



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF DELAWARE

2400 W 17<sup>th</sup> Street, Clash Wing, Room 1, Lower Level, Wilmington, DE 19806

lwvde@comcast.net www.lwvdelaware.org

TESTIMONY TO THE JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE  
REGARDING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S BUDGET

ON BEHALF OF  
THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF DE

FEBRUARY 2019

These remarks focus on one aspect of the DoE portion of the Governor's Recommended budget – namely, funding for students in grades K – 3 who are classified as being in need of “basic special education.”

Access to a high quality and appropriate education for all students is one of the key positions supported by the League.

Funding for these students is specified in Section 347 of the Governor's proposed FY 2020 budget (the same amount as was in last year's budget).

The importance of funding special needs children, starting in kindergarten, stems from the fact that intervention in the early years makes a real difference. Funding has been in place for some time for special needs children starting in grade 4, but beginning targeted services **earlier** is well justified. Research funded by the National Center for Educational Evaluation and Regional Assistance (January 2010) found that of those students identified for services in kindergarten or first grade, 49% no longer needed services by the third grade.\* Thus, by making modest investments **early** not only leads to significant savings in tax dollars in the long run but also provides these youngsters with the opportunity to reach their fullest potential...and, hopefully, to become productive tax-paying citizens.

\*"Patterns in the Identification of and Outcomes for Children and Youth with Disabilities. Final Report," Jose Blackorby, et al., **National Center for Educational Evaluation and Regional Assistance** (January 2010), p. 4-17.