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***WHY AAUW DELAWARE SUPPORTS EQUITY IN EDUCATION***

The ACLU, Delawareans for Educational Opportunity, NAACP Delaware State Conference and others filed suit in Chancery Court to question Delaware’s compliance with the Educational Clause of the Delaware Constitution. According to the lawsuit filed in January 2018, they believe that the state does not provide low-income children, children with disabilities and children whose first language is not English with an adequate education.

**\***Delaware the oldest education funding systems. It is one of only eight states that bases funding on adult needs and not student needs, using an archaic formula.

**\***In Delaware, child poverty has increased over the past decade as has the number of children needing special education. Resources are not distributed effectively among the schools or school districts. Some Delaware schools have concentrations of low-income students approaching 100% including schools in the city of Wilmington, Dover and some schools in Sussex County.

**\***Some states provide additional funding for high needs students as part of their ongoing budget: Delaware does not. (current budget contains some temporary funding, titled Opportunity Funding, to support low income/high-needs students.)

**\***Delaware ranks 38th in the nation in pre-K access, and 41st when Head Start and special education are included. 50% of all Delaware children are not served by any pre-k program today.

**\***Delaware students are not achieving at grade level. In 2018 only 53% of all students were at grade level in English/Language Arts and 44% Math.

AAUW believes that high-quality public education is the foundation of a democratic society and the key to improving economic prosperity and gender equity. AAUW Delaware supports advocating for changes in the current educational funding system in order to meet the needs of all students in Delaware. A settlement of the lawsuit was reached in October 2020. Our work is to assure that the settlement agreement becomes law; a first step towards education equity in Delaware.

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