

# Board to Board

A Communication from the AAUW California Board to Branch Boards

*Standing together for equity*



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December 2025

You may have noticed that all Board to Board emails include a link at the top labeled “View in browser.” The reason for this option is that the appearance of some emails may vary by device or email provider. If you have formatting issues, broken links, or oddly sized images, try clicking the link; you will see the entire email as it was designed to be read. Another advantage of reading the email in the browser is that you can share the link. For example, you can send the link to your newsletter editor and ask them to include the Public Policy article in your next newsletter.

## Quick Links

### Committee News

- [AAUW Fund](#)
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### Program News

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## Peer Group Meetings

All members are welcome to attend any peer group meeting. The peer group email announcement is sent to the branch chair(s) of the relevant committee and the branch president. Example: For the Public Policy Peer Group meeting, the email announcement will be sent to all branch public policy chair(s) and branch presidents.

## Charmen's Chat

**Charmen Goehring**, President, AAUW California, [statepresident@aauw-ca.org](mailto:statepresident@aauw-ca.org).

This time last year, I didn't realize the mood could be much heavier, but here we are. We are watching an administration more interested in prosecuting perceived adversaries than helping the people in our nation. We are witnessing a dismantling of the Department of Education, attacks on higher education, the loss of civil rights protections for students across America, and the rollback of environmental protections. In light of all of this, AAUW and AAUW California are staying the course and pivoting when necessary to reach those around us. Our organization is so vital to the future of women and girls in America. It is time to invest in a more equitable future for all by **contributing to**

**our AAUW Fund**, which allows AAUW to pursue actions that further our mission of gender equity as well as investing in our efforts to **become more welcoming** to diverse members in our community by doing the necessary mirror work described in *The Four Pivots: Reimagining Justice, Reimagining Ourselves* by Shawn Ginwright. As our nation becomes more diverse, AAUW branches need to better reflect their communities. It will take all of us working together to secure a more promising future for all women and girls.

To bolster your efforts, you might want to check out a National webinar called [Working in Coalition: Building Power through Partnerships](#). Another webinar worth your time is *Membership Recruitment Best Practices*, which features our own Morgan Hill Branch. It will be on the National website's [Webinar page](#) shortly.

Don't forget to consider lending your talents and ideas to the AAUW California state leadership team! This is a wonderful opportunity to help guide our state and branches into the next few years. You can find more information [HERE](#).

As we move through the holiday season, know that I appreciate all of you and all the hard work you do in your branches to promote AAUW's mission. Enjoy this month and whichever holidays you celebrate at this time of year, or just enjoy the cooler days of December!

## Committee News

### AAUW FUND [TOP](#)

*Deanna Arthur, AAUW Fund Committee chair, [aauwfund@aauw-ca.org](mailto:aauwfund@aauw-ca.org).*

Please encourage your members to invest in the future of AAUW and our mission of gender equity by making a year-end donation to the AAUW Fund. Funds with the most impact are The Greatest Needs Fund (#9110), the Public Policy Fund (#4514), and the Defend Higher Education Fund (#4513). Members can also direct their Required Minimum Distributions as a [Qualified Charitable Distribution \(QCD\)](#) to the AAUW Fund.

Your branch can also request that a Fellow speak at an event, either virtually or in person. You can find the request form and more information [HERE](#). Branches are expected to pay an honorarium and mileage/meal costs for the speakers, if applicable.

### BRANCH DEVELOPMENT [TOP](#)

#### MEMBERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP [TOP](#)

*Sigrid Moranz, Co-President-Elect, Leadership, [branch-development@aauw-ca.org](mailto:branch-development@aauw-ca.org)*

*Rebecca Gomez, Director, Membership, [branch-development@aauw-ca.org](mailto:branch-development@aauw-ca.org)*

#### DO YOU WANT TO EARN ONLY ¾ OF A MAN'S INCOME?

##### Finding and Building Coalition Partners:

If one hopes to recruit a younger demographic, finding like-minded organizations that advocate for social justice issues is paramount.

