

Highlights of proposed AAUW bylaws

by Sandy Kirkpatrick, AAUW-CA Parliamentarian & AAUW Bylaws Committee Member

AAUW's strategic planning process began in 2005, with a restructuring approved unanimously at the 2007 AAUW Convention. To complete this restructuring, newly revised bylaws will be presented for approval at the 2009 AAUW Convention at St. Louis. These bylaws:

- streamline the current bylaws and move administrative details to policies and procedures;
- provide more flexibility on all levels (branch, state, and national); and
- provide more avenues for all members to participate in the organization, in particular giving every member a vote on national business.

What will NOT change:

- mission-based activities and programming, including the work of the Educational Foundation, Legal Advocacy Fund, and Leadership Training Institute;
- public policy advocacy through the newly named "AAUW Action Fund;" and
- the unique mission and grassroots strength of AAUW.

Summary of Major Changes:

1. **ONE MEMBER-ONE VOTE.** Instead of using a delegate system, every member will have a vote. Members who cannot attend meetings and vote in person will be able to vote by all methods approved by the corporate code of the District of Columbia and the Board (i.e., mail, phone, FAX or electronically).

2. **ONE BOARD.** AAUW and EF boards are merged into one board with authority over all aspects of AAUW activity, including:

- delivery of the mission through programs and policies;
- setting membership dues (part of financial administration oversight);
- appointment of the directors of the AAUW Action Fund, for voter education and related political activities; and
- appointment and oversight of AAUW committees and task forces, including determining the process for the awarding of fellowships and grants.

3. **MEMBERSHIP OPEN.** Membership is open to any individual supportive of the mission, without regard to college degree status, and to partner members. Partner membership broadens the current college/university membership category to include the possibility of other institutions or organizations that meet the criteria. Open individual membership provides an equal opportunity for all to join, in recognition that one does not need to have educational credentials to work for women's education.

4. **STRUCTURAL FLEXIBILITY.** Branches and states will not be required to make any changes if their current structure works well for them. However, the new bylaws mandate only an administrative and financial contact person from each branch/state, allowing the branches and states to create the structure and leadership positions that make the best use of their resources to fulfill AAUW mission.

The full bylaws, with rationale for each article is published on the AAUW website, along with a detailed list of frequently asked questions, visit:

http://aauw.org/About/bylaws/index.cfm?cs_LoginTime=225332

(Membership number is required to login to this webpage)

For more information about the structural changes to AAUW, read the AAUW Briefing #18:

http://www.aauw.org/member_center/briefings/briefingRestructure_021009.cfm