



# COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

## COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

### Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 24, 2024, 6:00-8:00pm

**1. Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement**

**2. Roll Call**

a. **Commissioners Present:**

b. Aileen Cassinetto, Dayna Chung, Trish Erwin, Ann Girard, LaSaundra Gutter, Jess Hudson, Susan Kokores, Aysha Pamukcu (arrived 6:16pm, no vote on agenda & consent), Michelle Stewart, Susan Takalo, Rosie Tejada, Anisha Weber, Irma Zoepf, Joy Zou, Amani Shroff  
Staff: Tanya Beat

c. Absent: Julissa Acosta, Ana Avendaño (on Zoom), Nirmala Bandrapalli (on Zoom), Ellen Tafeen

**3. Public Comment** – Nirmala Bandrapalli, Ana Avendaño

**4. Action to Set Agenda and Approve Consent Agenda Items**

Motion by Trish Erwin, seconded by Jess Hudson. Approved.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**5. Approval of July 2024 Meeting Minutes**

**REGULAR AGENDA**

**6. Educational Equity in Civic Conferences presentation**

- Presenter: Bethany Zhao, senior at Oceana High School
- Gender discrimination and inequity within Girls State and Boys State, run by the American Legion. Advocates a conditional repeal of the American Legion's Title IX exemption as a first step.
- See meeting materials for one pager of information and proposed letter
- It is suggested that Jess Hudson meet with Bethany to further support her letter and have a congressional representative be her lead support person.

**7. Youth Commissioners Introductions & Mentors**

- Amani Shroff is a junior at Carlmont High School and lives in Redwood Shores.
  - i. Mentor is Aileen Cassinetto
- Joy Zou is a senior at San Mateo High School and lives in Foster City
  - i. Mentor is Trish Erwin

**8. President's Report (Susan Kokores)**

- Leadership Council CAP Fund the Future: project proposal is to create a public relations campaign to help us promote the Fund the Future report.
- Leadership Council CAP Pay Equity: project proposal is to help us target businesses/companies who we can encourage to sign up to work on pay equity.
- Susan and Ann will present Fund the Future at October 8 BOS meeting. Jacki will provide the time and invites the CSW to attend for support.

**9. Fund the Future – approval**

- Added a Definitions page and an Acknowledgements section
- Please see full report in meeting materials
- Motion to approve the Fund the Future report by Trish Erwin and seconded by Susan Takalo. Approved.

**10. Fund the Future – Next Steps (Ann Girard)**

- Various ideas high school students
- Email to RISE, share out to all of our collaborators
- Take it on the Road
- Ana Avendano inquiry about Canada College’s Womxn of Color Collaborative on either Nov 6 or 14. A panel on economic empowerment. LaSaundra Gutter & Jess Hudson both volunteered. They both prefer Nov 14.

**11. Commissioner Announcements**

- Office of Diversity & Equity 15 year celebration Friday, Sept 27. Susan Takalo providing ASL
- KQED Fest 2024, Saturday, Oct 19, 11am-6pm at new office in SF
- Networking event for Women in Silicon Valley (Mountain View)
- United Way Bay Area: Jess creating a Voter’s Guide that will be released Oct 7.

**12. Adjournment**



# COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

## COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

### Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 22, 2024, 6:00-8:00pm

**1. Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement**

**2. Roll Call**

a. **Commissioners Present:**

b. Nirmala Bandrapalli, Dayna Chung, Trish Erwin, Ann Girard, LaSaundra Gutter, Jess Hudson, Susan Kokores, Aysha Pamukcu, Ellen Tafeen, Anisha Weber, Joy Zou, Amani Shroff

c. Absent: Julissa Acosta, Ana Avendaño, Aileen Cassinetto, Michelle Stewart, Susan Takalo, Rosie Tejada (email notification), Irma Zoepf (email notification)

**3. Public Comment – none**

**4. Action to Set Agenda and move September Meeting Minutes to December Meeting**

Motion by Nirmala Bandrapalli, seconded by Trish Erwin. Approved.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**5. Approval of September 2024 Meeting Minutes**

**REGULAR AGENDA**

**6. Debrief of Fund the Future Report** facilitated by Susan Kokores

- General feedback provided
- Request for a commissioner to sit on Measure K Committee specific to childcare funding allocations (Aysha Pamukcu designated)
- Follow Up Emails to Contributors

**7. Next Steps:**

- CAP Project Update: update by Susan Kokores and Anisha Weber
  - i.* Communications Strategy for Fund the Future & Implementation; including purpose
  - ii.* Update your commissioner profile with headshot and bio
- Pay Equity Project: update by Ann Girard
- Wealth Health Projects: financial literacy, road show
- Other
  - i.* Retreat Dates: January or February ; Saturday half day, food included

