Case histories of Women's Educational Equity Act (WEEA) projects are presented, along with information on WEEA's mandate, operation, and new directions. The WEEA projects support the development of curricula and training materials for the education of females at pre-elementary to postsecondary schools, along with efforts of private sector and community groups. The project descriptions cover: math and science, sex-role stereotyping in the curricula, infusing equity in educational institutions, Title IX implementation, inequitable and stereotyped teaching, disabled women and girls, reentry women, and demonstrations of educational equity in diverse school districts. The major steps for selecting grantees for funding are identified, along with the priority areas for making funding decisions. Historical highlights since the passage of the Women's Educational Equity Act (P.L. 95-561) in 1974 are also outlined. An overview of the role and activities of the National Advisory Council on Women's Educational Programs is included. Finally, nine future directions for the program are proposed. Appended materials include the text of P.L. 95-561, and data on characteristics of WEEA projects, including users, educational level, subject/focus, and product or program. (SW)
CATCHING UP:
A Review of the
Women's Educational Equity Act
Program

A Report by the
Citizens Council on Women's Education

A Project of the National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education
CITIZENS COUNCIL ON WOMEN'S EDUCATION

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CATCHING UP:
A Review of the
Women's Educational Equity Act
Program

If education is to make a positive difference in the future of students and our society, leaders in education must redouble past efforts to achieve high quality education for girls and boys and women and men.

— Council of Chief State School Officers

A Report by the
Citizens Council on Women's Education

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February 1984

A Project of the National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education
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PREFACE

In 1974, Congress passed the Women’s Educational Equity Act (WEEA) because it found that education in the United States was “frequently inequitable” for women and girls and limited their “full participation” in American society. The Act established a program of grants for projects which promote educational equity for girls and women at all levels of education.

WEEA also established a National Advisory Council on Women’s Educational Programs (NACWEP) to advise Federal officials and the public about the educational needs of women and girls. The 17 member, Presidentially appointed NACWEP spotlighted important issues through hearings and publications which focused on rural, minority, and working women, equity in intercollegiate athletics, sexual harassment of students, and the enforcement of antidiscrimination laws.

In 1982, President Ronald Reagan replaced the experienced, bipartisan National Advisory Council with new members, most of whom lacked background in women’s issues or educational equity. Their obvious hostility to civil rights legislation and the Women’s Educational Equity Act itself makes it clear that they are unable to accurately appraise the accomplishments of the Act. Therefore, the National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education, composed of some fifty national organizations working to promote equal educational opportunity for girls and women, invited twelve women and men with experience in education and public affairs to constitute a Citizens Council on Women’s Education. This bipartisan, diversified group was launched in September, 1982. The purposes of the Citizens Council are to:

- protect the guarantees of educational equity in Federal legislation;
- monitor the activities of the official National Advisory Council;
- make recommendations to Congress about legislative and budgetary actions needed for educational equity;
- inform the public of the status of educational equity and attempts made to halt progress toward this goal.

The Women’s Educational Equity Act program, a small but highly visible focus of the Federal commitment to equal educational opportunity, has been the object of repeated attacks and efforts to eliminate it. With the Act due to expire September 30, 1984, the Citizens Council on Women’s Education believes it is essential to report to Congress and the public on what has been accomplished by this embattled program.

In order to decide on the future of the legislation, Congress needs to know what impact these Federal dollars have had on the lives of women and girls. Official statistical reports do not convey the diversity and the human significance of the projects supported by WEEA. The Citizens Council obtained information on over 100 WEEA projects from project directors, the WEEA program office, the Publishing Center, WEEA product users, and from articles in newspapers, magazines, and professional journals. This report examines several of these projects and emphasizes the actual experiences of their beneficiaries. We hope that our report be useful to all who will be concerned with the future of this crucial equity legislation.
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INTRODUCTION

The quality of American education has become a major national issue. With the release of several reports—most notably *A Nation at Risk*, prepared by the National Commission on Excellence in Education—politicians, the media, and parents have focused on the needs of our educational system. But these reports and discussions have virtually omitted the special needs of over half the population—women and girls. Educational equity, particularly as it affects females, has been overlooked as an essential component of educational excellence.

Yet recent studies of poverty underscore the needs of women. The National Advisory Council on Economic Opportunity in 1980 predicted:

> All other things being equal, if the proportion of the poor who are in female headed families were to increase at the same rate as it did from 1967 to 1977, they would comprise 100% of the poverty population by the year 2000.

And the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, in its report *A Growing Crisis: Disadvantaged Women and Their Children*, concluded:

> When a woman's education has not adequately prepared her for employment, she and her children may be destined to live in poverty.

The rapid surge of women into the labor force over recent decades reinforces the need of all women for an equitable education. Women are already over 40% of the labor force; they are a majority of college students; they are 65% of the college students over thirty-five.

Research has documented that some teachers unconsciously hold lower expectations of their female students, and this may lead to lower self-esteem and, ultimately, a lower rate of achievement. Career counseling and testing, too, are often sex stereotyped. Girls' future educational and occupational options are limited by presenting to them only a small portion of the career spectrum. This limitation hurts not only the individuals involved, but the nation at large.

