



School Board Project

Toolkit

2023

A product of the AAUW California Public Policy Committee



Toolkit for Protecting Your School Board from Members Who Support Book Banning, Curriculum Censorship, and Anti-LGBTQ+ Policies

Step #1 – Educate yourself.

- Find a list of resources [HERE](#).
- Attend school board meetings in your local district(s) and complete the School Board Meeting Checklist which can be found [HERE](#).

Step #2 – Seek out qualified candidates to run for open seats, or to challenge regressive members.*

- Make note of school board meeting speakers who share AAUW's values.
- Seek referrals.
 - Talk to members from your district PTA.
 - Talk to current board members.
 - Talk to local politicians you may have a relationship with.
 - Talk to like-minded friends who are in other community organizations.
- Once you have identified a potential candidate, approach them to gauge interest. You may find a sample "solicitation" speech [HERE](#).

Step #3 – If your potential candidate decides to run, support their campaign.*

- Request your branch board to agree to endorse the candidate; post on your branch's website.
- Help your candidate become known in your community.
 - Host a meet-and-greet in your home (as an individual, not as an AAUW member).
 - Post social media messages of support (to be provided by the state Public Policy Committee).
- Volunteer to work on their campaign.
 - Walk precincts.
 - Distribute flyers.

Step #4 – Speak out at school board meetings.

- You can find a sample script [HERE](#).

Step #5 – Keep your School Board Project liaison updated on your actions.

- You can find your liaison [HERE](#).
- Items to report:
 - Name, contact information (phone, email) of potential candidate, school district
 - Activities completed in support of candidate
 - Attendance at school board meeting
 - Attach copy of completed School Board Meeting Checklist.

*You can find information about the authority for engaging in these activities [HERE](#).

AAUW California School Board Project (2023-2024) Survey

<https://forms.gle/fQj7JyBdiLLLwsTC6>

Other Organizations Doing This Work

- [Equality California](#)
- California Teachers Association: [Elections Matter: Defending Schools Against Extremists](#)
- [Our Schools USA](#)
- Stop Moms for Liberty: StopM4L#
- [Showing Up for Racial Justice](#)

Organizations Supporting Regressive Candidates

- [Moms for Liberty](#)
- ["Reform-Minded" Candidates Sought to Run for CA School Boards in 2024](#)

Reports

- [Banned in the USA: State Laws Supercharge Book Suppression in Schools](#)
- [The Right-Wing Money and Influence Behind Moms for Liberty - LA Progressive](#)
- [What Is Critical Race Theory, and Why Is It Under Attack? \(edweek.org\)](#)
- [Trans Girls Belong on Girls' Sports Teams](#)
- [Transgender Athletes Face Bans From Girls' Sports in 10 U.S. States](#)

California Government

- <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Book-Bans-Letter-6.1.23-1.pdf>
- Sect'y of State Reference to Local Ordinances (find your city/county):
- [Local Campaign Ordinances](#)
- AB 1078: <https://legiscan.com/CA/bill/AB1078/2021>
- AB 1266 (8/12/13):
https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201320140AB1266 (EC Sect 221.5) Requires that a pupil be permitted to participate in sex-segregated school programs and activities, including athletic teams and competitions, and use facilities consistent with his or her gender identity, irrespective of the gender listed on the pupil's records.)

Community Organizing

- [Red Wine and Blue Book Ban Busters](#)
- [Unite Against BookBans - Action Toolkit](#)

Videos:

- Moms for Liberty vs. Save Our Schools -
[Part 1](#)
[Part 2](#)
- Satire (Just for fun): <https://youtu.be/BN4cAwIVAGM?si=thDXIRIQwh8a-MP1>



Observation of Public Meetings for Examples of Civil Discourse

Organization and Meeting Name _____ Date _____

Location _____ Observer _____ Security Guard Present Yes No NA

Audience: (If audience member is from a recognizable group, please include name of group after statements)

- Yes No NA Interrupting while someone is speaking or listening (group name if "yes")
- Yes No NA Shouting or yelling from the audience (group name if "yes")
- Yes No NA Being recognized by Board before speaking (group name if "no")
- Yes No NA Engaging in negative personal attacks (group name if "yes")
- Yes No NA Debating the policy, not the person (group name if "no")
- Yes No NA Ignoring directions given by the meeting chair (group name if "yes")
- Yes No NA Using intimidating body language such as standing or moving into the personal space of another (group name if "no")
- Yes No NA Treating others in courteous manner in person, online, or in written communication (group name if "no")

Board Members: (Please include name of board member after statements)

- Yes No NA Provide opportunities for public input on agenda items (name if "no")
- Yes No NA Shouting or yelling from the podium/dais (name if "yes")
- Yes No NA Resist efforts to find solutions or a course of action (name if "yes")
- Yes No NA Open to different perspectives (name if "no")
- Yes No NA Allow ideas to be expressed, opposed or clarified (name if "no")
- Yes No NA Provide unscheduled public appearance opportunities for input; if so when _____
- Yes No NA Treat others in courteous manner in person, online, in written communication (name if "no")
- Yes No NA Provided written behavior directions for public
- Yes No NA Appeared to not engage in civil discourse (name if "yes")

Board Chair:

- Yes No NA Follows meeting protocols
- Yes No NA Maintains control of the meeting
- Yes No NA Uses techniques to diffuse a tense situation
- Yes No NA Ensures respectful participation by all participants

Other Comments _____



School Board Script

Suggested script for a two-minute presentation before the school board that is proposing a violation of the State Ed Code, as defined below.

