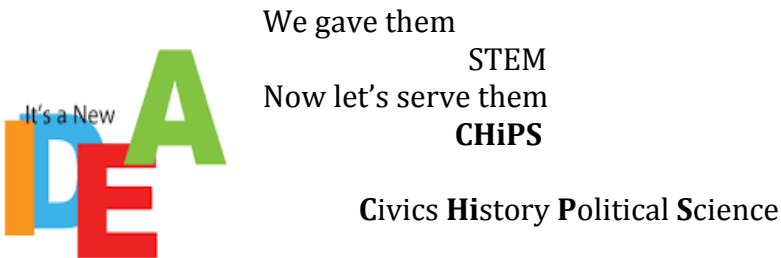


CHiPS Meeting Minutes
Eugene-Lane Branch
July 7, 2015

With the consent of branch President, Carene Davis-Stitt, Peggy Shippen asked a small group of members to gather to discuss a new program Peggy is proposing called CHiPS.

Twice during 2014-15, Peggy had discussed her idea for the CHiPS program with Eugene-Lane Branch members Kappy Eaton, Carol Miller and Marian Spath and Carene Davis-Stitt. They liked the idea! This spring Kappy suggested Peggy print up small cards introducing the concept to pass around at the 2015 AAUW National Convention they would be attending together. Peggy designed & Kappy edited the cards that looked like this:



Did you know ...

- Our country ranks 98th in the world for the percentage of women in its national government?
- The gender gap for women political representation is growing – with only 6 women governors, 25% holding state office and less than 20% holding Congressional seats – barely higher than in 1992-3?
- Research shows the more women a nation elects the better its economic performance; the more its democratic values of fairness, inclusiveness, tolerance and cooperation are upheld; and the more policies supported families, violence prevention, health, education and civil rights?

NOW IS THE TIME! Lets advocate for more **Civics History Political Science** courses in public schools K-12. Lets encourage women and girls to consider careers as elected officials, civic leaders and civics, history and political science educators.

Interested in developing a **CHiPS** concept?
E-mail **Peggy Shippen**, Eugene-Lane, Oregon Branch:

During the Convention, Peggy passed out the cards and discussed CHiPS with Jill Birdwhistle AAUW's COO, Joyce Zook & Penney Hoodenpyle Oregon AAUW State Co-Presidents, Marge Bitters, State Program Chair and Mardy Stephens, Past-State President. All were quite excited about the CHiPS concept and encouraged her to pursue it on the state level. Co-Presidents Zook & Hoodenpyle invited Peggy to give a 5-minute speech on CHiPS at the AAUW Oregon State Summer Retreat on July 18, 2015.

This request prompted Peggy to contact the aforementioned Eugene-Lane branch members she knew were interested in CHiPS. They agreed to a quick summer meeting to help solidify the CHiPS concept and sketch out an outline for going forward, including an appropriate "Call for Action" - in time for the July 18th Summer Retreat.

On the Internet, Peggy found two credible studies addressing the need for Civics, History and Political Science for middle and high school age children. Peggy asked the group to read over the

information in preparation for giving input on the types of CHiPS activities AAUW might be able to develop and what our first Call to Action for other branches should be. The studies they were asked to read are:

- The 2014 Nation's Report Card for Civics, U.S. History & Geography - 8th Grade by the National Center for Education Statistics
http://nces.ed.gov/whatsnew/commissioner/remarks2015/04_29_2015.asp
- *Civic Education and Knowledge of Government & Politics* – A paper by Diane Owen & Rebecca Chalif of Georgetown University and Suzanne Soule from the Center for Civic Education presented to the 2011 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Seattle WA. (Peggy contacted Diana Owen who gave her permission to copy, distribute and quote from the study.)

Present at The Meeting: Peggy Shippen, Carol Miller and Carene Davis-Stitt. Marian Spath and Kappy Eaton were unable to attend but gave input and said they wanted to be very involved after recovering from their surgeries.

What We Discussed:

1. What is CHiPS?

Peggy explained in the last couple of years, she's seen a need for women and girls to have more exposure to proper governance with Civics, History and Political Science seeming to be the educational foundation.

AAUW has been so successful with STEM advocating for women and girls to have more exposure to knowledge and careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, Peggy decided this would be a perfect model. She decided a catchy acronym was needed when advocating for **Civics, History and Political Science**. She played around with it a bit and, "**CHiPS**" was born!

Peggy would like to see AAUW adopt **CHiPS** programs or workshops with goals of increasing women and girls knowledge of civics, history and political science, their participation in civic affairs and voting. Our hope is their interest in public and political careers such as becoming COO's of public corporations and running for political office will follow.