Counties in California have Commissions on the Status of Women. Their mission is to monitor women's issues in their designated areas. California also has a Commission on the Status of Women and Girls, which researches and publishes statistics relating to their mission. Branch Public Policy chairs and committees should collaborate with these entities, as several of their emphases are the same as those of AAUW--especially pay equity.

One way to do this is to share a presentation with your county supervisors for Equal Pay Day. Equal Pay Day is March 4, 2026. Every public meeting has some local publication to report on the goings-on, so that you can get free publicity for your branch. Many branches give out cookies with ¼ taken out to visually demonstrate the lower pay women earn. Men, of course, get the whole cookie!!!

**Sharyn Siebert, Co-President Elect**

### **News From AAUW National Membership Matters:**

#### **New Webinars Now Available in AAUW's Webinar Library**

If you're looking for fresh ideas and inspiration for your branch, be sure to explore the latest recordings now available on [AAUW's Webinar page](#).

- **Working in Coalition: *Building Power through Partnerships***  
Strong alliances make a lasting impact. In this session, AAUW members from across the country share how they build power with trusted partners and how your branch can do the same. You will hear real examples and walk away with concrete first steps to strengthen your advocacy through coalition work.
- **Branches in Action: *A Century of Advocacy, Fundraising & Impact***  
This webinar traces the history of AAUW branches, how they began, how they've shaped AAUW over time, and how they continue to fuel our accomplishments through advocacy, fundraising, and a shared commitment to equity for women and girls in higher education.

### **February 1st Count Preparation**

Check your branch member roster and verify your member count in preparation for the official February 1st count, which includes memberships processed through January 31st. Click [HERE](#) for video instructions on how to prepare your roster. Expired members will automatically drop from your rosters during November. Reports will be available by mid-March. Once received, report any discrepancies to [connect@aauw.org](mailto:connect@aauw.org).

### **Degree Equivalency Policy**

In May 2025, the AAUW National Board of Directors approved a formal policy for Degree Equivalency for prospective members. Click [HERE](#) to read it. The policy is on page 4 of the May 14, 2025, Board of Directors minutes.

We would like you to join us for an interactive Branch Development Peer Group meeting on Tuesday, January 13th, on *Succession Planning*. We will share successful ideas and offer you an opportunity to share the ideas that have helped your branch thrive. The session is intended to gather ideas to keep your branch engaged and to develop leaders for your branch's continued *Success*.

## **FIVE STAR AND STRATEGIC PLAN**[TOP](#)

*Donna Holmes, Director, Strategic Plan Consultant, [strategic-planning@aauw-ca.org](mailto:strategic-planning@aauw-ca.org)*

### **CHANGE HAPPENS, SOMETIMES IT'S GOOD!**

*In October, Branch Development held a peer group meeting on Public Policy and the Five-Star Program. In November, I received some follow-up questions from Amy Hom regarding the Advancement Star. Bottom line, National has updated the rules for three of the five stars. Here are the highlights:*

**Advancement Star:** the first two bullets have been expanded to include donations to Defend Higher Education Fund # 4513 and Public Policy Fund # 4514. Donations to the old Public Policy Fund # 4337 will only count through December 31, 2025.

**Governance & Sustainability** added “Update branch bylaws to reflect changes approved by AAUW membership in 2023.”

**Communications & External Relations** deleted ‘and share the email re-subscribe link with members quarterly in member communications.’

To see/print the updated criteria go to the National website [HERE](#).

These changes make reaching our goals easier, we just needed to know!

**The next Branch Development Peer Group will be on Tuesday, January 13th at 7 pm. Click [HERE](#) to register. The topic will be *Succession Planning***

## COMMUNICATIONS [TOP](#)

*Michelle Baer, Director, Communication Committee chair, [communications@aauw-ca.org](mailto:communications@aauw-ca.org).*

### **MISSED A WEBINAR? FIND THEM HERE.**

You can find many of the past AAUW California Webinars on the Webinars page ([HERE](#)). Recent webinars, such as those on higher education, artificial intelligence, Project 2025, and more, can be found there. Take a look!

