



AAUW California Public Policy Peer Group Bi-monthly Meeting



December 5, 2025



Agenda

- Updates from National: Dept of Ed Dismantling
 - What You Can Do to Resist
 - Updates from State
 - School Board Project - Symposium
 - School Board Project
 - Lobby Day 2026
 - Things to Look For(ward to)
 - 2025 Legislative Agenda Recap
 - Proposition 50
 - No Kings Day
 - Upcoming events and webinars
 - Q&A/Open
- ACTION** → **Look for these icons for immediate or upcoming action opportunities.**

Updates from AAUW National: Dept of Ed Dismantling

Department of Energy final rules, which impact Title IX and Title VI are anticipated on 12/9 – see below. Expect an AAUW press release and action alert.

- Rescinding Regulations Related to Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs or Activities (General Provisions), [DOE-HQ-2025-0024](#)
 - This rule rescinds long-standing protections against disparate impact discrimination in DOE-funded education programs. The disparate impact standard holds recipients accountable when a policy that seems neutral on its face nevertheless burdens certain racial or ethnic groups more than others.
 - See [AAUW's comment](#).
- Rescinding Regulations Related to Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs, [DOE-HQ-2025-0025](#)
 - This rule rescinds a critical protection in DOE-funded education programs that allows schools to take proactive steps to help overcome the effects of discrimination that have resulted in the underrepresentation of women and girls in certain educational fields, like STEM.
 - See [AAUW's comment](#).

Updates from AAUW National (cont'd)

AAUW Press Release: [Gutting the Department of Education Betrays Students' Civil Rights](#) (11/20/25).



- TAKE ACTION - Urge Congress to ensure the Dept. can fulfill its mission: <https://aauw.quorum.us/campaign/148631/>.
- Overview of litigation re: dismantling of Dept. of Ed. from [Democracy Forward](#) and [Higher Ed Dive](#).

Recap of Dept. of Ed.'s [Reimagining and Improving Student Education \(RISE\) Committee negotiated rulemaking](#), including definitions and loan limits for "graduate" and "professional" degrees.

- Will impact student loan funding.
- If you want to read more on this, see [THIS DOC](#).



What Can YOU Do To Resist?

Protest, Respond to Action Alerts, and/or Engage in Targeted Monthly Actions! More coming on public education around Dept of Ed dismantling in Jan 2026.

Take Action: Combatting the Assault on Higher Education

STEP 1: Self-Focused: Education 1

- 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 2

- 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 3

- 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 to combat the assault on Higher Ed this month, see our ["Action Extras."](#)

Every
Contribution
Helps!

ACTION →

School Board Project

Why is participation in the School Board Project so critical? See the series of articles provided by the SBP team:

- [Understand the Urgency of Branch Participation in the School Board Project](#)
- [School Boards - The Overlooked Frontline of Democracy](#)
- [Supporting Public Education: Community-Based Coalitions](#)
- [AAUW California Public Policy Committee Announces School Board Project Symposium](#)

Half Day Symposium - Saturday Jan 31, 2026 9:00am-12:30pm via Zoom. Register [HERE](#).

- Keynote: Current State of Education Laws & the Challenges Presented
- Presentation: How to Effectively Monitor School Board Meetings for Compliance
- Panel Discussion: Challenges Facing Our School Boards
- Workshops:
 - Coalition building for Greater Community Impact
 - Recruiting School Board Candidates

School Board Project (cont'd)



Check out the event! Flyer will be emailed to all members next week. Please share it with your branches, your networks, and other organizations.

