



MARCH 2024 | ISSUE 7

Public Policy News

A monthly dispatch from the AAUW California Public Policy Team

LOBBY DAYS

April 2-3, 2024

Thank you very much to everyone who registered to participate in Lobby Days. 161 people have signed up, and 38 of them plan to participate in person at the Capitol!

We are now hard at work to schedule legislative office meetings. Meeting details and training documents will be available in mid-March. And don't forget to save the date for the training webinar-March 25th. Can't wait to see you there!

NEW PP WEBSITE

Be Sure To Check It Out

The AAUW California Public Policy website has had a facelift! We hope you will enjoy exploring it. Check it out [HERE](#). If you have any suggestions for improvement, please let us know at publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org.

One of the new features is the Branch Events page. Navigate there to see the interesting events that other branches are holding and get inspired. And let us know about your branch public policy events by filling out this [form](#).

WHERE IS THAT?

Find All Things Public Policy

Key links to your public policy resources:

- [Google Workspace](#)
- [AAUW Policy Leaders Manual from National](#)
- [Branch liaisons](#)
- Contact us at publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org.
- **Tell us about your branch public policy events** by filling out this [form](#).
- **Sign up for CA Legislative Action Alerts** [HERE!](#)

NEXT MEETING FOR BRANCH PUBLIC POLICY CHAIRS

Wednesday 4/10 @ 2pm PT

Note: April's meeting will be on the second Wednesday of the month, as Lobby Days is scheduled for the first week of April.

Click [HERE](#) for meeting information.

SAVE THE DATES!

Monday 03/25 @ 7pm PT

Learn How to Be an Effective Lobby Days Advocate Webinar

Wednesday 6/05 @ 2pm PT

June Branch Public Policy Chairs' Meeting

Celebrate Women's History Month

by advocating for equal pay (see p.3)

How One Branch Has Put the School Board Project into Action

By Laurinda Ochoa, Member AAUW California Public Policy Committee School Board Project

Last year the AAUW Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek branch said “Yes” to the AAUW California School Board Project (SBP) call to action. In August our branch members started to attend monthly local school board meetings and witnessed attacks by local religious and political extremists on books, curriculum, teachers, librarians and district staff.

Based on social media statements by people who want to “return schools to local control of concerned parents,” we believe our school district and adjacent districts are being targeted by groups intent on changing public education in California. As AAUW members we support our state and national public policy priorities of providing honest, equitable, and inclusive, quality public education for all students.

To implement the SBP and work toward these public policy goals, our branch has taken a three-step approach:

- **Educate** our members and the public about the issues facing public education by hosting Issue Programs and, later, Candidate Forums;
- **Advocate** for our public education priorities by speaking up at local Board of Education (BOE) meetings to support board decisions that are consistent with AAUW policies and values;
- **Collaborate** by forming coalitions with local groups to educate the public about the importance of supporting public education and those candidates that believe in honest and equitable quality education for all.

EDUCATE!

We encourage all branches to host an SBP program by inviting local experts to speak about what is happening in your districts. Often, accurate information is not available from local media and we need to hear from people actually engaged in public education to understand the local issues. PTA, BOE members, district superintendents, librarians, teachers and informed parents can provide valuable insights.

ADVOCATE!

We hope all branches attend BOE meetings and have one speaker advocating AAUW values. Board members and school staff have voiced appreciation to AAUW members for speaking up in support of public education. Often AAUW is one of the few voices of reason and civility at these meetings. Our voices can change the tone of the public discussion.

COLLABORATE!

We’ve learned our Education and Advocacy efforts naturally lead to other people and groups being interested in working together with AAUW to protect public education. We’re now working with others in a two-county area to “Lift Up Public Education” by educating the public, advocating for public education, and demonstrating community support for our local school districts. For more information on how we organized our coalition and distributed the workload, visit our website [here](#).

We encourage other branches to support quality public education and promote critical AAUW values by taking these simple steps to build member and community support for Quality Public Education. Remember to let your SBP liaison know when you have attended a school board meeting, and be sure to complete and submit the SB Checklist. You can find your liaison [here](#); you can find the Checklist [here](#).

AAUW California School Board Project: Sharing with Other States

On February 7, 2024, Kathi Harper, chair of the School Board Project, presented a webinar to AAUW National titled "School Boards: The Battleground for the Education Culture Wars". 433 AAUW members from around the country joined to learn what AAUW California is doing to fight back against book banning in schools, censorship of curriculum, and policies leading to unsafe climates for LGBTQ+ students.

click here!

If you missed the webinar, you can watch the recording [here](#). And check out [this Variety article](#) about the Oscar-nominated documentary short film "ABC's of Book Banning."

Celebrate Women's History Month

by advocating for equal pay

March 12 is Equal Pay Day 2024

Each year, this symbolic day is used to raise awareness around and combat the impact of pay inequities. Equal Pay Day 2024 is on March 12 and marks the current state of the gender pay gap for women, who make 84% of what men do, for full-time, year-round workers, and 78% for all workers (including part-time and seasonal). However, differently positioned women are more starkly impacted by this gap, as represented in the list below.*

● Asian American women	89 cents**
● White women	74 cents
● Moms	63 cents
● Black women	66 cents
● Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) women	60 cents
● Native women .	55 cents
● Latinas	52 cents
● LGBTQIA+ people***	?? cents

*List represents figures for average of all earners. For full list see [this link](#).

**Cents paid for every dollar paid to non-Hispanic white men, or in the case of moms, dads.

***The U.S. Census Bureau does not currently collect the necessary information to provide specific data about LGBTQIA+ communities. AAUW supports improving data collection on LGBTQIA+ communities through the American Community Survey.

Take Action!

Draw attention to Equal Pay Day and these persistent issues of gender marginalization in the workforce. **Need ideas?** Check out [THIS helpful article](#) from 2020 that includes additional information, tools, and suggestions.

QUESTIONS?

EMAIL US AT PUBLICPOLICY@AAUW-CA.ORG