**8. Voting Information**

- May need to be allies and support vulnerable populations

**9. December Meeting Discussion**

- Celebrate Anisha's last meeting
- Pre meeting dinner; holiday sweaters. Start the social at 5pm; start business meeting at 6pm
- Video Wish List for the Holidays

- Please think about Women’s History Month for March – proclamation and a potential event
- Listening Session in each District in 2025 (road show)

#### **10. Commissioner Announcements**

- **Youth Commission project:** short interviews of people – an Instagram series. Connect with Amani if you are able to be interviewed/profiled.
- **Housing Initiative - Partnership for the Bay Future** – connect with Aysha to learn more

#### **11. Adjournment**

**To: San Mateo County Commission on the Status of Women**  
**From: Tanya Beat, Director**  
**Date: December 3, 2024**  
**Subject: Status Update**

***Re-Appointments for new 4 year terms: - Supervisor Corzo will swear them in at Jan 28 meeting***

- Nirmala Bandrapalli
- LaSaundra Gutter
- Jess Hudson
- Irma Zoepf
- Rosie Tejada
- Michelle Stewart

***Vacancy Opening***

The waitlist in 2024 has been used fully. We have one vacancy opening with a deadline of January 17<sup>th</sup> to apply. Tanya will send the revised vacancy description to everyone. Please post on social and/or email all those amazing people you have connected with through Fund the Future. Our goal is to fill the position AND have a strong waitlist.

***DV Awareness Committee***

The purpose of this committee is to build awareness of healthy relationships and do education outreach. They are focusing in on youth and are looking for new members to help in 2025. They usually meet every other month, usually on Friday mornings for one hour in Redwood City.

***2025 CSW Meeting Calendar***

We will vote on the dates of all the 2025 CSW Meetings at the January 2025 CSW Meeting. Please keep this draft as reference.

It may also help you to think about dates for CSW Listening Forums located in the different County Districts. If Listening Forums take the place of CSW Meetings, the dates are listed here.



# COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

## COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

### 2025 Meeting Schedule

*CSW meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month from 6:00-8:00pm*

Month	Date	Time
<b>January</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>6:00-8:00 PM</b>
(Retreat) February	25	5:00-9:00 PM
<b>March</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>6:00-8:00 PM</b>
April	22	6:00-8:00 PM
<b>May</b>	<b>27 (day after Memorial Day)</b>	<b>6:00-8:00 PM</b>
June	24	6:00-8:00 PM
<b>July</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>6:00-8:00 PM</b>
August	26	6:00-8:00 PM
<b>September</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>6:00-8:00 PM</b>
October	28	6:00-8:00 PM
<b>November</b>		<b>NO MEETING</b>
December	2	6:00-8:00 PM

**To: San Mateo County Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)**

**From: CSW Youth Commissioners**

**Date: November 22, 2024**

**Subject: Youth Commission Updates**

**Update:**

- Youth Commission: Subcommittee Work Plan Presentations
  - Community Equity
    - Promoting legislation supporting safety and healing for survivors of domestic abuse and aiding prevention efforts (pending approval)
    - Necessities drive for the homeless (ex. food, clothing)
  - Educational Equity
    - Virtual career exploration event in March with representatives from a wide range of companies & industries
  - Environmental Justice
    - 3 weekend events (~3 hrs each) where students (focusing on East Palo Alto & North Fair Oaks) engage in activities related to careers within the Parks Department/Natural Resource Management
    - Need volunteers and location suggestions (currently considering Edgewood Park in Redwood City and Huddart Park in Woodside)
  - Health and Wellness
    - Mental Health Mondays (Instagram posts)
    - Mental Health Directory – distributing pamphlets at 4+ schools/libraries with resources like health databases & nonprofits
  - Immigrant Youth
    - Community Directory – pamphlet with info on resources for new/immigrant students in 3+ specific cities
    - Immigrant Youth Scholarship
- Civic Engagement Subcommittee Work Plan
  - Voter education – pamphlets informing and preparing middle/high school students in underserved communities on voter registration, the voting process, and their voter rights
    - Would appreciate introductions to schools and community groups to distribute the pamphlets to

- Social media campaign – Instagram posts spotlighting diversity in public service and elected government roles
  - Welcoming recommendations on government divisions to focus on or individuals to interview
- Upcoming
  - Youth Commission Winter Retreat on December 12th
  - CORA speaker at the Youth Commission's January general meeting

November 23, 2024

## Read[Her] Petition: The Increase in Diversity Reading in Our District

We urge the Sequoia Union High School District to implement more female-centered work, perspectives, and poetry into their English curriculums. Literature is one of the most powerful ways to introduce diverse perspectives, but many current school curriculums inadequately reflect the voices of women.

We urge the Sequoia Union High School District to take intentional steps towards including more female-centric works in its English curriculum. Women's voices are vital in understanding humanity, expanding our understanding of gender, and offering a fuller perspective for the work we read and study.

