



**THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS of the CINCINNATI AREA**

THE VOTER

103 Wm. H. Taft Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45219
513-281-8683 Fax: 513-281-8714
info@lwvcincinnati.org www.lwvcincinnati.org
Visit LWVCA on

September 2011

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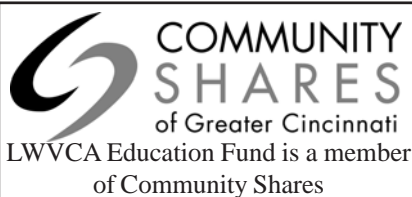
The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization which encourages the informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Membership is open to all men and women over 18. For information call 513-281-8683, or write to the LWVCA office at 103 Wm H Taft Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45219, or email at info@lwvcincinnati.org.

LWV DIVERSITY POLICY

The League of Women Voters recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision making.

The LWVCA affirms its commitment to actively seek diversity in its membership, leadership and programs.



EDUCATION KICKS OFF THE NEW PROGRAM YEAR

By *Burton Roehr, Education Committee Chair*

Welcome to a new LWVCA program year! We're launching with a September consensus meeting on the national topic, "The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education." Your local Education Committee urges you to:



GET READY!!!! Prepare for this timely, challenging topic by thoroughly familiarizing yourself with the "buff pages" that accompany this VOTER. You'll find all of the consensus questions as well as the background material for responding to them. Please read/absorb this material prior to your unit meeting to ensure a lively, informed discussion and a good consensus result.

GET SET!!!! You can get additional information by going to the website:

[lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=PubEdStudyLeadersGuide.](http://lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=PubEdStudyLeadersGuide)

Scroll to the bottom of the Leader's Guide to the entry "Public Education Study Background Papers." Each of the papers has an extensive bibliography, and much the information is found online.

GO!!!! Attend one of the unit meetings listed in this VOTER. General members are welcome at any unit, and their thoughts are important, too. Find a unit that's convenient for you, mark the time on your calendars, and participate in the discussion and consensus. Member input is what makes our opinions matter!

Let's have a great turnout for our September unit start-ups. Our responses to the consensus questions will help form the position on this topic that the LWVUS will ultimately use for action and advocacy when relevant issues are debated in Congress.

John Adams on The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education

"Before any great things are accomplished, a memorable change must be made in the system of education, and knowledge must become so general as to raise the lower ranks of society nearer to the higher. The education of a nation, instead of being confined to a few schools and universities for the instruction of the few, must become the national care and expense for the formation of the many." ~

John Adams' letters

BOARD BRIEFS: LWVCA BOARD MEETINGS

By *Lori Bissler, Secretary*

JUNE, 2011:

- President **Melissa Currence** distributed a “Snapshot of Governance” needed for LWVCA Education Fund and Steiner Fund.
- **Pinky Kocoshis** provided a motion to establish an Investment Committee. The motion passed.
- **Glenda Bernstein** moved that **Fred Heyse** be named Chair of the Investment Committee. The motion passed. Fred Heyse prepared a charter for the Board’s consideration.
- Treasurer **Kim Thompson** reported dues are on target. The accountant review showed the books “in line with accepted accounting principles.”
- **Shirley Jason** announced she will be taking a leave of absence as President-Elect, as she is running for elected office.
- **Nancy Dawley** moved, on behalf of the Housing Committee, to pay 2011-2012 dues of \$137 to the Greater Cincinnati Coalition. The motion passed.
- The **Natural Resources Committee** moved to send a letter to Elisabeth MacNamara, President of LWVUS, discussing the ad targeting Massachusetts and Missouri Senators regarding their EPA vote. The motion passed.
- Current membership total is 356.

JULY, 2011:

- President **Melissa Currence** received a response from the National League regarding the Natural Resource Committee letter on the Clean Air Act.
- A letter to the editor regarding Ohio HB194 and SB148 was printed in the June 12 edition of the *Enquirer*. A letter to the editor regarding the Anna Louise Inn was printed in the online version of the *Enquirer* on June 14.
- Executive Director, **Jean Masthay**, represented the League on WLW 700 regarding the voter ID issue.
- **Nancy Dawley** reported a thank you letter was sent to Thayne Maynard, Cincinnati Zoo, thanking his staff for the excellent June 25 tour.
- The Education Committee submitted an action request to co-sponsor the September 17 non-partisan forum “Prepare the Future”. The motion, presented by **Nancy Dawley**, passed.
- **Gavin Leonard** moved to co-sponsor the redistricting event being planned in September by Common Cause Ohio. The motion passed.
- **Pinky Kocoshis** reported the Office Volunteer Luncheon, held at the end of June, went well.
- **Marjorie Davies** reported the League met target contributions last year, as well as total revenues. Friends and Neighbors packets will be available at unit meetings.
- Our Community Shares representative, **Sherrie Heyse**, will be serving on the Community Shares Membership Committee this year.
- Per the action request of the County Government Committee and PDC, a motion passed that the League send a letter to the *Enquirer* editor, opinion page and reporter thanking them for coverage of the Tax Levy Review Committee work and recommendations.
- A motion to approve the charter of the investment committee passed.
- The Green Group will have a City Council Forum on Oct. 12 from 6-8 PM at Northside Tavern.

AUGUST, 2011:

- Questions from the PDC for the upcoming *Who and What of Elections* were reviewed and approved.
- A motion from the Investment Committee to consolidate accounts to produce efficiency was passed.
- **Glenda Bernstein** offered a motion to co-sponsor, with the Junior League of Cincinnati, a city council candidates meet-and-greet and a forum on SB5, on October 4, contingent upon League requirements being met; the motion passed.
- **Gail Wick** requested updated Unit Chair information be forwarded to her.

A Board Retreat followed the Board Meeting to discuss goals and planning.

KNOW YOUR BOARD!

President: **Melissa Currence**
 PresidentElect: on Leave of Absence
 VP Fund Development: **Marjorie Davies**
 VP Organization/Members Services: **Pinky Kocoshis**
 VP Program: **Nancy Dawley**
 VP Voter Service: **Glenda Bernstein**
 Secretary: **Lori Bissler**
 Treasurer: **Kim Thompson**
 Director Action: **Gavin DeVore Leonard**
 Director Membership: **Mary Van Ausdall**
 Director Planned Giving: **Dee Shaffer**
 Director Unit Coordinator: **Gail Wick**
 Director Voter Service: **Susan Banoun**

Executive Director: **Jean Masthay**

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

By *Melissa Currence*

On behalf of the LWVCA Board of Directors, I am writing to you regarding a letter campaign that was forwarded to Cincinnati City Council's offices and homes, and to LWVCA Executive Director, **Jean Masthay**, which was signed by "Anonymous members of the League of Women Voters". The letter was regarding contract negotiations between a private company and the City of Cincinnati and focused on asking specific questions of the company and contract. I became aware of this letter when Councilman Winburn reached out by email to ask if this was a legitimate letter from the LWVCA.



The Board of Directors and I cannot be certain that this letter campaign was, in fact, undertaken by LWVCA members, but I wish to be as transparent as possible regarding this activity, which is why I am sending you this notice. I will not be forwarding the letter because I am unsure of its veracity.

The board did not approve such a letter. The subject has never been a topic at any board meeting, at any Program Development Committee meeting, and, as far as I know, any other official League meeting.

From our document, *How to Take Action within the League*: "Boards consider several things before adopting an action strategy. A good Board looks at the readiness of the League (at any level) for action, the climate in the community, the political picture and the values of League participation. In assessing the readiness of the League, a Board should consider member interest and knowledge of the issue." The Board also may consider the issue of liability.

The letter sent to Executive Director Masthay alluded to fear of League Members being 'blacklisted' for bringing up these questions via transparent means.

Of course, whistle-blowing is also an important check and balance within our political system. But as far as I am aware, no attempt was made to address this issue using our traditional channels of taking action. Nothing was done to prevent these individuals from writing City Council as private citizens and asking these same questions.