AAUW California Public Policy Symposium

2025-2026
AAUW
OF CALIFORNIA
PUBLIC POLICY

THE SCHOOL BOARD PROJECT: DEFENDING THE FRONTLINE OF DEMOCRACY

Saturday, Jan 31st
 9am - 12:30pm **Virtual**

**FREE PUBLIC EVENT
REGISTER HERE**

FEDERAL CHALLENGES TO CALIFORNIA LAWS
Learn where California's protective laws against book banning, curriculum censorship, and attacks on LGBTQ+ students currently stand in light of recent Federal education policy changes
Richard Barrera, MPP – Trustee of the San Diego School Board

HOW TO EFFECTIVELY MONITOR SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS
Gain knowledge and skills to confidently assess school board compliance with state law and report non-compliance
Brianna Muller, MPP – Education Advocate, Public School Defenders Hub

CHALLENGES FACING CALIFORNIA SCHOOL BOARDS
Get insights from a students' advocate, parents' advocate, and current board member
Ariel Bustamante – Equity and Compliance Expert, L.A. LGBTQ Center
Lisa Gross, Ph.D. – California PTA Board of Managers
Nancy Young, MA – Murietta School Board Trustee

EFFECTIVE RECRUITING OF SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES
Hear how to recruit and support great candidates from a national leader on running school board campaigns
Kyrstin Schuette – Executive Director, School Board Integrity Project

COALITION BUILDING FOR GREATER COMMUNITY IMPACT
Engage with two AAUW California Public Policy Committee members from the Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek branch who formed a successful local education coalition
Ogie Strogatz, MSPH and Laurinda Ochoa, JD, Co-Founders, Lift Up Public Schools Coalition

WHO SHOULD ATTEND:
Concerned parents and guardians, educators, nonprofits, civic leaders, advocates, equity activists, legal advisors, media, local and state agencies.
AAUW members are encouraged to attend, but membership is not required.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SCHOOL BOARD PROJECT
aauw-ca.org/school-board-project-toolkit/

publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org
aauw-ca.org/public-policy

Lobby Day 2026

Lobby Day 2025 faced logistical challenges stemming from the overbooked schedules of the legislative offices in Sacramento.

- Many meetings were not confirmed until the last minute
- 84 of 94 meetings were with staff rather than with legislators
- Most meetings were limited to 15 minutes

The Redlands Branch scheduled their own meetings **with district offices** for Lobby Day 2025. They succeeded in securing 8 meetings, of which 4 were with the legislators.

AAUW California Public Policy sent a survey to all members to solicit their thoughts about shifting Lobby Day to in-district rather than in Sacramento. We received 213 responses, with the majority people preferring in-district meetings, followed by Zoom.

Lobby Day 2026 (cont'd)

Based on the member input received, Lobby Day 2026 will be held primarily in person in-district and via Zoom. We believe this will result in:

- Earlier meeting confirmations
- Longer meetings
- More meetings with legislators instead of staff

This approach introduces a new challenge in that most people want to meet with their own legislators, some of whom have 15-20 AAUW members in their district who want to participate in Lobby Day, spread across multiple branches.

Please look for more information and a sign-up form in January.

Things to Look For(ward to)

City Council Action and Monitoring Project (CCAMP)

- Look for information about the program and your potential participation in it! It will be in your inboxes soon. More information about CCAMP will also be rolling out in January & February 2026.

New Public Policy Interns Incoming

- Interviews and onboarding in the next few weeks.



AAUW California 2025 Legislative Agenda Recap

A-priority support bills were vetoed or gutted:

- SB 771 (Stern): Social Media Platforms Endangering Californians (AAUW CA Sponsored) – Governor vetoed the bill, indicating that current civil rights laws have not been tested in the courts wrt algorithms complicity in hate crimes.
- SB 418 (Menjivar): Ensure Equal Access to Care for All – Governor vetoed the bill, citing a concern about cost impact
- AB 1098 (Fong): Pregnancy Protections for All Students – Bill faced significant opposition from public universities, and author's office chose not to continue. Instead they gutted and replaced the language to establish the Office of the Interagency Council on Education. The amended bill was signed into law.