2. Studies Discussed & Their Relevance to CHiPS

The 2014 Nation's Report Card for Civics, U.S. History & Geography - 8th Grade by the National Center for Education Statistics shows there is a real need for more education in civics and a gap between girls and boys in their knowledge of history.

- **Civics Testing** above included: 1.) defining the foundations of the American political system, that we are a democracy, our relationship to other nations, and

the roles of citizens in American democracy; and 2.) Explaining and analyzing, evaluating information and defending positions with appropriate evidence and reasoning.

Only 23% performed at or above *Proficient* in Civics

- In Civics –In 1998, female students scored higher than males; in 2010, males scored higher; in 2014 there was no difference between them.
- **History Testing** above included knowledge of American history, evaluating historical evidence, understanding changes in democracy including knowledge of the development of the American political system, it's cultures, peoples and their interactions and ideas; technological and economical changes and their relationship to society, ideas and the environment; and the changing ideas, institutions and ideologies that affect foreign relations.

Only 18% performed at or above *Proficient* in History;

- In History – Girls began falling behind boys in 2006 and the gap has persisted with the boy's scores increasing every year since. In 2014 the gap was 4%.

The 2011 *Civic Education and Knowledge of Government & Politics* by Diane Owen & Rebecca Chalif of Georgetown University and Suzanne Soule from the Center for Civic Education states:

...Comparative studies in 2002 confirm that in some nations, when citizens lack the opportunity or have unequal opportunity to study civics, their civic illiteracy corresponds to a "lasting drop" in political participation, which also tends to perpetuate economic inequality

In 2011 a Pew Research Center study found that the political knowledge of Americans has remained at virtually the same low level for more than 50 years.

In 2013, *The Nation Magazine* reported...

... The gender gap for women political representation is growing with only 5 women governors, 25% holding state office and less than 20% holding Congressional seats – barely higher than in 1992-3. (It's now 6 governors with Oregon's Kate Brown).

...Our country ranks 99th in the world for the percentage of women in national government.

...Research shows the more women a nation elects, the better its economic performance; the more its democratic values of fairness, inclusiveness, tolerance and cooperation are upheld; and the more policies are enacted supporting families, violence prevention, education and civil rights. (The issues AAUW supports!)

Our CHiPS group agreed these studies adequately support the need for women and girls to have more Civics, History and Political Science education.

The 2011 *Civic Education and Knowledge of Government & Politics* study report by Diane Owen & Rebecca Chalif of Georgetown University and Suzanne Soule from the Center for Civic Education concluded that higher levels of political knowledge are associated with greater understanding of democratic principles, political issues, voting and engagement in community affairs.

The study examined the relationship of civic education to the acquisition of political knowledge and the particular types of classroom approaches and activities that are most effective. We agreed from our reading of it that the *types* of educational activities that lend themselves to students having a higher levels of political knowledge, a greater understanding of democratic principles and political issues, an increase the chances they will vote and engage in community affairs are:

- Lectures and textbook reading;
- Discussions of current events, public policy controversy, and media reports;
- Role playing of mock elections and trials;
- Simulations of democratic processes and procedures;
- Collaborative thinking
- Online research and videos;
- Participation in student government and debate teams;
- Writing for a student newspaper or yearbook, school TV or radio program;
- Participation in an election campaign;
- And...reading political articles at home and discussing them with parents.
-

Community activities the study showed were not effective in teaching about civic responsibility – *unless they are linked to textbook learning or a particular political event/discussion* are:

- Attending civic meetings;
- Participating in community service projects;
- Meeting community leaders;
- Field trips;
- Sports or hobby organizations.

Our CHiPS group agreed that for women and girls to be prepared to participate effectively in political leadership it is essential for them to have equal opportunity to participate in effective education and active learning experiences in Civics, History & Political Science beginning in, at least in middle school.

3. Gathering Information for CHiPS

After some discussion, we decided the first step to get CHiPS going was for branches to “gather information” from our school personnel and determine where each of our communities are at with CHiPS proficiency, what types of CHiPS learning experiences are being offered and what

types of “enrichment activities” schools would find helpful for AAUW to “augment”. We’re not interested in “assessing” or “recommending changes” for schools.

Carol presented a sample of questions AAUW members might ask when contacting Superintendents, Principals and Curriculum Coordinators in middle school and high school:

- What is currently being taught?
- Lectures & textbooks used? How much time?
- What engagement activities are included with textbook & lectures?
- Current events discussed?
- Newspaper being read and discussed?
- Do high school students know they can vote at age 18?
- Do high school students know how to register to vote?
- Do they know how our political system works for elections, passing laws etc.?
- Do they know the role of the different branches of government?
- What types of outside activities do they attend? Public hearings? Meeting with elected leaders? Letters to the elected officials – Senators, House Reps?
- Do they know the principles embodied in the Constitution?
- Do they know the education and career path for becoming an elected official or public corporation COO?
- How will the district incorporate the coming Presidential election vote into the curriculum?
- What are the proficiency scores for middle school and high school age students? Boys vs. girls?
- Is there a difference in time spent on civics and history between college-bound students and non-college bound students?
- Is the need for civics education different in schools with lower-income students than in schools with higher income students?
- What types of activities would be helpful for AAUW do to?
- Suggestions for how AAUW can help!