Additionally, peer group meetings, which focus on specific areas such as AAUW Fund, Branch Development, Public Policy, Tech Trek, and Communications/Technology, can be found on the Peer Groups page ([HERE](#)) and are organized by area. Select an area and look for the button to link to that group’s YouTube channel.

Speaking of peer groups, a Communications/Technology peer group meeting was just held on December 4th. The topic was *How to make changes on your national hosted branch website* and the recording will be posted after a couple days on the peer group page (again, [HERE](#)) under the Communications – Technology section.

Based upon the feedback from the peer group survey (sent via email and linked in last month’s post), the upcoming peer group meeting topics have been established and are noted below.

- Wednesday, February 18th, at 7 pm
  - Topic: How to work with images within Canva
  - Click [HERE](#) to register.
- Wednesday, April 15th, at 7 pm
  - Topic: How to edit videos
  - Click [HERE](#) to register.

We hope to see you there!

**The next Communication Peer Group will be on Wednesday, February 18th at 7 pm. Click [HERE](#) to register. The topic will be *How to work with images within Canva*.**

## NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS [TOP](#)

*Gail Swain, Nominations and Election chair, [nominating@aauw-ca.org](mailto:nominating@aauw-ca.org).*

## THANK YOU FOR BEING AN AAUW LEADER

What is on your gift list? In addition to fun items, how about giving yourself an opportunity, a challenge, a learning experience? Put your name in the “hat” to be a director or the secretary on the AAUW California State Board. We need six new members in 2026. The nomination form is on our state [website](#). Go there now and check it out. Make some notes and then plan what you will say. Nominating yourself for a state leadership position is a great learning experience. And if you get elected, it’s even better. If you need any help, contact me or our State President at [statepresident@aauw-ca.org](mailto:statepresident@aauw-ca.org).

## PUBLIC POLICY [TOP](#)

*Amy Hom and Melissa Maceyko, Directors, Public Policy Committee Co-chairs, [publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org](mailto:publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org)*

## THE ASSAULT ON EDUCATION - WHAT AAUW HAS DONE - AND WHAT’S NEXT

### DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION DISMANTLED

Last month, the Trump Administration took a major new step to dismantle the U.S. Department of Education (ED). After deep staff cuts, ED announced six “partnerships” on November 18th that shift the day-to-day work of key education programs to other federal agencies, despite Congress creating ED to centralize federal education expertise and protect students’ civil rights. [AAUW released a statement](#) underscoring what’s at stake & rejecting the idea that education should be reduced to workforce development alone. Here’s a [quick summary of the announcement](#).

#### What AAUW has done:

- **Pushed Lawmakers to Act.** AAUW has joined in a multi-organization statement to Congress calling on lawmakers to reclaim their authority and block this unprecedented transfer of ED responsibilities. [Read it here.](#)
- **Joined Actions of Disability Rights Coalitions.** Joined shared disability rights principles affirming that ED must remain an independent, fully staffed and funded agency to oversee the federal education rights of children and youth with disabilities. IDEA and Section 504 guarantee students with disabilities a free, appropriate public education and protection from discrimination. Weakening ED’s capacity to enforce these laws would put those rights — and the resources schools need to uphold them — at risk. [Read the principles here.](#)

#### Why this matters:

- **Ensuring Civil Rights Protections in Education.** ED was created by Congress to ensure equal educational opportunity and enforce civil-rights laws in education. Scattering expertise across agencies not centered on education makes those statutory responsibilities harder to meet and accountability harder to track.
- **Preserving the Purpose of Education.** When federal leaders frame education as a “talent pipeline,” they focus on a kind of economic rationality that ignores its broader purpose of preparing people to lead, participate in democracy, and build economically secure lives. That broad purpose is especially vital for women and girls, students of color, LGBTQ+ students, students with disabilities, Native students, immigrants, and student parents.