But these individuals wrote to City Council falsely representing our organization. The League of Women Voters demands transparency in government—it is a hallmark of a democracy. Letters sent anonymously fail to uphold our tradition of demanding transparency in government. When the LWVCA stands for an issue or asks questions, we act with openness and without disguise.

To use the name of the League of Women Voters inappropriately tarnishes our reputation. No individual may use the League's name without explicit approval from the board.

As I said above, we cannot be certain this letter campaign was, in fact, undertaken by LWVCA members, and we may never know whether it was. But I am truly saddened to think that League members did not feel they could voice their concerns in legitimate League settings or may have decided to use our name for their own gain.

The day I was notified of this activity, I wrote the following letter to City Council on behalf of the LWVCA:

Dear Mr. Winburn:

Thank you for forwarding this letter to get more information. This is NOT an approved letter from League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area. Our board of directors approves all letters submitted to public officials, and we have not discussed this issue nor have we approved any action in regards to this situation. I have no knowledge on who drafted this letter, why it was drafted or how it was submitted to the city. Thank you again for reaching out to let us clarify this situation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I truly appreciate all the hard work our members do in the name of the League of Women Voters to achieve our mission of encouraging informed and active participation in government, increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influence public policy through education and advocacy. We will continue to excel at our mission despite the actions of a few.

I invite any member to contact me directly with questions regarding this issue.

Sincerely, *Melissa*

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE EDUCATION FUND?

By *Melissa Currence, President*

Since I have fielded questions from members about the status of LWVCA's Education Fund, I wanted to take the opportunity to clarify any questions you may have.

As you know, the LWVCA created the LWVCA Education Fund in 1954 as a nonprofit, nonpartisan, tax-exempt organization that funds the educational activities of the League. The goal of the Fund has always been to ensure that all citizens are informed about the issues and prepared to participate in government and to play their part in community building.

Education Fund monies pay for our Voter Service and education activities, such as the *Who and What of Elections* voter guide, which are designed to provide citizens with unbiased, factual information as a basis for reaching their own decisions.

The change, which was recommended by the Education Fund Board, is that the Board of Directors of the LWVCA will now also serve as the Board of Directors of the LWVCA Education Fund. Separate budgets and meeting minutes for the Education Fund will be kept, as directed by the IRS.

Having the same board members manage both sides of the League allows for better coordination of projects and assessment of the financial needs of the whole organization. This is a structure that is in line with how the Ohio League and the National League manage their Education Fund.

So be assured the LWVCA Education Fund, a 501(c)(3) organization, still exists as it always has, still funds our important educational work; and a donation to the Education Fund still remains tax-deductible. Donations can be made by visiting our website at lwvcincinnati.org, or by mailing a check payable LWVCA Education Fund, 103 Wm. H. Taft Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45219.

NEW LWVCA DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

By *Jean Masthay, Executive Director*

A new Development Committee was recently formed to prepare and support a strategic plan targeting closer coordination of fundraising, membership, and related areas in order to improve their effectiveness in supporting the LWVCA mission. The group is in the beginning stages of evaluating communications with our members, donors, partners and the public. If you are interested in knowing more please email Jean at jeanm@lwvcincinnati.org.



COME, JOIN A LWVCA COMMITTEE!

By *Nancy Dawley, VP Program*

Our local league has a number of committees which delve into local issues of concern. You are warmly invited to join one or more that interests you. Just call the chair. S/he will tell you what that committee is currently focusing on and when the next meeting is. Committees welcome new members and new ideas.

City Government Committee, Carolyn Miller – What is happening in Cincinnati Council and Cincinnati neighborhoods?. There are several election issues as well as city budget hearings to monitor.

County Government Committee, Donald Rhoad – County Government Committee focuses on county government structure, funding, and services. We closely monitor county commission and committee meetings. Lately, we have been following the processes leading to the county levies which will be on the November ballot, as well as opportunities for improved delivery of services to county residents.

Education Committee, Burton Roehr – The Education Committee will finish the consensus program for the LWVUS, and we'll gather information on the Cincinnati Public School levy so that we can make a recommendation to the Board whether to support, not support, or take no position. Generally, we tackle issues that affect CPS, but also issues that we cover in our LWVO positions (mostly education finance).

Healthcare Committee, Gretchen Langdon – The committee is watching the issue of expanding a health center into Avondale. They are polling Ohio local Leagues on interest in Medicare for all citizens.

(continued on page 7)

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS USA LAUNCHES CLEAN AIR PROMISE CAMPAIGN

The League of Women Voters has launched a major, nationwide campaign in defense of the EPA's work to give Americans clean air. The "People Not Polluters" campaign asks Americans and their elected officials to join the Clean Air Promise:

THE PROMISE:

I promise to protect America's children and families from dangerous air pollution.

Because toxics and pollutants such as mercury, smog, carbon, and soot, cause thousands of hospital visits, asthma attacks, and even deaths, I will support clean air policies and other protections that scientists and public health experts have recommended to the EPA to safeguard our air quality.

MAKE THE PROMISE! You can make the promise online, at PeopleNotPolluters.org.

LWVUS 2010-2012 NATIONAL LEADERSHIP NOMINATIONS

The 2010-2012 LWVUS Nominating Committee needs YOU! You can help us find great League members to lead us in 2012-2014 on the **LWVUS Board**. This national Board will be leading us forward and helping make the League stronger. Our LWVUS leaders have honed their leadership skills beginning as a local league member and we are proud to continue that tradition. You can let us know who you see as the next national leader from your League.

You can nominate either yourself or another person. To locate the "toolbox" for making a nomination, go online to lwv.org, click on "For Members," "Leaders' Section," and then click on "Nominating Committee" on the left side of the page. Deadline for nominations is October 3, 2011.

ELECTIONS: CONGRATULATIONS TO THE LWV OF OHIO!

Source: LWV US

A couple of weeks after passing sweeping election reform legislation, the Ohio state legislature was back at work, tweaking the law one last time before adjournment. The good news is the Ohio legislature left for summer recess WITHOUT passing a voter photo identification law. In addition, they've canceled plans for an online system for voters to register and update their registration information, and they eliminated the new requirement that a voter using a Social Security number for identification purposes provide all nine digits rather than the last four. Peg Rosenfeld, elections specialist for the LWV of Ohio, applauded most of Wednesday's results, particularly the absence of a photo ID requirement.

Thank you for your support in fighting this legislation from Cincinnati.

OHIO REDISTRICTING FORUM Thursday, September 8 6:00-8:00 pm

Meyerson Hall, Hebrew Union College
Sponsored by Common Cause
Cosponsored by HUC, Woman's City Club,
LWVCA
See enclosed flyer.

FRACKING IN SW OHIO

By *Jeff Davis*, Chair, Natural Resources Committee

"Fracking": hydraulic fracturing for oil and natural gas extraction. A number of environmental organizations will be rallying against fracking at the Southwest Ohio Regional CALL TO ACTION Meeting, **September 10, 2011**, 10:00am-2:00pm, at Antioch University Midwest in Yellow Springs, Ohio. For more information, see nofrackingconferencesw.eventbrite.com.

MILL CREEK RESTORATION PROJECT APPOINTED AS NATIONAL URBAN WATERS FELLOW

By *John Hunter*

The Cincinnati-based nonprofit Mill Creek Restoration Project (MCRP) has been selected through a national competition to become one of ten Urban Waters Fellows to join the new Urban Waters Training Network. The Network is cosponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and by two national nonprofits, River Network and Groundwork USA.

“There is a range of health and environmental challenges facing our urban waters today — but each challenge is matched by an incredible opportunity to transform distressed urban waterfronts into centerpieces for community revitalization,” said Nancy Stoner, Acting Assistant Administrator for EPA’s Office of Water. “Urban waters have the potential to support healthy environments, economic development, and educational and recreational activities.”

