

**STATEMENT OF POSITION**

The League of Women Voters of Alaska believes the State has the major responsibility for setting minimum education standards and for financing elementary and secondary schools in Alaska. However, local school districts in organized and unorganized boroughs should be required to contribute a percentage of the financial support and should have the major responsibility for decision making in the expenditure of funds.

**AMPLIFICATION**

**Financing**

The League of Women Voters of Alaska believes that the State has the major responsibility for financing elementary and secondary schools in Alaska because State funding is an equitable method and meets the constitutional requirement that the State provide an educational system for its residents; and because the State has the ability to derive income from wider sources than a local unit of government. The League believes local monetary involvement helps insure local interest and accountability; therefore, local districts in organized boroughs and regional educational attendance areas (REAA) in the unorganized borough should be required to contribute a minimum (5-10%) of the funding for basic need (as defined for the delivery of "basic" education program and related services). Local funding beyond a set minimum should be permitted.

**Method of Financing**

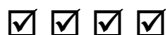
The League believes that the allotment and distribution of funds for elementary and secondary schools should be based upon equity, adequacy, and fairness. Inherent in this distribution plan should be a clear and concise definition of "basic need," which should be stated in monetary terms and be clearly understandable.

**Funding of Construction, Operations and Maintenance**

The League believes that the State has the major responsibility for financing the construction, operation, and maintenance of educational facilities, with local districts required to contribute a percentage of the funding. The State would meet its responsibility through a separate formula funding mechanism. Local school districts have the major responsibility for making the decisions in regard to design, location, needs, type of structure, and equipment. In order to qualify for State construction funds, local school districts should be required to contain the size of their buildings to conform to space guidelines mandated by the State.

**Clarification of Basic Need**

Basic need shall include all of the costs associated with the delivery of educational program required by statute, regulation, or other standard requirements. Assumed under this is a fair and equitable determination of real cost indices by community for facilities, staff, texts and materials, library, music, art, physical education facilities, etc. It is also assumed that the basic costs will be modified by geographical area differentials across the State. It is understood that any districts qualifying for federal funding would be allocated its full entitlement - separate from the basic need definition.



**Adopted 1977; Revised 1985; 1986; Reaffirmed each year since at LWVAK Convention.**