

The Fight for Fair and Safe Campuses: Title IX Past, Present, and Future Opening Remarks

I am Ann Pehle, AAUW Pennsylvania President.

Welcome to the fourth and last webinar of our 2020 AAUW Convention Webinar Series. The COVID pandemic forced the cancellation of our in-person event last April and we began working to bring some of the content to you through the power of Zoom. Information about all of our webinars are on the AAUW Pennsylvania website, under Meetings.

Before we continue any further, there are Zoom etiquette items I need to share.

- This event is being recorded and the link will be posted on the AAUW Pennsylvania website.
- Please use the Chat feature for technical assistance. A team member is monitoring the Chat and will try to assist. Chat messages will not be seen by other attendees.
- We have allotted time at the end of the conversation for your questions. Please submit via the Q&A button. Other team members are monitoring the questions and, as time permits, will pose them to our speaker. We will do our best to answer all the questions submitted, but no guarantees.

I couldn't be more pleased to have Tracey Vitchers join us this evening. Tracey and I met in May 2019 at an event sponsored by Governor Wolf that was designed to introduce people, working in the same spaces, to each other. I remember being so pleased that the Executive Director of a leading campus sexual assault prevention organization is a resident of Pennsylvania.

Tonight, we are focusing attention on Title IX and specifically campus sexual assault. AAUW has been a strong voice supporting Title IX from its creation in 1972 through today. Our public policy staff lobby the Department of Education and national legislators to ensure the provisions remain and are enforced. When Secretary DeVos, in the previous administration, [in our opinion] gutted the rules around campus sexual assault, AAUW created a call-in campaign to the Dept of Education. It is said that by midday, the staffer assigned to answering the phone could quote our pitch.

As you know, Title IX is a vast and complex piece of legislation aimed to reduce gender discrimination. AAUW identified a gap in that there was no implementation guidance to Title IX Coordinators, persons assigned to enforce the legislation locally. AAUW worked with Dept of Education to create such a tool and in 2015 asked members to help distribute it. I had just joined AAUW and thought this is something I can do. So worked in my branch and at the state level.

Many of you have donated to and/or are aware of AAUW's Legal Advocacy Fund and its work. Founded by AAUW members in 1981, AAUW's Legal Advocacy Fund informs people of their rights and uses the

legal system to seek justice and change. LAF has provided millions of dollars to balance the scales of justice for people working toward gender equity through the legal system.

Tomorrow you will receive an email with information, Tracey's presentation, and links to AAUW's work on Title IX and campus sexual assault.

So, you see why inviting Tracey Vitchers to speak at our April 2020 State Convention was so important. AAUW and It's On Us definitely work in the same space. Introducing you to Tracey tonight is very special.

Now, it is my pleasure to introduce Lee Wolfe, AAUW Pennsylvania Program Vice President who will make the official introduction and moderate tonight's event.