Diana Toledo, Southeast Program Manager with River Network, said “Mill Creek is a classic degraded and polluted urban river. Groundwork USA and River Network vetted one hundred and fourteen Urban Waters applications, and MCRP’s stood out. The nonprofit has forged diverse partnerships and has creativity, strength and determination. They intend to make Mill Creek a treasured resource and community asset in Greater Cincinnati.”

MCRP executive director Robin Corathers said the nonprofit will benefit over the next two years from intensive Urban Waters training, ranging from organizational capacity-building to urban river regeneration strategies. In return, MCRP will serve as a peer mentor to other Fellows within the Training Network and as a model for other urban river organizations in the country.

LWVCA has supported the Mill Creek Restoration Project since its inception and the Natural Resources Committee has been involved in the creation and implementation of the Mill Creek Greenway Master plan. Laughing Brook, a multifaceted rain garden that is part of the Greenway (in Salway Park, off Spring Grove Ave across from Spring Grove Cemetery), is in full bloom, peaceful and lovely.



“GREENING CINCINNATI – A CANDIDATES’ FORUM”

Wednesday, October 12, 2011, 5:30-8:00 pm

Northside Tavern (rear stage)

4163 Hamilton Ave (corner Hamilton & Lingo in Northside)

Cincinnati’s next city council will grapple with many thorny issues including increasing revenue, cutting expenses and meeting basic, immediate community needs while planning for our city’s future. Many city residents expect council to address these issues with a focus on creating green jobs, clean air and water, walkable communities, green space restoration/preservation, LEED certified buildings, clean renewable energy and recovering valuable material from our waste stream.

The “Greening Cincinnati” forum is sponsored by **The Green Group**, an informal network of Cincinnati-based environmental groups and concerned citizens. This is your opportunity to show your support for building a sustainable Cincinnati and to learn more about how council candidates plan to address environmental issues. You may also submit questions in advance via email to greencincy@gmail.com.

See you there!! ~ submitted by *Pinky Kocoshis*

25TH ANNIVERSARY REGIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK CONFERENCE (RNNC)

September 22-24, 2011

Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza,

This is the first RNNC national conference to be held in Cincinnati. Theme of the 2011 conference is “Building Bridges & Making Connections: 25 Years of Connecting Neighbors to Neighborhoods.”

Historically, the RNNC is a proven venue for cities to learn from one another - then to put those lessons to work making their communities even better places to live, work and raise families. In addition to workshop sessions, the conference features tours and keynote presentations. For more information, email info@rnnc; or do a quick internet search for “RNNC.”

FUND DEVELOPMENT NEWS

By *Marjorie Davies, VP Fundraising*

Have you gotten your **Friends & Neighbors** kit yet? If you didn't pick one up at Annual Meeting or at your unit, please call the League office and we'll send one right away. With it, you can have our premier nonpartisan voter guide, the *Who & What of Elections*, sent to your friends and neighbors free of charge immediately after publication in late September. Your friends are sure to appreciate this superb tool, which is used by over 100,000 Hamilton County voters every year! Mailings will include an introductory letter, signed by you, with an explanation of our mission, along with a contribution card and return envelope for those who choose to support our work. Be sure to return your completed kit to the League office ASAP to assure prompt delivery.

Dues renewal notices are mailed in late August. When you make your payment, please consider a generous **Annual Campaign** contribution to support LWVCA advocacy work and/or the Education Fund's tax-deductible nonpartisan voter services. Did you know that most of our dues revenue supports the services of our state and national LWV affiliates? We rely primarily on Annual Campaign contributions, plus foundation grants and corporate sponsorships, to support the crucial local services you so value.

The LWVCA board, on the recommendation of the Fund Development Committee, is **suspending the annual Visions for Greater Cincinnati event** this year, after an 18-year run. Originally the State of the City/County, it was conceived as a way to present a speaker of civic interest to corporate and community leaders, with financial support of the region's largest companies. In recent years, however, corporate attendance has dwindled, with audiences primarily comprising League members. Better, we think, to concentrate event volunteers' efforts on our very popular **Susan B. Anthony Luncheon** in February, and dedicate most fund development volunteers' resources to soliciting direct gifts from individuals, foundations, and companies. Your comments on this change of emphasis are encouraged: contact **Marjorie Davies** or Executive Director **Jean Masthay**.

The LWVCA continues its successful partnership with **Community Shares**, the workplace giving program supporting agencies promoting social and economic equity and a healthy environment. League member **Ernie Mowell** was the LWVCA cook at CS's annual fund raiser, Guys, Griddles, and Grub. Thanks, Ernie!

DINNER WITH THE LEAGUE DISHES UP A NEW SERIES OF FINE MEALS AND SPEAKERS

By *Donald Rhoad*

Dinner with the League (DWTL) will begin its new 2011-2012 series of dinner and speaker events on **Monday October 24, 2011**. Details about the October 24 event will be included in the October *Voter* and on the LWVCA web site. The format will be similar to that of recent years.

DWTL is a series of dinner meetings featuring community leaders as speakers. Initiated in September of 2007, these dinner meetings are designed to offer LWVCA members, their guests, and others in the community an opportunity to enjoy dinner together and be intellectually stimulated by a guest speaker. The events usually take place on the fourth Monday of each month in which there is no other League-wide event. (Note that we are skipping September in deference to the important Issues Briefing on September 26.) Additional DWTL's are scheduled for **November 28, January 23, March 26, and April 23**.

Programs are offered that address issues of current significance, such as downtown development, media influences, challenges to public education, regional transportation, and the arts. Past guest speakers have included retired councilman and Vice Mayor Jim Tarbell, Professors Gene Beaupre and George Vredeveld, CSO President Trey Devey, Governor Strickland's Cincinnati liaison Brewster Rhoads, and Enquirer writer and columnist Krista Ramsey.

DWTL planners **Helen and Don Rhoad** are making plans now for the new year of DWTL dinner meetings and would welcome volunteer assistance in planning and implementing the events.

COMMITTEES *(continued from page 4)*

Housing Committee, Helen Rhoad – At their August meeting, the Housing Committee will choose a housing issue to study during the 2011-12 year. In the past the committee has looked at issues such as affordable housing, accessible housing, lead contaminants, foreclosures, and integrated communities.



Natural Resources Committee, Jeff Davis – NRC investigates environmental issues of local and general concern. In addition to planning the November water program it is looking at natural gas "fracking" and its effect on the Ohio environment.

Action Committee, Gavin DeVore Leonard – This committee is considering a "quick response unit" to identify issues for quick action by our League. You can be one of the first members.

LWVCA DISCUSSION TOPICS FOR 2011-2012

By Nancy Dawley, VP Program

Unit meetings will discuss a variety of topics this year. If one is of particular interest to you, speak with your Unit Leader about becoming a discussion leader. It will give you an opportunity to delve into the topic and highlight it for your co-members.

September: We will work for consensus on the topic of the **role of the federal government in education**. This is a timely topic as the school year begins and we prepare for the November election of school board members.

October: There are numerous **issues on the November ballot**. We will discuss the pros and cons of each issue to prepare ourselves to vote in the election.

November: "Water, water, every where, Nor any drop to drink" (Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*). We will examine our local **water** story.

December: Unit Choice

January: LWVCA Program Planning. What are our current **local positions**? Let's discuss if our positions are up to date or deserve further consideration.

February: Many governments are **outsourcing** work to the private sector. We will work for consensus on some parameters and policies to follow as our elected leaders look for new ways of "getting the job done."

March: LWVUS Program Planning. Which **national positions** are particularly pertinent to today's problems? Do we want to recommend any changes or new studies to our national organization?

April: What is **League action** all about? Sometimes we feel more comfortable with the education part of our organization. Learn how and when to take action on League positions.

