**Survey Responses Needed for Food in the Schools Study**

The LWV Duluth is embarking on a study of the Food Systems in Duluth area schools. This study was voted on and approved by a majority of our membership at the Annual Meeting in May 2013. The study process has begun and will continue through March of 2015, or until a consensus related to the topic is reached. The study information gathered and compiled will be evaluated per our by-laws under the established LWV Consensus process to determine if a Program Policy position related to Food in Our Schools might be added to those currently supported by LWV Duluth.

There are two study questions under evaluation: 1.) Is the school food our children are eating healthy? 2.) Is the environment based around food at the schools healthy?

A set of specific goals and a scope for the investigation have been determined by the study group. Specific goals include the following:

* Determine a working definition of “healthy”
* Determine what food types, and related policies and procedures (food prep, lunch periods, etc.) are currently in use in our ISD 709 School system now;
* Do these meet our definition of “healthy”
* Is there need and /or room for improvement or change; and
* Is improvement or change feasible after identifying the barriers or handicaps?

The ISD 709 School Board has recently re-established a General Committee on District Wellness headed by Annie Harala. Healthy food and food systems in the schools will be a large emphasis of the work to be conducted under the direction of this committee. LWV Duluth hopes to use our food study to shed light on issues of importance to our community members, provide relevant data and research to aid the efforts of the school board, and to educate our community on the importance and realities of food in our school and encourage change where needed and appropriate.

A survey has been compiled to collect background data on current public and LWV member conceptions and opinions related to Food in the Schools. Data collected will identify noted areas of public concern; and to aid in the development of educational materials. You can participate in the survey by going to the LWV-Duluth website <http://www.lwvduluth.org/> and clicking the active link below, or typing it into any web browser:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Q65DTK9>

Our survey will also allow us to determine interest in study participation, discussion or investigation, from our members and other involved parties. Members wanting to help can supply their name and contact information (e-mail/phone number) in question 1 of the survey. If members prefer to be anonymous in their answers but still want to help, they are welcome to contact either of the study group chairs (below) directly.

The survey consists of 10 questions, and will take approximately 5 minutes of your time to complete. Only the first question will require a response. However, a participant is welcome to answer the questions as “anonymous” if preferred. You must click DONE on page 8 of the document to submit your responses. Until then, you can review and change information on previous pages, and even exit the web and return where you left off, as long as you sign in from the same computer. Only one response per individual computer will be accepted.

Please check out our LWV-Duluth website <http://www.lwvduluth.org/> for progress and updates on the study. If you would like participate, are having problems with the survey, submitted a response you would like removed from the data set, or have any other additional questions. Please feel free to contact either of our study committee Co-Chairs: Chelsea Helmer at (218) 341-4407 or helmerchelsea@gmail.com; Zandy Zwiebel at 728-9411 or zzwiebel@gmail.com.