



LWV Ohio Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Education

As a nation, state, and collection of communities, education is the bedrock of our democracy. It informs the values and perspectives that shape our ideologies, civic engagement, and priorities. At its best, education inspires us to broaden our view, challenge systems, and fulfill our promise of a truly representative democracy. Monocultural, exclusive, and prejudiced education breeds miseducated voters and elected officials who perpetuate extremism, discriminatory policies, and party-loyalist agendas. Government leaders move from serving the People, to serving themselves.

As such, the League of Women Voters of Ohio believes:

Schools must be firmly grounded in the principles and practices of diversity, equity, and inclusion, including anti-discrimination, anti-racism, anti-hate, multiculturalism, and cultural proficiency;

Schools must prioritize the social-emotional well-being and diverse academic needs of ALL students; and

Schools must provide an immediate safe, non-hostile, nurturing environment where ALL students can thrive and realize their full potential.

To this end, the League wholeheartedly supports approaches to education that embed diverse perspectives, cultures, and identities into curriculum and discussions; value truth, facts, science, and research; foster critical thinking and independent thought; prioritize root cause analysis; examine complete, accurate accounts of history and modern events; scrutinize governments, institutions, and power structures; study inclusive canons of literature; encourage ALL students to

engage in STEAM; and challenge ALL students to go beyond their borders to seek out truth and perspective.

The League strongly supports the Ohio Board of Education's July 2020 Resolution to Condemn Racism and Advance Equity and Opportunity for Black Students, Indigenous Students, and Students Of Color, and local school board resolutions that comprehensively address racism, white supremacy culture, discrimination, hate, implicit bias, disparate outcomes for students of color, culturally responsive teaching, trauma informed care, and professional development.

These resolutions not only challenge school districts to fully comprehend the impacts of structural and systemic racism on education and student learning, but also challenge districts to reimagine their values, campus culture, curriculum, policies and procedures, teaching practices, and social-emotional support structures. This framework is critical to ensuring that ALL students feel safe, valued, included, and ready to learn.

Further, League supports school districts and institutions that are operationalizing intentional goals, objectives, and action plans that embed diversity, equity, and inclusion into their culture and practice.

Collectively, we must dismantle the belief systems and power dynamics that unjustly prioritize some while abusing and marginalizing others... in government, workplaces, schools, communities, and households. It is incumbent upon ALL of us to ensure these values are infused throughout our nation -- beginning with our schools.