GREAT TIMES AT GUYS, GRIDDLES AND GRUB

By Sherrie Heyse

Guys, Griddles and Grub is the annual Community Shares Fundraiser and it really did raise a lot of fun this year! The food was delicious and all the cooks were great. Many thanks to our volunteer cook **Ernie Mowell** for the wonderful tomato soup with croutons and cheese that he served. It was so hard to choose the "best of category"!

Each year, this event just gets better and better. If you have never been, here's how it works - each organization in Community Shares provides a male volunteer cook who competes in categories such as appetizer, entree, salad, soup, and dessert. The room is surrounded by tables loaded with food from great amateur cooks. Guests taste special treats and vote for their favorite. It is great time to eat, listen to music and have fun with friends.

In a new twist this year, "Mystery Boxes" were on sale with lots of special prizes inside. No one was disappointed with their box and everyone was a winner. The wine raffle had two large baskets of the best wines for 2 lucky winners. There was a lot of action around the silent auction table and a last minute rush to win the "Golf Package" and other special items.

The LWVCA Education Fund is one of the 26 member organizations of Community Shares. If you have never attended this special event, please plan to come next year and have a great time supporting Community Shares.

CINCINNATI CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES FORUM

At The GREENWICH

2442 Gilbert Avenue, Walnut Hills

Saturday, October 15, 2011 7:00PM

LWVCA and The Greenwich (the Walnut Hills Arts and Entertainment venue - visit www.the-greenwich.com) have once again teamed together to provide a unique setting for a candidates forum based on the theme "Cincinnati 2012: Diary of a City in Transition" Doors open at 6:30 pm, forum begins at 7pm. A meet and greet reception immediately follows at 9:45 pm. This nonpartisan event is free and open to the public. Valet parking in secured lots will be available.

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED! We need volunteers to serve as **timekeepers, ushers** and **greeters**, and to provide **food/snacks** for the reception. If interested, contact **Glenda Bernstein** or **Alice Schneider** directly, or through the League Office at 513-281-8683.



“GREEN ZOO” SUMMER TOUR

By *John Hunter and Nancy Dawley*

The Cincinnati Zoo welcomed the League to a tour of the Zoo’s widely acclaimed Sustainability Initiative on Saturday, June 25. Their program, presented by Sophia Cifuentes, sustainability outreach specialist, is focused on conserving and producing clean energy and saving and preventing run-off of water. Savings are substantial and have been reinvested in both expanding and improving exhibits. Animal homes and visitor experiences have been positively affected. Environmental benefits include cleaner air and water.

Clean energy is produced from wind turbines, geothermal wells, and solar panels, including the industrial scale solar array roofing the new parking lot. The latter was producing 60% of the total Zoo consumption during our visit, a sunny day with large cumulus clouds. The zoo sometimes sells surplus power back to the grid. The train ride is powered by biodiesel (French fry oil) collected from the Zoo’s dining facilities.

Savings from water conservation measures are considerable. Water retention measures include rain gardens and porous pavement that allows storm water to flow into underground tanks. Rain barrels collect roof runoff. This collected water is used for other zoo purposes. Plus, they fit into the Metropolitan Sewer District’s effort to reduce total Cincinnati runoff and keep sewage out of the Ohio River. Green roofs, ubiquitous recycle containers, solar powered trash compactor bins, and a cell phone recycle campaign designed to save gorilla habitat are other examples of the scope of the sustainability commitment. Animal manure is taken offsite for composting instead of paying landfill fees.

Key to the success of the program is an innovative management approach. The Zoo is an old institution with many dedicated specialists caring for individual exhibits. Savings from energy and water conservation are reinvested in the exhibit where the saving is made. The result has been a Zoo-wide buy-in to the search for improvements. We heard this directly from Eddie Annal and Markee Jefferies as they showed us the bearcat and barred owl they care for, both beautiful animals.

A number of League members mentioned renewing their zoo memberships in order to keep track of the many changes at this “land-locked” but growing Cincinnati icon. League member Don Hudson was one of the docents recruited by the Zoo to lead the small groups on a walking tour, to see the multifaceted sustainability initiative in action.



Wind Turbine has an appealing design.



A huge solar power array over the parking lot supplies 20% of the Zoo’s electrical needs.

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE SEEKS MEMBERS

The League of Women Voters has always had a strong environmental focus and has been a respected voice in many green issues at local, regional, state and national levels. Areas of focus include global warming; air quality; water quality; protecting rivers and streams; preserving green space, scenic and natural lands; solid waste; recycling; energy policy; etc. We know many League members have a strong interest in these issues.

However, as an all-volunteer organization, the League’s level of activity is completely dependent on the level of activism of our members. Our Natural Resources Committee has only three regular members and cannot continue effectively without more help. If you want to get involved, please send an email to NRC@lwvcincinnati.org, or call the League office for details on our next meeting.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: BURT ROEHR



At present, I'm retired and living in Liberty Township/Butler County with my husband of 50+ years. Our two daughters and their families live in North Carolina and Texas, and we have three grandchildren: two teen-aged grandsons in NC and a 9-year-old granddaughter in TX. Although I did earn a Library Science degree many moons ago, my most recent paid job was that of administrative assistant to the CEO of a now-gone Cincinnati corporation.

I joined the League in 1965 (I think) because I had two small daughters at home and needed something of interest to do with other adults. One of my neighbors took me to a League unit meeting, and I loved it. That tells you something about my warped personality, because, as I recall, that meeting was on Apportionment, a subject usually guaranteed to cure insomnia!

Over the years, I've changed units from the Western Hills evening (that first one), to Central Evening (while I was employed), to Warren County, which is close to my home. At the present time, I chair our Education Committee and as such, participate in our Program Development Committee. I'm also serving on the Budget Committee this year.

League membership provides an opportunity to meet with and enjoy the company of folks who are interested in local, state, and global issues and current events. I've learned a lot from my associations with Leaguers and have had many years of fun doing so. Our members are well-versed and passionate about the issues they're involved with, and that makes any League meeting very special.

My husband and I love bicycling and when we can, we'll put together a bike tour with my sister and her husband. We also try to find snorkeling opportunities periodically. As for reading, we have a neighborhood book club that meets monthly to discuss a member-recommended item. This month it will be *Enrique's Journey* by Sonia Nazario; it deals with the issue of immigration, according to the person who recommended it. I'm finishing *The Yacoubian Building* by Alaa Al Aswany, a novel about living in modern-day Cairo—fascinating and depressing! A good, escapist detective novel will also get my attention.

Morton Gusweiler - Past President and Life Member

By *Rina Saperstein*

Life member **Morton Gusweiler** died on August 6, 2011, just three weeks short of her 101st birthday. Mrs. Gusweiler was an active member of the Cincinnati League for many years and served as president in 1948-50. She was a founding member of the League's Eastern Day unit. She also served one term on Cincinnati City Council, and attended the 1960 Republican National Convention.

IN MEMORIAM

John Dowlin – A True Friend of the League

By Don Rhoad

A long-time friend and member of the League, **John Dowlin**, died on July 12, 2011, at his Sharonville home after a prolonged battle with Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's. Dowlin was 81.

John Dowlin began his political career as the mayor of Sharonville, where he served for many years. He subsequently served as a County Commissioner of Hamilton County for 13 years, ending that service in 2004.

John was a member of LWVCA from 1996 until just a few years ago. He is remembered as being easy to approach and a source of valuable counsel for other League members. He normally had a quiet and gentlemanly manner, but it is said that John Dowlin would never shy away from a fight – even within his own Republican Party – if he felt that what he believed to be right was threatened.

**CALENDAR:
SEPTEMBER UNIT MEETINGS**

Discussion Topic: The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education

Unit meetings are our grassroots discussions, located at different places and times so that there's always one convenient for YOU! This is your chance to get involved. All meetings are open. Come, and bring a friend!

2nd Thursday 9/8/11

Eastern Day: 12:00 noon. Brown bag or order lunch in MPL Dining Room. Free valet parking.
Marjorie P. Lee Home, 3550 Shaw Ave.

