choose one):
 - a. Sanction schools not measuring up to the specific levels
 - b. Reward schools that achieve high scores
 - c. Rank teachers based on student test score data
 - d. Reward teachers who have exemplary scores
 - e. Inform districts how their population compares to others similar to theirs.

General Questions

1. The current role of the federal government in public education is
 Much too small too small about right too large much too large

2. What should be the role of the federal government in public education? (Rank)
 - a. To ensure that all students preK-12 receive a quality education.
 - b. To develop accountability measures that will study the progress of all students so that they achieve adequate yearly progress.
 - c. To mandate Common Core Standards for all students K-12.
 - d. To monitor state efforts for funding.
 - e. To measure teacher effectiveness through test data.

3. A quality public education is important to perpetuate a strong and viable democracy.
 Strongly agree Agree No consensus Disagree Strongly disagree

Social Media Update



Our Webmaster Terri Farneti has been busy! First, she established a page on Facebook for the LWVAZ, our State League. Now she has done the same for our own local League, LWVCYC. My granddaughter informs me that “nobody uses email anymore; everybody just goes to Facebook.” Though this doesn’t apply to me, perhaps it will be a way to reach a younger generation. If you are on Facebook, please “like” the page! Thanks to Terri for her hard work!

Nancy Shugrue, VOTER Editor

Our Hidden Government Benefits

Excerpted from New York Times, September 19, 2011, by SUZANNE METTLER, Cornell U.

DON'T take at face value the claims that Americans dislike government. Sure, a recent ABC News/Washington Post poll found that 56 percent of Americans said they wanted smaller government and fewer services. Tea Party activists, the most vocal citizens of our time, powerfully amplify those demands. Yet the reality is that the vast majority of Americans have at some point relied on government programs — and valued them — even though they often fail to recognize that government is the source of the assistance.

A 2008 poll of 1,400 Americans by the Cornell Survey Research Institute found that when people were asked whether they had “ever used a government social program,” 57 percent said they had not. Respondents were then asked whether they had availed themselves of any of 21 different federal policies, including Social Security, unemployment insurance, the home-mortgage-interest deduction and student loans. It turned out that 94 percent of those who had denied using programs had benefited from at least one; the average respondent had used four.

Americans often fail to recognize government's role in society, even if they have experienced it in their own lives. That is because so much of what government does today is largely invisible.

Besides political ideology, the design of policies also influences awareness. The most visible policies are those that require people to interact frequently or intensively with public officials to qualify for benefits, like food stamps, disability payments and subsidized housing. Another set of programs, including Medicare, Pell Grants and Social Security retirement benefits, are also fairly visible, though each contains characteristics that can camouflage government's role.

The final group of policies, what I call the “submerged state,” is largely invisible because its benefits are channeled through the tax code and subsidies to private organizations. These include the home-mortgage-interest deduction and the exemption from taxes on employer-provided health and retirement benefits. Using “submerged” benefits is nearly as common as using more visible policies.

Even personal encounters with the submerged state fail to make most people recognize that they have benefited from government. The greater the number of visible policies an individual had used, the more likely he or she was to agree that “government programs have helped me in times of need,” but greater use of policies of the submerged state had no comparable impact.

Likewise, the greater the number of visible policies used, the higher the rate of agreement that “government has provided me opportunities to improve my standard of living”; by contrast, those who had used more submerged policies were more likely to disagree. The hidden policies left beneficiaries with the false impression that their economic security was owed merely to their own efforts.

The submerged state obscures the role of government and exaggerates that of the market. It leaves citizens unaware of the source of programs and unable to form meaningful opinions about them.

Until political leaders reveal government benefits for what they are by talking openly about them, we cannot have an honest discussion about spending, taxes or deficits. The stipulation in the new health care reform law that W-2 forms must indicate the value of untaxed employer-provided health care benefits is a step in the right direction. The government should also provide “receipts” that inform people of the size of each benefit they get through the tax code.

The threat to democracy today is not the size of government but rather the hidden form that so much of its growth has taken. If those who assume government has never helped them could see how it has, it might help defuse our polarized political climate and reinvigorate informed citizenship.

MEMBERSHIP

ANNOUNCEMENT: We are in a new League year, so please pay your membership dues. Only current members are able to vote on position statements. At the end of this Voter is a Membership Registration Form, which has the necessary information.

Recently approved by the LWV Board is a new SCHOLARSHIP FUND POLICY, with the goal of increasing membership.

Recipients:

1. A current member of LWVCYC could recommend to a board member that someone receive a scholarship because of high interest in the League and financial need.
2. A past member of our league could request a scholarship for the same reasons as #1.

Funding:

1. Contributions by members.
2. Raffle.
3. Set up league membership donation box for scholarships at meetings.

Procedures:

1. An interested person contacts a board member and tells the board member why she/he wants to be a member of the league.
2. The board decided if the interested person should receive a scholarship.
3. Every scholarship recipient has to pay at least 50% of the membership fee.
4. A scholarship expires at the end of the LWVCYC's fiscal year.

If you want more information, contact Alice Harris.

