Resolution Worksheet
Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ

Title of Resolution: A Resolution Supporting Full Funding of English Language Learner and Special Education Services in Public Education

Date Resolution Submitted: 03/09/2023

Name of Submitting Body: United Church of Christ in New Brighton
1000 Long Lake Road
New Brighton, MN 55112
Phone: 651-633-1327
Email: uccnb@uccnb.org

Primary Spokesperson: Alison Jones
806 Cannon Avenue
Shoreview, MN 55126
Phone: 651-324-2671
Email: alisonejones@msn.com

Secondary Spokesperson: Dan Judd
840 Sherwood Road
Shoreview, MN 55126
Phone: 651-278-5449
Email: dpjudd@aol.com

Summary Statement of Intent of the Resolution:
This resolution is to support full funding for English Language Learner and Special Education in Public Education. Historically, these services have been consistently underfunded by federal and state government, causing local school districts to fund the gap, resulting in educational inequities. We wish to encourage efforts to increase funding and increase educational equity. Further, we intend to raise awareness and provide members of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ with information that can be used for the development of talking points about these issues.

Background and Supporting Statement:
Equity in all publicly funded schools has evolved through the growing understanding that integrity in education requires that schools have resources to serve all students as appropriate to their needs. Understanding this imperative has continued to be informed by our parents in our pilgrim faith tradition; including John Robinson, whose message that “there is more truth and
light to break forth from God’s holy word” has guided our progressive approach to meeting educational needs. That message is foundational to the liberal education commitment in the traditions of leading educational institutions established by our churches and passed onto public institutions that have been greatly influenced and shaped by this faith understanding.

John the Apostle began his gospel by stating “In the beginning was the word,” using the Greek term logos. From this can be drawn the connection between our faith tradition and liberal education. Logos means word. It also means reason. In ancient Greek, it presented the idea that humans were rational and capable of education. Out of this grew the concept that “in being made reasonable” humans could reach the fullness of being in the image of God.

Being in the image of the “Reason of God,” persons are called to be free, rational beings. The concept of liberal education develops out of freedom because its name comes from liberty. Out of this liberty came the drive for equity, which calls for all endeavors, including the public funding of education having the resources needed to accomplish the educational mission.

Educational integrity requires that providing equitable educational resources in funds spent for students, for teachers and facilities raises up all students to become free citizens, their minds and hearts formed in the fulness of their potential, able to think for themselves, to pursue the truth and grow in wisdom (I Corinthians 1:24) that is enabling all young people to more fully live out the glory of being in the image of God and the Truth of Personhood (John 14:6).

Resolution:
See attached

Additional Resources:

American University (September 2020) *Inequality in Public School Funding: Key Issues & Solutions for Closing the Gap.* Retrieved from [Inequality in Public School Funding | American University](https://www.american.edu)


Century Foundation (July 2020) *Closing America’s Education Funding Gaps.* Retrieved from [Closing America’s Education Funding Gaps (tcf.org)](https://www.tcf.org)


New America Education Policy Brief, New America, 2014
A Resolution Supporting Full Funding of English Language Learner and Special Education Services in Public Education

Whereas federal/state special education service requirements have been consistently underfunded in public schools, requiring local school districts to fill the funding gap.

Whereas when Congress enacted the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1975, it was estimated that students with disabilities on average required twice as much education funding as their non-disabled peers and Congress pledged to fund up to 40% of the additional cost (McCann 2014).

Whereas, in the 45 years since, the federal government has not funded special education at a level close to that goal. In Fiscal Year 2020, federal funding through IDEA Part B-611 was nearly $12.8 billion or approximately 13% of the estimated additional cost.

Whereas Title III has not from its beginning or since resulted in sufficient funding to provide adequate education for English Language learners,

Whereas the number of English Language learners has continued to grow, making the level of Title III funding even less adequate. (The Century Foundation, 2021).

Whereas the United States federal, state, and local governments are underfunding our public schools by nearly $150 billion annually (The Century Foundation “Closing America’s Education Funding Gaps” July 22, 2020).

Whereas the United Church of Christ will support federal/state legislation

(1) Supporting efforts for evidence based effective use of Title I (schools with high percentage of children from families with low incomes) funds as well as increasing Title I funds,

(2) Increasing Title III (ELL) funding to appropriate levels,

(3) Supporting efforts to increase IDEA (Special Education) funding at the state and federal levels so that it reduces need of local funding, which is inequitable, and at the same time, redesigning funding systems so they are more outcome-driven, flexible and equitable,

(4) Increasing per-pupil federal and state funding so that it is sufficient for educational services and opportunities,

(5) Supporting a more equitable funding stream rather than depending on local taxes as the major education funding source.
Therefore, be it resolved that the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ at its 2023 Annual Meeting

- Affirms support of our public education systems and public-school education.
- Supports increased and more equitable federal/state funding of English Learner Language and Special Education services for public schools.
- Supports the Minnesota UCC Conference and congregations in forming relationships with education reform advocates.
- Supports the Minnesota UCC Conference and congregations in joining advocacy delegations with local/state/federal elected officials.
- Supports mobilizing Minnesota UCC congregations for actions, marches, interfaith services, and other local or national activities on this issue.

We ask Conference Minister and Associates, clergy, and lay members of the United Church of Christ congregations in Minnesota to use this resolution for the development of speaking points in public arenas where such matters are being dealt with, including the United States Congress, Minnesota State Legislature, local school boards, Parent-Teacher Associations, Ministerial Associations, and in informal setting as appropriate.

**Funding:** Funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected entities and the funds available.

**Implementation:** The Conference Minister, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the Minnesota Conference UCC will determine the implementing body.