2nd Monday 9/12/11

Hilltop: 2:00 p.m. Home of Donna Dansker
Northeast Evening: 7:00 p.m. Madeira Public Library, Euclid and Miami Ave

2nd Tuesday 9/13/11

North Central: 12:00 noon, Friendship United Methodist Church, Springfield Pike & Fleming Rd
Warren County: 7:30 p.m. Mason United Methodist Church, 773 Mason-Montgomery Rd.

2nd Wednesday 9/14/11

Anderson: 7:15 p.m. Anderson Government Center, 7850 Five Mile Road
Central Evening: 7:15 p.m. League Office, 103 Wm. H. Taft

3rd Wednesday, 9/21/11

Metro Day: 12:00 noon League Office, 103 Wm. H. Taft

Not to Be Missed!

THE LWVCA ELECTION 2011 ISSUES FORUM

and

**OCTOBER DISCUSSION LEADERS' BRIEFING
Combined!**

**Monday, September 26, 2011 - 7:00 pm
Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church sanctuary**

A great opportunity to be informed on the ballot issues that will be considered by voters on Election Day, November 8.

Hope to see you there - bring a friend!

CENTRAL NORTH:

New Unit formed from Merger

The North Central and College Hill units have merged to form a new unit, based in the central part of the city and taking in the north suburbs. The unit will meet at **noon on the second Tuesday** of each month, at Friendship United Methodist Church, Springfield Pike & Fleming Rd. Unit Chairs are **Barbara Carvey** and **Mary Kay Gardner**, and Membership Chairs are **Loraine Schultz** and **Kathy Shahani**. The unit invites participation from League members throughout the community.

The Voter is the official monthly newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area.
Editor: **Marty Harrington**.
Office Staff: **Susan Gorman**.
Proofer: **Melissa Currence**
Layout and design: **Kit Berger**.

Join the League of Women Voters
...where hands on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.
All citizens, male and female, 18 years and older, are welcome. Take the opportunity now to support our work promoting democracy and civic engagement. Dues include Cincinnati, Ohio, and National membership, including newsletters from each.

Individual - \$60.00
Household - \$80.00
Student - \$25.00

Dues pose a hardship. I can pay _____

Optional deductible contribution to LWVCA: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Mail to LWVCA, 103 Wm. H. Taft,
Cincinnati, OH 45219



League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area
 103 Wm. H. Taft Rd. Cincinnati, OH 45219
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LEAGUE ACTIVITIES

NOTE: Double check for changes, including changed days of week, from the accustomed schedule.

All meetings are open to the public and are held at the League Office, 103 Wm. Howard Taft unless otherwise noted.

Bring a friend!

- Monday Sept 5 Labor Day, Office Closed
- Wednesday Sept 7 6:30 pm Board Meeting
- Thursday Sept 8 6:00 pm Ohio Redistricting Forum
(Mayerson Hall, Hebrew Union College)
- Friday Sept 9 Deadline for copy for October Voter
- Monday Sept 12 3:30 pm Rookwood Six Coalition (Health Foundation Bldg, 3805 Edwards Rd)
- Saturday Sept 17 10:00 am Prepare the Future Education Forum
(Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action Agency, 1740 Langdon Farm Rd)
- Monday Sept 19 6:00 pm Health Care Committee
- Monday Sept 19 7:00 pm County Government Committee
- Tuesday Sept 20 7:00 pm Housing Committee
- Wednesday Sept 21 7:35 pm Rosh Hashanah begins
- Thursday Sept 22 10:00 am Voter Collating; Anderson Unit in Charge
- Monday Sept 26 5:30 pm Program Development Committee (PDC)
- Monday Sept 26 7:00 pm LWVCA Election 2011 Issues Forum and
October Discussion Leaders Briefing
- Wednesday Sept 28 5:30 pm Social Media Committee

As always, see our website (www.lwvca.org) for more information on upcoming events.

The Road to Quality Schools: "You Can Impact Public Education"

The Cincinnati Chapter of "Prepare the Future Ohio" will host an important community forum. A panel of community leaders and education experts will discuss how we can make positive changes in our education system. Don't miss the chance to learn what the federal and state laws require schools to do to help our children succeed in the public education system.

The Event is **FREE** and Open to the Public

September 17, 2011
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

at the Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action
Agency

1740 Langdon Farm Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45237

(Jordan Crossing -- Across from Woodward High School. Metro Bus
Routes #43 Reading Road and #43 Bond Hill – FREE PARKING)

Faith Community Alliance of Greater Cincinnati, Prepare the Future Ohio Cincinnati Chapter, Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition of Cincinnati, League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area, Parents for Public Schools of Greater Cincinnati, Citizens for Civic Renewal, Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action Agency, Applied Information Resources, Woman's City Club of Greater Cincinnati

Funding provided by

Greater Cincinnati Foundation and the Procter Fund of the Southern Ohio Episcopal Diocese

For Additional Information Contact Charles Wallner
(513) 910-5985



Ohio
COMMON CAUSE
Holding Power Accountable

PRESENTS

in conjunction with



Ohio Redistricting Forum

Thursday, September 8, 2011

6-8 p.m.

Mayerson Hall, Hebrew Union College
5101 Clifton Ave.

For many, the reality of redistricting and reapportionment has become synonymous with partisan gerrymandering. But are there alternatives? Join us as we highlight potential opportunities and threats in the 2011 Ohio redistricting process, showcase maps from the Draw the Line Ohio Redistricting Competition and set the stage for future redistricting reform efforts.

- State Senator Tom Niehaus and State Representative Armond Budish (invited)
- Ann Henkener, Legislative Director and Board Member, League of Women Voters of Ohio
- Greg Rabidoux, Fair Districts Director, Common Cause
- Engaging small group discussions to build momentum for reform

Sponsored by:



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Ohio votes



THE ROLE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

Our September units will discuss consensus questions formulated by our National LWV to determine our thinking on the above-titled study that was adopted at the 2010 National Convention. It is a timely, interesting, and detailed study; and our responses to the fifteen consensus questions will be combined with those of other Leagues across the country. From that compilation, the LWVUS study committee will develop a position statement that, if adopted by the LWVUS Board, will become a basis for advocacy and action at the federal level as bills and budgets concerning public education are debated in Congress.

Your local League Education Committee has condensed a wealth of material into these pages. It is imperative that members read them prior to their unit meeting on this subject. If members are not prepared, discussion will flounder and get off topic. **Please come to your unit meeting prepared to discuss the questions thoroughly and completely.**

Note that the consensus questions pertaining to each section immediately precede that section's background material. This should enable members to consider the questions as they study the relevant information. However, no background material is provided for the first three questions, as we are asking members to answer them at the beginning of the meeting and then answer them again at the end of the meeting to see if the responses are different. Those latter responses will be what we use for our consensus report to National.

INTRODUCTION

Consensus Questions:

The current role of the federal government in public education is

*Much too small too small about right
too large much too large*

What should be the role of the federal government in public education? (Rank)

To ensure that all students preK-12 receive a quality education.

To develop accountability measures that will study the progress of all students so that they achieve adequate yearly progress.

To mandate Common Core Standards for all students K-12.

To monitor state efforts for funding.

To measure teacher effectiveness through test data. A quality public education is important to perpetuate a strong and viable democracy.

*Strongly agree Agree No consensus
Disagree Strongly disagree*

Common Core Standards (excerpted from a LWVUS paper by Janelle L. Rivers, PhD)

Consensus Questions:

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.*

*Should there be a **national assessment aligned with the Common Core 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.**

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.

