

The following are the responses to the Education Study Consensus submitted on behalf of the LWV Of San Luis Obispo County (League ID: CA073) as recorded by Sharon Whitney], co-president.

Note: for questions that asked for Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree, a value of 5 equals Strongly Agree and a value of 1 equals Strongly Disagree.

15 League members participated in the consensus process.

General Consensus Questions

1. The Current role of the federal government in public education is

Your League's Response: Too large

2. What should be the role of the federal government in public education?

Your League's Response: 1,4,3,2,5

3. A quality public education is important to perpetuate a strong and viable democracy.

Your League's Response: 5

Your League's Comments:

Question 1--This question was too vague because it failed to capture the nuances of desirable goals being set versus dissatisfaction with federal implementation in recent years. Question 2--People objected to the word "mandate" in "mandate Common Core Standards..." preferring the word, "monitor." Also, there was a preference for using "nation-wide" over "national" in order to avoid confusion with "federal."

Common Core Standards

4. Currently the governors and state education officers have developed Common Core State Standards that are national but not federal. How should the standards be mandated of the states in order to obtain federal funding?

Your League's Response: e. None of the above

5. Should there be a national assessment aligned with the Common Core State Standards?

Your League's Response: No

a.

(If the answer to 2 is Yes). Should implementation be voluntary or federally mandated?

Your League's Response:

- b. (If the answer to 2 is No) What other accountability measures might you suggest?

Your League's Response: b. 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*.

6. National Standards should lead to:

Your League's Response: c. A suggested structure for states and local education agencies to develop their own curriculum.

7. What role should the national assessment consortiums play in student evaluation?

Your League's Response: 4,2,3,1,5

8. Data from national assessments are often difficult for parents, teachers and others to understand. If we have a national assessment, what information is the most important to be reported to parents, teachers, and students and the community?

Your League's Response: 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.

9. Information from nationally required assessment data should be used to

Your League's Response: e. Inform districts how their population compares to others similar to theirs.

Your League's Comments:

Question 7: A and E were equally opposed. Many of our participants had teaching backgrounds in K-12 (mostly public schools, one in private school), and experience in the administration of education institutions or districts (public and private), mostly in California, but one or two more broadly. Some also experience about the effects of public education in business and civic organizations. There was a general concern that California and the U.S. have declined in their quality of education, whereas other nations are improving. There was much preference for no federal mandates as a remedy, but rather for local, state, and nation-wide approaches.

Funding and Equity

10. 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 those funds. However, competitive grants are now being proposed for states/districts who meet certain federal requirements such as Race to the Top. Which would be appropriate?

Your League's Response: b. A combination of non-competitive and competitive grants

11. If the federal governments role is the concern of the "common good" then:

Your League's Response: b. Mandates and funding should both be provided.

12. Equity in public education means equitable access to:

Your League's Response: 1,2,3,4,5,6

13. 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.

Your League's Response: 5

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

Your League's Response: 5

15. Federal support for early childhood education programs (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.

a.

Your League's Response: 5

b. This funding should be extended to:

Your League's Response: All children

Your League's Comments:

10. Most of the federal funding emphasis should be on non-competitive grants. Mandates can be problematic if unfunded. There is a need for accountability if money is provided. There should be more emphasis placed on performance and vision of principals of school rather than just teachers. Principals can make or break the morale of a school. 11. A combination of funded mandates and grants does not mean a 50-50 split. Any mandate should be funded. Kids come first; keep politics out of grants and mandates. 12. All of these points are important. The federal government in some way and at some level should be involved in all of these points. 13. The numbers of children at the poverty level

in the US has greatly increased as have number of special needs children. Resources for the special needs children have been beneficial to the special needs population with positive effect. Special needs should consider the needs of the gifted too. There are still too many inequities in monies provided to the schools. Most of that inequity adversely affects children in poverty. 14. So many studies have shown that the first five years of life are crucial to the subsequent success in education and life of children, 20% of children in the US are below poverty levels. But, it is important to remember the responsibilities of parents too. 15. Parent education and involvement is also critical for the child.