- My name is () and I am a resident in this district. My children/grandchildren attend/attended school in this district (if applicable).
- But today I am speaking on behalf of the **American Association of University Women**. AAUW supports academic freedom, protection from censorship and bias-free education, as well as access to curriculum that represents historically accurate information.
- According to the California Department of Education: “In California, the State Board of Education decides on the standards for all students...” I point this out to remind you that local school boards do not determine those standards.
- Keeping this in mind, I refer to **Ed. Code sect 51204.5**: requiring Social Science instruction to include the role and contributions of both men and women, members of various races/ethnic groups, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans, persons with disabilities, and members of other ethnic and cultural groups, to the economic, political, and social development of California and the nation.
- Actions taken by this board would be construed as a violation of students’ First Amendment rights as well as California’s constitutional guarantee of the right against discrimination.
- **We urge the Board to vote in favor of upholding those rights.**



Scripts for Soliciting School Board Candidates

Script #1: For soliciting names

Hello, my name is []. I'm a member of the American Association of University Women of California. One of our most important policy priorities is to ensure that all students have access to quality education that incorporates diversity and historically accurate information. We are very concerned about forces in our city that are supporting candidates for next year's school board race who want to censor curriculum and children's access to books that reflect the rich diversity of our state and country, and/or institute policies that may be harmful to LGBTQ+ students. We are looking for potential candidates who have a background in education, share our values, and have connections to our community. Would you know anyone with those qualifications that I might contact?

Script #2: For potential candidate

Hello, my name is []. I'm a member of the American Association of University Women of California. One of our most important policy priorities is to ensure that all students have access to quality education that incorporates diversity and historically accurate information. We are very concerned about forces in our city that are supporting candidates for next year's school board race who want to censor curriculum and children's access to books that reflect the rich diversity of our state and country, and/or institute policies that may be harmful to LGBTQ+ students. We are looking for candidates who have a background in education, share our values, and have connections to our community.

Your name was given to me by [] as someone with those qualifications who might be interested in running. Once you file and begin your campaign in earnest, members of my organization will be on hand to assist in your campaign by distributing materials, hosting meet-and-greets, etc. We also have access to materials that can help you learn more about running a campaign.

If you will allow me to provide your name and contact information to the Public Policy Committee at AAUW California, someone from their team will contact you to discuss next steps, and provide more details.

Script #3: If you have identified a qualified incumbent who is likely to be challenged

Hello, my name is []. I'm a member of the American Association of University Women of California. One of our most important policy priorities is to ensure that all students have access to quality education that incorporates diversity and historically accurate information. We are



Scripts for Soliciting School Board Candidates

very concerned about forces in our city that are supporting candidates for next year's school board race who want to censor curriculum and children's access to books that reflect the rich diversity of our state and country, and/or institute policies that may be harmful to LGBTQ+ students.

[I have been told] or [I have observed] that as a board member for the [school district] you share our values. May I ask if you are planning to run in 2024? We are concerned about a possible challenger and would like to offer you support in your re-election bid. Once you file and begin your campaign in earnest, members of my organization will be on hand to assist in your campaign by distributing materials, hosting meet-and-greets, etc.

If you will allow me to provide your name and contact information to the Public Policy Committee at AAUW California, someone from their team will contact you to discuss next steps, and determine how we might best be able to assist you.

Sue Miller - suellen-aauw@wavecable.com

- Alameda
- Capital Counties
- Lake Tahoe
- North Valley
- Far North

Seena Trigas - historiantrigas@gmail.com

- L.A.
- San Diego County
- Orange County
- Southeast

Laurinda Ochoa - ochoalaurinda@gmail.com

- Contra Costa County
- North Coast
- North San Joaquin
- South San Joaquin

Ashley Dargert - ashley.l.dargert@gmail.com

- San Francisco-San Mateo Counties
- San Luis Obispo County
- Santa Barbara County
- Santa Clara County
- Ventura County



Authority for School Board Candidate Involvement

AAUW Policies and Procedures provide guidelines for involvement by affiliate branches in recruiting and endorsing candidates and for campaign activities. The following are sections pertinent to our work with school board candidates:

AAUW Policies and Procedures: 301 CANDIDATES FOR PUBLIC OFFICE

II. Endorsement of Candidates for Nonpartisan Elective Office

A. A nonpartisan elective office is an office for which party affiliation does not appear on the ballot next to the candidate's name.

B. AAUW affiliates with 501(c)(4) status (the majority of affiliates) **may recruit and/or endorse candidates for non-partisan elective offices.**

Two Caveats:

1. AAUW affiliates that have independently incorporated themselves as 501(c)(3) entities may not endorse candidates for any kind of elected office.
2. Before endorsing candidates for nonpartisan elective office, AAUW state affiliate organizations must carefully investigate state and local election laws.

Where state or local election law considers endorsement itself a contribution, AAUW state affiliate organizations may not endorse candidates for any elective office, partisan or nonpartisan.

NOTE: California State Fair Political Practices Commission Regulation (FPPC) 18215 (a) provides that:

A contribution is any payment made for political purposes for which a donor does not receive full and adequate consideration.

- Endorsement is not listed as an activity that is considered a contribution.

IV. AAUW Affiliate's Contributions (AAUW P&Ps)

A. AAUW affiliates may not contribute money, mailing lists, or anything of material value to candidates for any elective office, partisan or nonpartisan.

A. AAUW affiliates may not collectively volunteer time for candidates' activities through an official AAUW affiliate-sponsored activity.*

A. AAUW affiliates may not publish paid or unpaid **partisan** political announcements or advertisements in any AAUW affiliate publication.

Note: Uncompensated messages on social media are not considered contributions (FPPC Reg 18215.2).

*However, nothing prohibits a member from doing so in their individual capacity.