What role should the national assessment consortia (coalitions of states) play in student evaluation? (Rank order)

- a. Provide an assessment system that is aligned to the Common Core Standards.*
- b. Provide comparison data showing progress toward reaching Common Core Standards*
- c. Provide criteria for determining readiness for college and careers.*
- d. Provide information to students, parents, teachers and school districts about student achievement.*
- e. Provide diagnostic*information on each child.*

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.*

Information from nationally required assessment data should be used to: (Choose one)

Sanction schools not measuring up to the specific levels

Reward schools that achieve high scores

Rank teachers based on student test score data

Reward teachers who have exemplary scores

Inform districts how their population compares to others similar to theirs.

* Definitions of these words are in the Glossary at the end of the material

What is the Common Core State Standards Initiative? (CCSI) Demand for Common Core Standards for bringing American students up to global standards has been widespread in recent years, and led to action by the National Governor's Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) which established the Common Core Standards Initiative (CCSI). This initiative developed the Common Core Standards (CCS) that were published in June, 2010. A portion of the Initiative's Mission Statement describes their purpose:

"The Common Core State Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them...."

One may examine the standards in detail by going to the Initiative's website, [HYPERLINK http://www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org)

The Common Core Standards (CCS) thus established are national - not federal - standards. CCSI has to date authorized two multi-state consortia (PARCC and SMART) to contract with large sub-tier organizations that will develop detailed assessments and evaluations, plus statistical methods for analyzing the data so that they can be best used to evaluate achievement

By 2011, Common Core Standards (CCS) had been adopted by 42 states (**including Ohio**), the District of Columbia, and 2 U.S. Territories. The goal of the CCSI is to move even the best state standards to the next level, with an explicit agreement within CCSI that no state would lower its standards. These uniform standards are needed to accommodate the increasing mobility of K-12 students within the country, among states, among school districts, and within schools in the same district; they are also needed to recognize that even in high-performing states, students are graduating and passing all the required tests while still needing remediation in their postsecondary (after high school) work

What are the current sources of information about academic standards and student achievement in the United States? Essentially there are four sources of information about academic standards and students achievement in the United

States:

The **states** are the primary sources because they maintain records of student performance. What is required to be “proficient” varies greatly from one state to another.

A second source of “standards” is in the **text-book publishing industry**. Major publishers reflect the choices made by curriculum committees in the largest states in the texts they publish and sell to schools.

There are **testing companies** that compare performance of students across the country, but these tests serve mainly to rank students, not determine how well students have mastered information.

Finally, there are international comparisons made of students in 60 countries and five (5) other educational systems. These comparisons indicate that our students’ performance is average or below average when compared to that of students in other countries. While the causes of these gaps are open to discussion, the situation has fostered interest in this country in common core standards and how they might be applied and assessed.

What attempts have been made to create common standards? The first efforts to create national standards and assessments began in 1992 when grants were awarded to a dozen national organizations charged with developing such programs. In 2001, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) encouraged each state to create its own tests and assessments, but that Act failed to bring equity, efficiency and higher expectations to education in the U.S. Instead, there are wide discrepancies in the quality of the tests, their assessment, and the meaning of the results.

What are the arguments for and against adopting common educational standards for Grades K-12?

Arguments for Adopting Common Educational Standards:

> Ensure that all students, regardless of where they live, are prepared for postsecondary education and the workforce.

> Ensure that all students receive a high quality education from school to school and from state to state.

> Help teachers determine what skills and knowledge their students need so they can better plan their lessons.

> Set clear and realistic goals for students and parents.

Arguments against Adopting Common Educational Standards:

> Standards may be too narrow or misused.

> There would be a significant cost to change the existing curriculum and assessments.

> Education should remain primarily a state and local responsibility.

How do content and rigor of state standards compare with the Common Core?

The Common Core State Standards have been built from the best and highest state standards in the country. Formal studies have been conducted to compare the Common Core Standards with various state standards. In 2010, the Fordham Institute compared Common Core and state math standards and English Language Association (ELA) standards; out of 102 comparisons, the Common Core Standards were found to be superior seventy-six (76) times. In only three (3) of those comparisons were the state standards more rigorous than the Common Core Standards.

Would rigorous standards improve achievement?

This can be answered only when the total CCS system is in place, and as noted above, large sub-tier organizations will develop the detailed Assessments and evaluations. Educators point out that in order to achieve enhanced student performance, standards must be implemented in conjunction with curriculum, assessments, and other aspects of the educational system. Three possible models for implementing the Common Core Standards have been suggested in a Fordham Institute Report (2010):

Set up a national board to oversee implementation of the Common Core Standards and related assessments;

Leave implementation of standards to districts, states and the market; have the CCSI update the standards every five to ten (5-10) years.

Set up an interim council funded by private foundations, state dues, and some possible federal funds. It would track implementation, share information, and perform other functions among the states.

The system will be comprised of assessments (tests), data collection and analysis from these assessments, and comparisons within and among states. In Ohio, the new assessments will be in place by the 2014-2015 school year.

How will the Common Core be assessed?

Dr. Rivers states in her paper, “The norm-referenced tests that have been in widespread use across the United States do a good job of ranking students and identifying those who are particularly strong or particularly weak in academic skills; however, norm-referenced tests are not designed to measure how well students have mastered specific content and skills that are part of the curriculum. Instead, updated accountability systems will require new standardized criterion-referenced tests, which do measure mastery of a curriculum that is based on the Common Core.” (Underlines added.)

No national test for this purpose is being planned by the federal government. At present, two groups of states are working together to develop options for assessing the Common Core. Additionally, two coalitions of 44 states and D.C. have won a grant to design “comprehensive assessment systems” aligned to the Common Core. They would also reveal whether students will be prepared for either college or a career track. Their initial ideas are well removed from the traditional multiple choice tests that currently assess proficiency. By various means they will establish sub-tier contracts with other entities to develop/refine specific tests and measurement systems, which will include teacher input.

How would scores from Common-Core assessments be used?

There are many issues to be resolved before any type of national approach to standards and assessments can be implemented. Indeed, multiple professional organizations are already tackling these issues. The information provided by these assessments must be timely if it is to be useful in determining what individual students need for improvement. How much emphasis should be placed on a single test? Should they be used for

evaluating teacher performance and tied to merit pay? Should there be cross-state comparisons? How do we maintain equity? There is still much to be determined in this important area of research.

What is the role of the federal government with respect to accountability?

Since 1969, the National Center for Education Statistics has been reporting the results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). This assessment includes reading, mathematics, science, writing, U.S. history, civics, geography, and other subjects. In 1990, the NAEP began reporting the results of some state-level assessments. And in 2001, as part of the reauthorization of ESEA, the federal government started requiring states that receive Title I funds to participate in state NAEP assessments in reading and mathematics in grades 4 and 8 every two years. In addition to requiring states to participate in the assessments and report the results, consequences were established for districts that failed to make Annual Yearly Progress. Modifications have been proposed to add graduation rates and other measures of academic proficiency to the assessments.

Funding and Equity Issues (excerpted from a LWVUS paper by Jean Pierce)

Consensus Questions:

In the past, most of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funding has been non-competitive based on need. All/Any schools that prove they fall under the federal guidelines for funding receive these funds. However, competitive grants are now being proposed to states/districts who meet certain federal requirements, such as Race to the Top. Which would be appropriate: (Choose one)

Non-competitive funding for all applicants meeting requirements.

A combination of non-competitive and competitive grants

Competitive grants only

No federal funding

If the federal government’s role is the concern of the “common good,” then: (Choose one)

Mandates only should be sanctioned.

Mandates and funding should both be provided.

Funding should be provided through grants only.

A combination of funded mandates and grants should apply.

No mandates should be required and limited grants

for innovation available.

