

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS METRO PHOENIX

Scottsdale Team

Meeting Date January 11, 2018 at 9:30 am at the home of Gerry Corey.

Members Present: Judy Levine (Host), Pat Bauer, Eva Binder, Gerry Corey, Leslie Gordon, Paula McKey, Diane Mueller, Joanne Pamperin, Doris Perlmutter, Alice Stambaugh, Anne Walsh, Solange Whitehead, and Katie Wilke.

Guests attending are Janet Nicholas and our guest speaker, Allegra Fullerton.

Agenda 1 – We extend our warm **welcome** to new Scottsdale team members **Diane Mueller** and prospective member **Eva Binder**.

Agenda 2 – The **December 14, 2017 minutes** were approved by consensus.

Agenda 3- We welcomed our guest speaker, **Allegra Fullerton from AZ Schools 101**.

Ms. Fullerton is a volunteer speaker for AZED101, a former teacher and she was a core team leader for SOS (Save Our Schools). Her college majors included Public Administration and Policy. Following are some of the highlights of her impressive 90-minute Power Point Presentation.

-Arizona currently has the 10th highest class size in the U.S.

-AZ teachers are 51st in the U.S. in teacher pay rankings.

-Out of the 8353 teachers needed for this school year, over 2000 positions remain unfilled and

over 4000 AZ positions are filled by long-term subs.

AZ teachers average 3 years of teaching experience, are unprepared to teach their subjects and experienced teachers are overwhelmed and unable to mentor new teachers.

She referred to a March NY Times [article](#) about Steve Yarbrough and the Arizona School Voucher program.

-The Arizona Center for Law in the Public Interest and attorney Tim Hogan filed a lawsuit on

behalf of several school districts alleging the governor and state Legislature have shorted

districts hundreds of millions of dollars a year for building-maintenance and soft-capital

needs. According to Allegra, the School Board pulled out of the suit.

-In 2009, then-Gov. Jan Brewer and the Legislature started cutting soft capital and building

Maintenance. Cuts continued under both Governors Brewer and Ducey.

-Since 2009, ongoing cuts in this area have topped \$2 billion

- For capital expenses- school districts are supposed to get approx. \$450 per elementary student and \$490 per high school student. (Those figures had remained unchanged since the 1980's)
- Currently receiving between \$40-\$80 per student; depending on district
- As of FY 2014, AZ ranked 49th or \$7,528, in overall per pupil spending in the U.S.

Comparing Charter, Public and Private School funding:

- Both are considered public schools
- Charter schools are contractors that receive taxpayer dollars to operate privately schools
- Charter school materials/equipment are usually privately owned and leased to the school at taxpayer expense

Allegra's presentation pointed out the different sources of revenue for Public Schools, Charter Schools and Private Schools. Charter schools do not have geographic boundaries and therefore, receive no revenue from district property taxes. They get the majority of their funding from the state's general fund. They can charge optional fees and receive tax credits.

Private schools can receive STO (student tuition organization) or ESA (Empowerment Scholarship Account) money from the state and they charge tuition.

What can we do to improve AZ public education? Allegra ended her presentation emphasizing the need to educate our fellow citizens through the following approaches: **Attend** PTO meetings, **Support** your local school, **Attend** school board meetings, **Attend** Legislative District meetings, **Contact** your local senators and representatives and the Governor, **Investigate** candidates' campaign funding and **Elect** officials with clear understanding and clear support for public education.

STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education should be emphasized in order to provide students with real problem solving skills.

Allegra informed the group on the House and Senate Education Committee Meetings held at 9am on Mondays and Thursdays, respectively and encouraged our involvement through RTS (Request to Speak).

Mentioned at the meeting were three areas of concern: 1) Proposition 301 renewal in 2020, 2) Increase Recess breaks from 1 to 2 daily and 3) Increase in funding, including PTO funding.

Agenda 4 – Alice – RTS (Request to Speak) Only when a bill is in committee, use RTS to make a comment or a Thumbs up or Thumbs down. Alice offered to assist League members who are interested in signing up for RTS at the Capitol.

Agenda 5 – Announcements – Leslie Gordon is enrolled in the current Scottsdale 101 sessions. **Anne** is participating in LWV's "Observer Corps". At November's Scottsdale City Council Meeting, Anne reported the following items of interest 1) the Fire department is underfunded and receives only 20% of what they request. 2) Councilman Smith says we underfund our infrastructure. 3) Council members Smith, Phillips and Littlefield were the "yes" votes in the 4-3 "No" vote to address dark money. At the January 8 meeting, a motion to approve a letter to the Arizona State Legislature expressing support for an update to Arizona's nondiscrimination statute to be inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity was approved 6-1, with Councilman Phillips dissenting.

Agenda 6 – Suggested topics for next month. **Solange** stated that our involvement in DDC continues. The Petition calling for a public vote for Desert EDGE is being circulated. Topics to consider: 1) Councilwoman Korte wants to reduce funding for the Palomino Library 2) City funds for Scottsdale Unified School District partnerships and 3) Council's support of schools.

Next Meeting is Thursday, February 8 at 9:30 am at Judy Levine's home.

Minutes Prepared by: Katie Wilke Final 2-5--2018