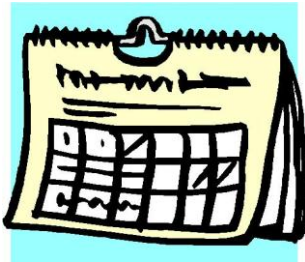
Women's Issues Report By Marge Mead, LWVAZ Board

On Friday, August 26, we celebrated Women's Equality Day. American women have struggled for decades to achieve equality – equal pay for equal work, equal access to quality health care, equality in the marketplace, in job opportunities, in education, in political positions. We have made progress - but it is clear that a significant gender gap still continues to exist.

For instance, take a good look at the number of women who serve on the US Supreme Court – three, as opposed to five male justices. Women make about 77 percent of the salary earned by a male co-worker – doing the same job, with similar education, training, experience, etc. When elected officials decide what cuts must be made to try to balance state budgets, they invariably select programs – like health, child care, early childhood education – that provide support for women who are struggling to support their children on meager incomes.

Now we have learned about a decision by the AZ Court of Appeals that allows the imposition of sweeping anti-abortion legislation. Control over their own reproductive health decisions will be denied Arizona women, who will no longer have assured access to safe abortion. They will be forced to make a trip to the doctor 24 hours before the procedure to listen to a medically unnecessary script. Minors seeking abortion care and their parents must have a consent form notarized at a bank or other business before they arrive for an appointment. The new laws allow pharmacists to refuse to fill birth control prescriptions. The laws have forced Planned Parenthood to close abortion services in six rural cities across the state.

The League of Women Voters clearly must continue to fight for the rights of women to enjoy full equality with their male counterparts. We are not there yet!



Calendar of Events

Saturday, October 8

LWVUS Study: The Role of The Federal Government in Public Education I

Tuesday, October 18

LWVCYC Board, 5:30 PM

Saturday, November 12

LWVUS Study: The Role of The Federal Government in Public Education II

Tuesday, November 15

LWVCYC Board, 5:30 PM

Wednesday, December 7

Non-Profit Meet and Greet

Tuesday, December 20

LWVCYC Board, 5:30 PM

Saturday, January 14,

Program Planning, JTED Talk

Tuesday, January 17

LWVCYC Board, 5:30 PM

Saturday, February 11,

Water

Tuesday, February 21

LWVCYC Board, 5:30 PM

Tuesday, February 28, 2012

Presidential Preference Primary

Saturday, March 10, 2012

Legislative Update

Tuesday, March 20

LWVCYC Board, 5:30 PM

Saturday, April 14, 2012

Annual Meeting and Speaker

Tuesday, April 17

LWVCYC Board, 5:30 PM

Saturday, May 12, 2012

LWVUS Study and Consensus: The impact of privatizing government services on local communities

To Be Arranged

LWVCYC Board Retreat

Week of July 30, 2012

Candidate Forum

Tuesday, August 28, 2012

Primary Election

Tuesday, November 6, 2012

General Election

DUES!!!!

Yes, it's time for you to send in your DUES! You may pay at our October meeting, or send \$55 (individual) or \$82.50 (household) with the Membership Registration Form on the next page to **LWVCYC, PO Box 11538 Prescott, AZ 86304-1538**

**IMPORTANT WEBSITE
REFERENCES**

LWVUS Website
www.lwv.org

LWVAZ Website
www.lwvaz.org

LWVCYC Website
<http://centralvavapai.az.lwvnet.org/>

We recommend that you check these out monthly, or more often. Lots of good information! Bookmark them to save on typing, or go to lwvaz.org, where there are links to click on. Or Google LWVCYC!

Our website includes current and past VOTERS, Pros and Cons of Ballot Initiatives, Directory of Elected Officials, and other great material.

Reminder – Members are always welcome to attend Board meetings. Regular meeting times will be on the calendar.

To request placement of an item on the Board agenda and/or to receive the Board agenda packet, contact the LWVCYC President a week in advance.

LWV MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION
2011-2012

Dues cover membership through June 30, 2012.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Please check type of membership:

_____ \$55/Yr Individual Membership

_____ \$82.50/Yr Household Membership

Plus

\$_____ Contribution to League (not tax deductible)

\$_____ *Contribution to Education Fund (tax deductible)

*Please make donations to LWVAZ Education Fund by separate check, to preserve tax deductibility. This supports our Webpage and Voter Service activities. Thank you!

Both new and renewal members, please include this form with your check. Thank you!

New: _____ Renewal: _____

Membership in the LWV is open to any person 18 and over who subscribes to the purposes and policies of the LWVUS. These dues for 2011-2012 cover payment for local (\$15.30), state (\$10), and national (\$29.70) memberships.

OR

Be a "Friend" of LWVCYC:

_____ \$50/Yr Individual or _____ \$75/Yr Household
(open to businesses and individuals)

Please mail this form and all checks to:

LWVCYC
PO Box 11538 Prescott, AZ 86304-1538



**League of Women Voters
of Central Yavapai County
P.O. Box 11538
Prescott, AZ 86304-1538**

A nonpartisan membership organization, the League of Women Voters neither supports nor opposes political parties or candidates, but encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.