Equity in public education means equitable access to:
(Rank order)

- a. High quality teaching/learning
- b. Adequate and current learning materials
- c. Clean and well maintained physical facilities
- d. Food and health care
- e. Safe and secure neighborhoods
- f. Secure housing

The Federal Government's involvement in equity issues in public schools has extended over 115 years. It began with the 1896 Supreme Court decision (*Plessy v. Ferguson*) that racially segregated public schools were allowed under the equal protection clause of the Constitution as long as they had equal facilities. Then, in 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court reversed that decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, which declared that state laws establishing separate public schools for black and white students were unconstitutional. This decision reflected the need for equality of opportunity. This same policy was demonstrated in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and in President L. B. Johnson's Elementary and Secondary School Act (ESEA) in 1965. The Civil Rights Act outlawed racial discrimination in general; Title VI of ESEA forbade the allocation of federal funds to segregated programs.

A study authorized by Congress in 1965 (the *Coleman Report*) found that student achievement and educational outcomes were related directly to student background and socio-economic status, and these influences were stronger than differences in school resources. Whereas the original intention of ESEA was to provide extra resources to school districts that served large numbers of low-income families, the debate about the causes of educational inequalities led to ESEA's being allocated for various programs such as teaching innovations, cultural and social enrichment programs, parent involvement activities, nutrition programs, etc.

Nationally the amount of federal funding amounts to less than 10% of a local school district's annual budget. In its FY2010 budget, the Ohio Department of Education received approximately \$2.5 billion for all education-related federal programs including school lunch and breakfast programs. These funds comprise about 20% of Ohio's funding for education. These monies are distributed by

the OH Department of Education to local districts throughout the states and are used to support 42 different programs in the districts that have those programs; it would be the rare districts that qualified for all 42 allotments! Some of the program allocations are based on formulas; others are competitive. Formula programs are based on student count and census data, while competitive grants require the district to meet eligibility criteria and/or apply for the grant. Some smaller competitive grants may go directly to a local district.

A quick check of some districts here in Hamilton County yielded the following information: Princeton City Schools received about 2.02% of its 2010-11 budgeted income from federal funds; St. Bernard-Elmwood Place City Schools received about 11% of its 2010-11 budget from federal funds, and their largest programs are Title I, IDEA (special education), and free and reduced lunch; of Madeira's \$15,644,000, 5.6% was from federal grants and were used for special education, building utility costs, student intervention, teacher training, etc.

In addition to federal funds, local districts receive funding from their respective states and from local property taxes. In states that rely heavily on property taxes to fund their schools, large inequities in funding exist. Studies show that these inequities can have an effect on student learning, as highly qualified teachers are more frequently found in wealthier school districts where they are more highly paid and can demand and receive better working conditions. A 2002** study revealed that in Massachusetts, schools with high concentrations of minority students were highly likely to have uncertified teachers—five times more than schools serving few minority students. A 2010 work by Darling-Hammond** contends that schools with high minority student bodies often have less challenging curriculum requirements, materials, and inferior equipment.

In 2001, President George W. Bush signed the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). It expanded ESEA testing requirements and allowed the federal government to become more aggressive in holding states accountable for improving student performance. This legislation used both enrollment and categories as bases for distributing funds to districts that could show per-pupil annual yearly progress. NCLB ratcheted up the federal government's role in public education significantly.

We have all heard of what NCLB was intended to do - close achievement gaps for minority students. It permitted parents to move their children from a low-performing school to a better performing school in the district. It "punished" schools and teachers if their students didn't show annual yearly progress. Critics complain about the dependence on standardized testing, the emphasis on penalties, the mandates, etc. Moreover, there is some question of whether the approaches NCLB espoused actually worked at the local level.

A new approach called Race to the Top (RTTT) was President Obama's effort in 2009 to use another approach to improve America's public schools. It emphasizes competition via competitive grants to states that align their programs to the RTTT agenda and apply for the grants. To date only twelve states have received funds through RTTT.

One of the criteria on the application was "improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance." The idea was to provide "merit" pay for teachers and principals whose students showed significant improved year-over-year improvement on assessments. To date, a satisfactory assessment that would overcome the flaws that educators and others are quick to identify has not been developed.

Both NCLB and RTTT offered parents of children in poorly performing schools the option to send those youngsters to alternative schools. The alternatives were charter schools (called "community" schools in Ohio) or to use a state-supplied voucher for use at a private school. Our League has discussed these approaches on several occasions in recent years.

We tend to ask our public schools to solve many societal problems, but what our society must do to make that happen across the country is an enormous undertaking. Educators and other specialists call for increased effort to ensure secure housing, food, and health care so children come to school ready to learn. Additionally, they have put forth detailed ideas to improve teacher education and quality. Are these the responsibility of the federal government, the state, or the individual locality?

**Darling-Hammond, L. (2010). *The Flat World and Education: How America's Commitment to Equity Will Determine Our Future*. New York: Teach-

ers College, Columbia University

Legislation and Funding for the Education of Children Who are Disadvantaged (excerpted from a LWVUS paper by Patricia O'Brien Libutti, PhD)

Consensus Question:

Currently Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funding is considered "categorical" rather than for general use. This means that it can only be used with special populations for special purposes. ESEA should remain targeted toward poverty and special needs.

*Strongly agree Agree No consensus
Disagree Strongly disagree*

The Federal Government's involvement in the education of children who are disadvantaged began with the April 1965 passage of the **Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)**. ESEA was part of President Johnson's War on Poverty, was influenced by the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and provided massive changes in the ways students who differed from the norm by reason of disadvantage would be treated. Over the next four decades, the federal government moved toward educational equity for all children. Many pieces of legislation and numerous legal cases set the way for sweeping legislation.

The last reauthorization of ESEA was enacted by the 107th Congress as **The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001**. The Act specifically covered the following groups of children: children of poverty, children in rural areas, children who are Native Americans, children who are neglected and delinquent, children who are migrants, children who are homeless, children who are learning English, children who are impacted by disasters, children who are disabled.

Since April 1965, ESEA has undergone many re-authorizations as well as growth and declines reflective of the political temper and educational practice. It remained an umbrella law to fight the war on poverty by providing funds for education of disadvantaged children through discretionary grants. The current ESEA (No Child Left Behind) is comprised of ten sections known as Titles.

These Titles are as follows:

Title I: *Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged* includes funds for programs for educationally disadvantaged students and also funds the education of children who are migrants, homeless and advanced placement programs for gifted children.

Title II: *Preparing, Training and Recruiting of High Quality Teachers*

Title III: *Language Instruction for children who have limited English proficiency and children of migrants including provisions for Native American language immersion.*

Title IV: *21st Century Schools*

Title V: *Promoting Informed Parental Choice and Innovative Programs* includes funding for the National Center for Gifted Education for research on programs and practices for educating gifted children.

Title VI: *Flexibility and Accountability* includes allocations for the two primary rural education programs.

Title VII: *Indian, Native Hawaiian and Alaska Native Education* includes funds for the education of children in these categories.

Title VIII: *Impact Aid Program* includes students who have experienced a natural disaster such as Katrina or who live on land used by the federal government.

Title IX: *General Provision* includes the provision for a Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Title X: *Repeals, Resignations and Amendments* includes support for children who are neglected, delinquent or homeless.

Legislation that affects children who are *Native Indians, Native Alaskans and Native Hawaiians* defines who comprises these groups of indigenous peoples and contains appropriations for specific education programs for language development (English) and language restoration (tribal languages and culture). Additionally the **2010 ESEA Reauthorization: A Blueprint for Reform** provides for further training of teachers for their education. Studies of all three groups generally indi-

cate lower achievement in the areas of reading and math than white students so these have been areas of primary focus.

Children who are English Language Learners (ELL) hovers around 5 million. These students are provided for in Title III which includes immigrant instruction as well as support for all limited English proficient children to attain competence in academic subjects as well as English.

Children who are Rural Students are from the rural districts that account for more than 50 percent of all districts. Many of these districts have combined their schools into a K-12 school and rural education programs are most often funded for technology, distance education (done outside the traditional classroom and utilizing computers) and teacher recruitment.

Children who are Neglected or Delinquent are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the public school system. The majority of students covered under ESEA Title I (est. at over 132,000) are in correctional institutions and funds are used in institutional education programs which must provide at least 20 hours of non-funded education of juveniles and youth.