Carene suggested, when we contact the Superintendent’s office to arrange an interview that we ask if AAUW branch members might meet with Curriculum Coordinators or Principals to gather information to determine what types of Civics, History and Political Science weekend workshops or enhancement activities AAUW might provide with the goals of:

- Increasing girls proficiency in Civics and History;
- Sparking girls’ interest in becoming engaged in civic activities, including voting;
- Inspire girls to consider careers as leaders in public corporations and elective office.

4. CHiPS – A Statewide Effort

We agreed that it would be best to have a coordinated effort with other state branches interested in CHiPS. Carene suggested our Call to Action at the Summer Retreat on July 18th be to ask other interested branch members to sign up to do CHiPS information gathering from their schools as mentioned above.

Peggy said she would ask that branches send information to her on their findings throughout the winter months. Our CHiPS group can then compile and analyze the findings.

Hopefully, all branch members who participate and are interested can then meet at the 2016 State Convention – perhaps in a workshop- where we can discuss what types of CHiPS activities/workshops AAUW-Oregon would like to sponsor or present.

5. CHiPS Workshops

Peggy said she envisions AAUW-organized or sponsored **CHiPS** workshops for middle and high school girls much like we did in the beginning with STEM and the Mother-Daughter Choices Programs (where the mothers attended with daughters). The reason for considering including the mothers is the Georgetown University women found that one of the most effective activities was for students to read political articles at home and discuss them with parents.

The content of CHiPS workshops could provide middle school and high school girls - and maybe their mothers - with an variety of effectively-proven enrichment activities, including having women civic leaders participate as role models – not to just meet-and-greet but to engage with girls in meaningful activities.

The CHiPS group agreed this vision is “subject to change” after analyzing the results of our Information Gathering. We also agreed that when it comes to the format and content of CHiPS workshops, input from AAUW members from around the state is imperative.

Peggy reviewed other Interactive Civics Programs she found on the Internet. Perhaps AAUW could incorporate some of these activities or - better yet - partner with the organization when planning workshops:

- **Sandra Day O’Connor’s iCivics:** <https://www.icivics.org/teachers>

Retired Justice Sandra Day O’Connor founded iCivics, which uses interactive games to teach civics basics to younger students in a fun, engaging way.

We the People State Programs

The Center for Civic Education partners with a network of 50 state civics, government, and law programs sponsored by state bar associations and foundations, colleges and universities, and other civic and law non-profit organizations to promote teaching and learning about the Constitution and Bill of Rights. These state programs conduct local teacher professional development, hold conferences and organize local and state simulated congressional hearings for elementary and secondary students. Each year these state programs impact thousands of teachers and tens of thousands of students.

Marilyn Cover - Oregon Coordinator
Website: <http://www.classroomlaw.org/>

The Touchstone Discussion Project

Touchstones has been called democratization of education because our discussion-based programs develop thinking and collaboration at the highest levels for all students, regardless of their economic or educational background. For 30 years, Touchstones' primary focus has been to address gaps in education in K-12 schools by teaching educators and students to use structured dialogue to activate and enliven their thinking and build cooperation and leadership.

6. Speech & Call to Action

Peggy will prepare a 5-minute speech for the Summer Retreat and ask Kappy to help edit it. (Kappy has since agreed to do this and says she wants to be very involved in this project.)

At the Summer Retreat Peggy will have a CHiPS Sign-up Sheet available for members interested in Gathering Information from Schools for CHiPS She'll also have available a list of questions they can ask.

Peggy will make it known at the Summer Retreat that she is available to answer questions and take input and gather the data.

Members interested in receiving an e-copy of the *Georgetown Univ Civics* study and website where the 2014 Civics, History & Geography Report Card for 8th Graders can be viewed will just need to check a box and Peggy will sent that information to them.

Peggy and Carene will be attending the Summer Retreat so will be able to report back on the state-wide response for participation in Information Gathering for CHiPS.

In the meantime, Peggy will see if she can get an appointment with the Eugene and Springfield Districts for Information Gathering for CHiPS. She will also contact Marilyn Cover, the Oregon Coordinator for We The People to talk about their workshops and get her thoughts about partnering with AAUW.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Shippen
July 12, 2015