11 of the 14 support bills that made it to the Governor's desk were signed into law, including:

- AB 621 (Bauer-Kahan): This B-priority bill heightens penalties for companies whose platforms distribute deepfake pornography.
- SB 669 (McGuire): This B-priority bill authorizes up to five rural hospitals throughout the state to partner with licensed birth centers to provide perinatal services in rural communities.
- AB 260 (Aguiar-Curry): This bill protects access to medication abortion.
- SB 627 (Wiener): This bill bans law enforcement officers from wearing facial coverings during their duties. **This is the first such law enacted in the nation!**

AAUW California 2025 Legislative Agenda (cont'd)

Three of the bills AAUW California opposed have died:

- AB 579 (Castillo): This bill would have barred courts from treating parents' refusal to acknowledge their child's gender identity as abuse, preventing it from being used as a factor in custody decisions.
- AB 25 (DeMaio): This bill would have required an election official to verify the citizenship of voters.
- AB 1012 (Essayli): This bill would have prohibited the provision of Medi-Cal to people without legal immigration status.

To see the full results of the 2025 Legislative Agenda, please go to the [Bill Tracking Report](#).

To review the Legislative Agenda Scorecard, see the [November issue](#) of Public Policy News, page 7.

Proposition 50 - Thank you for your advocacy!

A graphic with a blue background featuring a stylized illustration of the Statue of Liberty. The text "YOUR VOTE IS YOUR VOICE." is in white and red, and "BE HEARD." is in white. A red banner at the bottom says "Special Election Nov. 4th". On the right, under "RECENT NEWS", is a headline about AAUW California's guidance on Proposition 50, followed by a date and location, a paragraph of text, and three buttons: "Press Room", "2025 Bill Tracker", and "Take Action Now".

**YOUR VOTE
IS YOUR
VOICE.**

BE HEARD.

Special Election Nov. 4th

RECENT NEWS

AAUW California Public Policy Shares Education-Focused, Nonpartisan Guidance on Proposition 50

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – September 26, 2025 – AAUW California today released nonpartisan voter-education information to help Californians understand Proposition 50, a statewide ballot measure on the November 4, 2025, special election. [Read full news release.](#)

[Press Room](#)

[2025 Bill Tracker](#)

[Take Action Now](#)

Thank you for everything you did to Get Out the Vote and educate the community about the importance of Prop 50. Voters overwhelmingly approved the measure, giving the state the ability to temporarily redraw its congressional maps in response to the redistricting undertaken by Texas.

The collective efforts of organizations like AAUW California - alongside many others - made a real difference.

No Kings Day - AAUW shows up in force

In October, AAUW encouraged members to turn out to nationwide No Kings Day protests to "...show the power of people working together for education, economic opportunity, civil rights, and a healthy democracy." AAUW members responded, joining with neighbors, friends, and family members, as well as with partner organizations, to turn out in force.



Upcoming Webinars and Events

- **Reproductive Health Care Issues Post-Dobbs - Thursday Jan 15, 2026 6:00pm PT.** Register [HERE](#).
- **Leah Litman Speaks to AAUW on Roe Commemoration - Thursday Jan 22, 2026 1:00-2:00pm PT.** Register [HERE](#).
- **AAUW California School Board Project Half Day Symposium - Saturday Jan 31, 2026 9:00am-12:30pm PT** via Zoom. Register [HERE](#).

And if you missed them:

- **Harnessing the Power of AI: Innovation, Creativity, and Social Impact** - see the recording [HERE](#).
- **Higher Education at Risk - And How You Can Help Protect It** - featuring Meghan Kissell, AAUW Senior Director of Policy - see the recording [HERE](#) and the presentation slides [HERE](#).
- **Project 2025 Impacts on AAUW Values - One Year Later: How to Stop Ongoing Implementation** - see the recording [HERE](#).



Q&A/Open Discussion



Next Public Policy Peer Group Meeting

NOTE: Meetings will be held every other month on Fridays at 1:30pm starting October.

Meeting dates Feb 6, Apr 3, Jun 5

Next meeting: Friday February 6th at 1:30pm

Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87678507834>

Information about all meetings, including slides and recordings can always be found HERE.