Children who are Homeless, according to 2007-08 HUD estimates for those 6-17, was placed at 168,000, considered to be the low end. These children cannot keep possessions, suffer from isolation, and face barriers to school enrollment. ESEA Title X defines this group and requires these students be integrated into the services offered to regular academic students.

Children who are Migrants are estimated to number 487,000 and go to fisheries, farms, and other seasonal agricultural work places. They are enrolled in school sporadically and often are not available for school services such as special education. Title I provides for the education of these students ages 3 through 21 who underachieve academically compared to their peers, and it is administered under the direction of the Office of Migratory Children.

Children who are Disabled relates to the special education of K-12 students who have disabilities. These students are also covered under the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004)** which covers 13 percent of all students enrolled in public schools. States use the definition

of “disabled” found in IDEA due to federal mandates for funding and are awarded grants if they accept federal funding according to a formula specified in federal statutes. They then distribute the funds to their local school districts.

The original 1975 legislation, the **Education for All Handicapped Children Act**, which later came to be called the Individuals with Disabilities Act specified that federal funding be 40 percent of the total funding for the state. In practice, the actual contribution has ranged from 8 to 11 percent. To be eligible for special education, a student must be classified with one or more of the 13 disabilities now covered by IDEA such as serious emotional disturbance, autism, mental retardation, speech or visual impairment, etc. The largest group of these students, (39 percent), are diagnosed with a specific learning disability.

IDEA mandates include a **zero reject policy** in which no child is turned away from education services. Under each state’s laws, an **Individualized Educational Program (IEP)** is constructed for each child receiving services, the purpose of which is to ensure the student a free and appropriate education. Simply put, the child is to be placed as close as possible to the child’s school near home. This practice is termed inclusion. Of these students ages 6-21, 95 percent are served in the general education classroom. Parents become involved through advocacy, assessment and revision of the IEP yearly.

Children with disabilities are responsible for the content they learn and they are assessed under test taking protocols designed by their district and state. Children across the country take assessments with regular grade level achievement standards, modified standards or alternative standards. Personal responsibility is a core principle of No Child Left Behind which means a student may be disabled but their behavior is their responsibility, and procedures for disciplining these students is covered in IDEA. The IDEA also provides for transition programs for children to lead an independent life beyond special education. Concepts of the rights of disabled persons are still evolving, but 95 percent of the students of these students are being educated in the general classroom. There continues to be a need for more preparation for the general education teachers who are responsible for the education of these students.

The Reauthorization of ESEA: A Blueprint for Educations Reform (2010) outlines the priority items for legislation to fund the full and appropriate education of children who are disabled, migratory and rurally located and homeless as well as those who fall under the other title groups. Each groups needs are addressed and most groups have funding aimed at continuing existing programs. It remains to be seen if the Blueprint has predicted well enough the funding needed to ensure all of these children receive the education they deserve.

Early Childhood Education, Equity and Funding (excerpted from a LWVUS paper by Pat Aaron)

Consensus Questions:

The federal government has a role in supporting early childhood education, birth to 5, for all children.

*Strongly agree Agree No consensus
Disagree Strongly disagree*

15. a. *Federal support for early childhood education programs (e.g., Head Start, Title I, Special Education, Early Start) should include funding for parent education and support regarding child development, child health and nutrition, and access to other supportive services, such as mental health as needed.*

*Strongly agree Agree No consensus
Disagree Strongly disagree*

b. *This support should be extended to:*

*All children only those with special needs
special needs first*

Early childhood education (EC) programs began in 1965 under the authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and with funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The First EC program, Head Start, began as an initiative to provide children of low-income families and children in at risk categories access to early education. Thirty years later, funding was extended to provide health information and education to low-income parents, mostly to pregnant mothers or mothers of young children.

Today there are several early education programs, all of which are operated under the standards and guidance of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 1992). More than ever, current research is emphasizing the importance of a quality early education for all children, birth to pre-kindergarten.

Under Title 1 of the ESEA, local agencies are granted federal funding only after program approval from state agencies. The programs receiving federal funding vary from state to state. Following the reauthorization of ESEA in 2001, called No Child Left Behind (NCLB), funds from Part A of Title 1 should be used for pre-school programs recognizing the importance of preparing children for entering school with language development and cognitive and early readiness skills.

Additional EC funding is made available through the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). This program, authorized through the Social Security Act, assists low-income families in obtaining child care so they can work or attend training/education. Last year, \$5 billion was made available to the states, territories, and tribes. State funding for pre-kindergarten funding is also available to 40 states and the District of Columbia, with these programs aligned to their standards.

While it is important to note that programs serving low-income families receive more federal funding than any other socioeconomic group, only about half of eligible participants will receive benefits. Additionally, federal funding has always included children with disabilities, beginning with Head Start and extending to The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which has been reauthorized and amended numerous times since it was signed into law in 1997. Since IDEA was enacted, the federal government has had its hand in how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to children (up to age 21) with disabilities.

Many wonder why there is more federal funding for early education programs serving low-income families than any other socioeconomic class. To answer that question, there are more children living in poverty than any other age group, and it has been this way since 1974. Currently, about 20% of American children are living with a family whose household falls below the poverty line. Research suggests that poverty has a strong impact

on a child's school readiness and learning (Berliner, 2005) and that the education gap is created when a poor child enters the public school system without any exposure to a school-like setting during the first 5 years of his/her life.

During the 2010 World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education, findings suggested that early childhood care and education is much more than preparing a child for a smooth transition into a formal academic setting. They found that childhood policies should be brought into a broader context of academic and social development addressing issues of poverty, gender, and equity. Of all UN countries, the United States is one of two without a clause for child rights.

Although more research has been done to document the benefits of quality early education programs for low-income children, middle and upper-income students can reap benefits as well. In a study that reviewed assessments of middle-income students, those who attended two years of preschool scored significantly higher than those who did not. With that being said, an investment now in quality early education can greatly reduce the amount of time and money spent on retention, dropouts, and special education placements. Project Star reported in 2010 that higher kindergarten quality increases college attendance rates and has the ability to reduce poverty and increase the earning potential for once disadvantaged students.

All in all, an early investment can potentially close the achievement gap, reduce education related costs, and lower overall societal costs associated with crime and public assistance. Research has shown that each dollar spent now on early education will return 10 cents annually for the life of a child, which is a 10% per year return on investment (Heckman, 2010). The question for the American public is, Why pay more for something later that can be addressed now at a lower cost. Or, in Heckman's words "investing later chains us to fixing the very costly missed opportunities of the past." All that being said, should the federal government extend funding to cover all children?

GLOSSARY

Assessment – A test

Federal vs. National Initiatives – Refers to both mandates and funding. A **national** program is one that was developed by a national organization. For example the Common Core Standards were developed by an initiative of the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers. Neither was required, promoted or funded by the federal government. **Federal** refers to those programs that are funded and/or mandated by the federal government. The Common Core Standards are a national initiative, but the federal government has required it for the grant program, ‘Race to the Top.’

Curriculum – An educational plan that spells out which goals and objectives will be achieved and how they will be achieved. It also defines the topics to be covered as well as the methods and materials to be used to reach the goals.

Norm-referenced assessment – A test that ranks students and identifies those who are particularly strong or particularly weak in academic skills. Children are compared to their peers, typically with percentile scores.

Criterion - Referenced assessment – measures mastery of a curriculum by comparing student scores to certain objectives or criteria.

Cut score – The score on a test that separates test takers into various categories, such as a passing score and a failing score, or a selected score and a rejected score. For example, the cut score of 70% on an exam would mean that anything below that score is a failing grade and anything above it is a passing grade.

Holistic assessment – A student’s projects and activities as well as traditional testing would be used to determine whether or not he/she had mastered a given subject or curriculum.