

## **WNDC PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE**

### **Positions on Education**

WNDC believes that public education is one of the cornerstones of American democracy. Historically, the role of public education has been to teach students knowledge, skills, and values. Today, investments in education are even more crucial to provide our students with the tools to help our nation effectively compete in the global economy. WNDC supports actions by government agencies, including offices such as the states' secretaries of state, to improve the ability of our citizens to understand and participate in the democratic process.

#### **WNDC calls for policymakers to:**

- Provide civic education for all and support efforts to provide timely and necessary information on public policy, with a particular emphasis on outreach to high school students who will soon receive the right to vote.
- Support efforts to improve equity and efficiency in public schools and to help future generations enjoy economic success. The U.S. lags behind a number of other developed nations in academic achievement at the primary and secondary education levels. Fund programs that help children succeed academically as well as personally, from preschool through college. Such programs may include those related to consumer finance and health that improve the quality of life for many.
- Increase enrollment in high-quality early learning programs, such as Head Start, which have been shown to benefit both participants and communities.
- Support research to determine best practices to improve educational outcomes.
- Support high-quality public education for all students irrespective of their race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or school district where they live. Oppose the privatization and destabilization of public schools.
- Support efforts to end structural racism in education, which include increasing funding parity between poor and wealthy school districts, creating a more equitable distribution of public funds, and supporting reforms to decrease the segregation of schools through measures such as revised school boundaries or equitable access to advanced courses of study.
- Fund programs that nurture social-emotional development, interpersonal skills, and other learning mindsets that increase overall achievement.
- Support efforts to improve how colleges respond to allegations of sexual assault.
- Support efforts to increase the pool of teachers, particularly among diverse populations, to realize the positive effect of diversity on student achievement. Fund teacher salaries at a level that is adequate to relieve current and projected teacher shortages.

- Improve the overall school climate, for example, by encouraging peaceful conflict resolution, discouraging bullying, and limiting punitive disciplinary practices against students and school professionals.
- Fully fund programs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to ensure that students with disabilities have access to free and appropriate services that meet their individual needs.
- Protect students from for-profit school scams, such as through debt-forgiveness programs and gainful employment rules. Support regulations that increase accountability from these institutions.
- Continue to support the separation of church and state in funding decisions.
- Oppose threats that limit access to books, including textbooks that provide comprehensive fact-based information on American history.