

## AAUW 2025-2027 Public Policy Principles and Priorities

The Public Policy Principles **and Priorities** underscore AAUW's mission to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. They establish principles for action on which AAUW members across the country focus their advocacy efforts. They guide the work of the AAUW's federal priorities and that of AAUW state organizations and branches on state and local issue advocacy efforts.

AAUW positions are shaped by our commitment to equity by being nonpartisan, evidence-based, experience-driven, inclusive, and intersectional. AAUW opposes all forms of discrimination on the basis of age, disability, race, ethnicity, **sex**, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, religious beliefs, pregnancy or parental status or socioeconomic status, and supports constitutional protection for the civil rights of all individuals. AAUW believes in the need to end white supremacy and address structural and systemic racism. Efforts to advance racial, ethnic, and gender justice must be embedded into every policy initiative.

### AAUW stands for Education

- **Public Education:**
  - Investing in strong public education systems which provide equitable high quality public K-12 education
  - ~~Opposing all diversions of public funds to nonpublic elementary, secondary education and charter schools the use of public funds for nonpublic elementary, and secondary education, and for charter schools that do not adhere to the same civil rights and accountability standards as required of other public schools~~
  - Closing the learning and opportunity gaps that disproportionately affect students from low-income and underserved groups
- **Inclusive Curriculum:**
  - Ensuring all curriculum represents historically accurate information, information based on scientific consensus, and is free from **censorship and political**, religious, **or cultural** bias
- **STEM Opportunities:**
  - Closing the gender gap in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education
- **Strengthened Civil Rights Protections—Enforcement of Inclusive Title IX Rules and Other Civil Rights Statutes**
  - **Strengthening civil rights statutes impacting education including Title IX, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and other applicable laws**
  - **Vigorous enforcement of the 2024 Title IX rules, and other protections against sex-based harassment and discrimination in schools**  
**Reinstating Title IX rules that strengthen and clarify protections for student survivors of sexual harassment and assault, ensure schools provide**

- o accommodations for pregnant and parenting students, and affirm Title IX's protections from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity
- o Prohibiting harassment and bullying in schools, including support of enumerated anti-bullying and harassment laws and policies that protect with specific enumeration of students on the basis of disability, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex-based stereotypes and characteristics, pregnancy or parental status
- **Affordable post-secondary Higher Education:**
  - o Supporting equitable access to higher education, which is affordable, inclusive and yields high-quality credentials or degrees through increasing investment in financial support for degree programs and addressing the debt burden which disproportionately impacts women and borrowers of color
  - o Expanding access for women in career and technical and vocational education and training that leads to lucrative employment yields high quality credentials or degrees
  - o Reducing barriers to postsecondary success through policies that mitigate non-tuition challenges to completing a degree or high-quality certificate program, including supporting pregnant or parenting students, expanding access to affordable child care, and ensuring access to contraception and abortion care.

## AAUW stands for Economic Security

- **Pay Equity:**
  - o Ensuring equal pay and benefits for equal work of equivalent value, and addressing root causes of occupational segregation regardless of gender, identity, or location
  - o Addressing the multiple factors that reinforce the gender and racial pay gaps, through increasing salary transparency, eliminating salary history to set future wages, increasing the minimum wage, and addressing root causes of occupational segregation, and other policies that mitigate the gender pay gap
  - o Enforcing and expanding employment discrimination statutes
- **Mitigation of Caregiving:**
  - o Improving access to paid sick leave, medical leave, safe leave, affordable child and elder care, and other policies that mitigate the unequal burden on women for caregiving responsibilities
- **Retirement Safety Nets:**
  - o ~~Robust and strong~~ Strengthening Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid and oppose any efforts to undermine them, including privatization and block grant proposals
- **Reproductive Freedom:**

- o Ensuring access to contraception and abortion care for all women regardless of location

## **AAUW stands for Social Justice and Civil Rights**

- **Constitutional Rights:**
  - o Vigorous enforcement of and full access to civil and constitutional rights, including recognition and publication of the Equal Rights Amendment
  - o Complete, accurate and timely collection of data, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and gender identity to inform policy decisions and the apportionment of political representation
- **Expanding Voting Rights:**
  - o Expanding voting rights to promote diverse, inclusive and equitable political participation and ensure all Americans have the same access and right to vote
- **Freedom from Harassment and Violence:**
  - o Ensuring that people who are subject to harassment or violence based on age, disability, race, ethnicity, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, religious beliefs, pregnancy or parental status have full protection and recourse under the law
  - o Supporting policies to end gender-based violence, including reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)
  - o Supporting policies that address the prevention of human trafficking and protection of its victims
- **International and Civil Rights:**
  - o Supporting U.S. advancement towards the gender equity goals on education and the economy in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
  - o Supporting ratification of the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

## **2025-2027 Biennial Action Priorities**

*AAUW's Biennial Action Priorities for federal action are chosen according to the criteria of viability, critical need, strong member support, and potential for distinctive AAUW contribution or leadership. These national priorities inform local, state, and federal action. Additional priorities may be added based on circumstances. No order of importance for the priorities is implied.*

**To support equitable access to higher education that promotes gender fairness, equity, diversity and inclusivity, and to address the barriers and implicit biases that hinder the advancement of women and girls especially women of color,**

**AAUW advocates for:**

- Vigorous protection of the 2024 update to Title IX rules that provide clear directives to build safer and more inclusive institutions for all students, including student survivors of sexual violence, pregnant and parenting students, LGBTQ+

## students

Reinstating Title IX rules that strengthen and clarify protections for student survivors of sexual harassment and assault, ensure schools provide accommodations for pregnant and parenting students, and affirm Title IX's protections from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity

- Ensuring institutions of higher education are accessible to all students regardless of socioeconomic status, the environment and curriculum is inclusive, and free from political, religious, or cultural bias intervention around curriculum
- Reducing barriers to postsecondary success, specifically for women of color, including increasing investment in financial support for degree programs, campus child care programs
- Policies that support working women in pursuit of higher education, including increased access to paid leave, access to contraception and abortion care, affordable high-quality child care