

League of Women Voters of Illinois Position on  
Charter Schools  
2001

***LWVIL Position:***

The League of Women Voters of Illinois believes that:

- The Illinois State Board of Education should continue to monitor the progress of existing charters before supporting expansion, specifically looking for improvement in individual student test scores and achievement of the specific goals stated in the school's charter.
- Charters should be established by local school boards, with adequate provisions for public education and participation in the decision making process.
- An appeal process to the State Board of Education should remain in place as an option for charters who have been denied by their local school boards.

While we feel that advantages of charters largely outweigh the disadvantages, we have identified the following areas of concern:

- School funding. Charters do nothing to address the issue of equitable and adequate funding of education, including special education.
- Financial impact on underlying school districts, especially smaller districts. Charters place financial pressure on smaller districts by drawing money out of the traditional public schools.
- Privatization and profit-making. The LWVIL opposes the presence of private, for-profit companies in the governance of public education, as there could be a conflict between the interests of shareholders in the corporation and the citizens of the state.

LWVIL has also identified areas of opportunity resulting from charter schools:

1. Innovation. Charters have a mandate to share innovations in teaching methods, curricula and standards of assessment for all stakeholders.
2. Increased parental choice and involvement within the public school system.