Analysis by the *Literary Canon in the Classroom* project (2020) indicated how male authors dominate the English curriculum, with less than 30% of assigned texts being written by women. There is even less exposure to female experiences and viewpoints.

Female writers bring unique viewpoints that are shaped by their identities and experiences. Representation in literature affirms to young women that their voices matter and pushes students to think critically about gender roles, creating a more inclusive society.

The evidence for reading diverse literature speaks for itself. Stanford University researchers looked at data from a pilot program in San Francisco where students considered at high risk for dropping out were enrolled in ethnic studies programs. The results showed how attendance rose by 21% and grade-point averages rose by 1.4%. This shows the impact of reading diverse books for students.

A study on the benefits of minority students from multicultural education shows the positive social and emotional effects of diverse curriculums. It shows how reading texts from members of ethnic groups that are underrepresented in school curriculums improved the self esteem of students from that minority group and led all students to have a greater appreciation for different perspectives.

A research article published in the journal *Educational Researcher* shows that students exposed to diverse literary voices develop a stronger sense of empathy, which is a crucial skill for students to develop stepping into the real world. Female-centric literature provides perspectives on experiences like gender inequality, motherhood, and the pay gap.

A large section of female writing that is often overlooked is also poetry. Women have been writing poetry for decades and studying poetry can be a great way for students to understand female voices and perspectives better. Female poets such as Emily Dickinson, Audre Lorde, and Maya Angelou have made monumental contributions to literary and cultural movements. These poems challenge societal norms and explore themes of identity, love, and equality that resonate deeply with today's students.

We urge the district to align themselves with legislature that has been passed reaffirming the importance of diversity in literature

The *Every Student Succeeds Act*, passed in 2015, emphasizes the importance of providing educational opportunities for everyone. This emphasizes including female-centric writing that addresses gaps in representation and ensures that all students see themselves reflected in their curriculum.

The California Assembly Bill 1078 was passed in 2023 and ensures that instructional materials reflect the diverse backgrounds and experiences of California's population.

Additionally, the California Department of Education specifically states that "Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the district to select literature according to the selection policies that are in place."

Here are some simple ways we recommend including more female voices in the English curriculum:

1. For students studying Shakespearean poetry, include an assignment about a female poet at the time and have them compare the two voices.
2. When students are studying narrative writing, have them read short stories by female writers and analyze the different narrative techniques they have utilized.
3. Students entering AS English II are often asked to read the epic poem *Beowulf* by Seamus Heaney. In this translation, women are often objectified by men and are only praised if they have served the men well. This interpretation of *Beowulf* has often been criticized, with writers describing that it is not what the original author intended. A new translation of *Beowulf* by Maria Dehvana Headley takes a feminist approach to the novel and encourages readers to rethink the patriarchal Anglo-Saxon society. We encourage English II classrooms to discuss this perspective as well, and maybe study some of the new books and compare the two translations.

By adding one or two simple assignments, we can expand the representation of women and engage students in a variety of perspectives. When students engage with a wider range of voices, they develop the intellectual and emotional tools necessary to contribute to a more inclusive society.

We respectfully ask the SUHSD to take decisive action to ensure the inclusion of these perspectives in our classrooms.

#### Works Cited

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- U.S. Department of Education. "Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)." *U.S. Department of Education*, 2015, [www.ed.gov/laws-and-policy/laws-preschool-grade-12-education/every-student-succeeds-act-essa](http://www.ed.gov/laws-and-policy/laws-preschool-grade-12-education/every-student-succeeds-act-essa).
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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **Peninsula Women's Chorus**

Join us for a special Pre-Concert Talk featuring composer Saunder Choi (12/13 & 12/14) and San Mateo County's former Poet Laureate Aileen Cassinetta (12/14).

Discover the inspiration, cultural traditions, and creative process behind "Meet Me for Noche Buena," a heartfelt piece celebrating the Filipino holiday Noche Buena. Saunder and Aileen will share their stories and insights, bringing this holiday tradition to life before the performance.

Don't miss this opportunity to connect with the artists behind the music!

### **Friday, December 13**

Pre-Concert Talk at 6:30pm and Concert at 7pm  
First United Methodist Church in Palo Alto

### **Saturday, December 14**

Pre-Concert Talk at 1:30pm and Concert at 2pm  
Mission Santa Clara

Grab your tickets today! Visit <https://pwchorus.org/>

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### **Please Promote! Rainbow Kids – A Webinar on Gender, Love & Family**



#### **You're Invited to Rainbow Kids - A Webinar on Gender, Love & Family**

**Date/Time:** December 3rd, 6:00-7:30 PM

**Description:** This free, 90-minute webinar (in English) offered by the San Mateo County Pride Center will help parents, caregivers, and educators talk with young children about diversity, focusing on gender, families, and love. The session will offer practical, age-appropriate guidance and strategies to support children's development of self and understanding of others.

**Registration:** <https://tinyurl.com/RainbowKidsDec2024>