#### What you can do:

- See below for **Three Steps to Take Action in December: Combatting the Assault on Higher Education**

## AAUW CALIFORNIA PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES SCHOOL BOARD PROJECT SYMPOSIUM

The School Board Project will be hosting a Half-Day Virtual Symposium *Defending the Frontline of Democracy* on **Saturday, January 31st, 9 am-12:30 pm via Zoom. Register [HERE](#). In just 3 ½ short hours, you will learn:**

- How the federal government's restrictive laws impact California's protective laws
- How to effectively advocate for AAUW values with your local school board members
- Why advocating on behalf of LGBTQ+ students is a crucial AAUW priority
- How to support progressive school board members in conservative districts
- How to respond to parents' concerns with accurate information
- How to form and sustain valuable coalitions in your district with like-minded organizations
- How to identify, recruit and support school board candidates whose values reflect AAUW California's Public Policy Priorities

Please read this excellent article by Kathi Harper, chair of the AAUW California Public Policy School Board Project, about why the School Board Project is more important, more relevant, and more urgent than ever: "[AAUW California Public Policy Committee Announces School Board Project Symposium](#)".

Kathi's article is the fourth and final installment in a series of articles we have been providing in the lead-up to the Symposium. If you missed them, here are the previous installments: "[Understand the Urgency of Branch Participation in the School Board Project](#)", "[School Boards - The Overlooked Frontline of Democracy](#)", and "[Supporting Public Education: Community-Based Coalitions](#)".

### WEBINARS AND EVENTS

- AAUW Silicon Valley Branch will host a virtual event on reproductive rights featuring [Leah Litman](#), host of the popular [Strict Scrutiny](#) podcast - Thursday, Jan 22nd, 1-2 pm. Register [HERE](#)
- AAUW California School Board Project presents a Half Day Symposium: *Defending the Frontline of Democracy* - Saturday, Jan 31st, 9 am-12:30 pm via Zoom. Register [HERE](#).
- If you missed it...AAUW California Webinar - *Harnessing the Power of AI*. See the recording and presentation [HERE](#).

### Three Steps to Take Action in December: Combatting the Assault on Higher Education

#### STEP 1: Self-Focused: Education

- Learn about the Trump Administration's "Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education" which would offer preferential funding to universities if they adopt policy changes such as dismantling DEI and restricting campus governing and speech. See [how universities have been responding](#), and read AAUW's [press release](#) opposing the compact.
- Read the [AAUW letter](#) urging Congress to support student parents by preserving the Child Care Access Means Parents in Schools (CCAMPIS) program. The CCAMPIS program helps student parents by funding campus-based child care centers.
- Read the [summary from AAUW National](#) on the dismantling of the Department of Education - what is happening, and why it matters.

#### STEP 2: Other-Focused: Education & Connection

- Tell at least TWO other people what you have learned about the negative impacts of the Trump Administration's "Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education".

- Tell at least TWO other people what you learned about the negative impacts of the Trump Administration’s dismantling of the Department of Education.
- Tell at least TWO other people about the importance of the CCAMPIS program to support student parents.
- Get a booster shot of hope: meet with friends for a watch party of AAUW National’s 10/29/25 webinar, “[Defending Equity: Standing Strong Against Attacks on Equity in Education](#),” It will inspire you.

### STEP 3: Politically-Focused

- Tell Congress to ask the Department of Education to open the CCAMPIS application so parenting students can stay in school. Click [HERE](#) to access AAUW’s Two-Minute Activist page, then click on “Dept. of Ed.: Remove Barriers for Student Parents”.
- Urge Congress to block efforts to dismantle the Department of Education’s ability to do its job - advancing gender and racial equity in every classroom and protecting students’ rights. Click [HERE](#) to access AAUW’s Two-Minute Activist page, then click on “Congress: Ensure the Dept. of Ed. Can Serve Our Students”.

### For Extra Learning and Outreach Ideas

- See our “[Action Extras.](#)”

Please share the latest issue of [Public Policy News](#) with your branches, your friends and your network.

### Public Policy Peer Group Meeting

**Next meeting: Friday, December 5th, at 1:30 pm Pacific. Anyone and everyone who is interested in public policy is welcome to join! Can’t wait to see you there.**

AAUW California

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