A current television commercial for a credit card depicts one of these new students—a woman returning for further education. The commercial’s “star” is shown having some initial difficulty in the classroom; she cannot compete with the more experienced younger students around her. Her husband lends his moral support while she struggles with a term paper. The final scene shows the student receiving her graded paper. The male professor gives her a look of approval. Her peers congratulate her. The woman has succeeded as a student!
Unfortunately, not all returning women students have as positive and successful an experience as this atypical, fictional character. Many women do not have a husband offering both moral and financial support. Many women return to school because they are widowed, divorced, abandoned. They are forced to support themselves and their families and must return to school to learn new, competitive skills.

The WEEA program is a miniscule item in the Federal budget, yet it has attracted disproportionate attention from both the executive and legislative branches. Its peak appropriation was only $10 million in Fiscal Year 1980; since then it has received less than $6 million a year. But each year's budget has been a battle, with the administration proposing no new funds as well as rescission of existing appropriations, and the Congress insisting on continuation of the program. Other recent moves to eliminate or drastically redirect this sensitive program, described more fully in later sections of this report, include:

- a proposal to bury WEEA in an education block grant to the states, with no requirement that they undertake women's equity projects;
- virulent attacks on the program director, reassignment and eventual firing of the director;
- reduction of the program staff and transfer of the experienced personnel;
- downgrading the status of the program office;
- appointment of entirely new membership to the National Advisory Council on Women's Educational Programs, most of them inexperienced in women's educational equity issues;
- appointment by the Advisory Council of an executive director who had testified in Congress against appropriations for WEEA.

In the words of Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder (D.-CO):

The relegation of women to second-rate jobs is a direct reflection of how our educational system has failed them, both because it has not adequately prepared them for higher level positions and because it has not encouraged them to seek higher level positions.

We are truly a “nation at risk” if we continue to restrict the educational and occupational opportunities of over one-half of our nation.
On the Cutting Edge

In its short life, the Women's Educational Equity Act program has been responsible for many landmark projects in women's educational equity.

- WEEA has been a leader in funding programs to open math, science and technology courses and careers to women and girls and has encouraged their participation by supporting important programs to overcome past stereotyping.
- WEEA took the lead in opening doors to girls and women in nontraditional vocational education; funded projects to eliminate bias and discrimination against women and girls in the trades, apprenticeship, and vocational programs.
- WEEA has funded major programs to improve educational opportunities and career choices for low-income women—to help break the cycle of poverty, unemployment, and underemployment of women.
- WEEA has supported numerous projects to increase the access of women to positions in educational administration. Some projects trained aspiring women educators, while others influenced superintendents, university presidents, and local school boards to encourage their active support for Title IX and sex equity.
- WEEA has led the way in supporting programs on double discrimination based on both sex and race/ethnicity. WEEA has made minority women's concerns a national priority by strengthening significant networks of Chinese- and Japanese-American women, Hispanic-American, Native American and Black women, educators and grassroots networks of parent/teacher advocates for equity.
- WEEA was the first (and to date the only) federal program to target resources on the educational needs of disabled women—the most invisible and underserved women in the country.
- WEEA supported projects to help rural women and girls understand the importance of nonstereotyped education to their future lives.
- WEEA projects have assisted faculty and students adjust to new physical education and athletics patterns under Title IX.
- WEEA pioneered in demonstrating comprehensive approaches to educational equity by funding projects to implement locally selected equity programs in five diverse school districts.
- WEEA has funded programs meeting needs of women and girls from preschool to postgraduate, from dental/medical/engineering students to women in jail, from non-English speaking immigrants to university administrators, from athletes to researchers.
How the Dollars Work

Congress took a significant step when it passed the Women's Educational Equity Act, the sole Federal program dedicated to improving the educational experience of women and girls. WEEA supports projects which develop curriculum and training materials for educational institutions from pre-elementary to postsecondary levels, as well as others for use by the private sector and community groups. WEEA grantees develop models which can be shared and used throughout the country. Chart 1 illustrates the diversity of target groups addressed by WEEA projects.

Chart 1.—Distribution of grants by educational level of beneficiaries

![Pie chart illustrating distribution of grants by educational level of beneficiaries]

(Awards are counted more than once when projects focus on more than one level.)

Grant recipients are highly diversified, including major universities, local school districts, and a wide range of private sector groups.

Chart 2.—Distribution of grants by type of applicant

![Pie chart illustrating distribution of grants by type of applicant]

[FY 1976 – FY 1983]
Case Histories of WEEA Projects

1. MATH AND SCIENCE

To meet the country's needs for excellence, creativity and innovation in its scientific work, we must develop and utilize the talents of all Americans, particularly women and minorities, now currently underrepresented in the science and engineering professions.

— Today's Problems, Tomorrow's Crises, The National Science Board

Problem: Math Anxiety. Many women are returning to school to gain skills needed to be competitive in today's rapidly changing job market. However, many of these reentry women students lack basic math background to enable them to study the math and science courses required for the high demand occupations. Victims of sex discrimination in education, they often suffer from math-anxiety and need remedial assistance.

WEEA Project: MINORITY WOMEN IN MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE:
AN ANXIETY AVOIDANCE REDUCTION PROGRAM

Bronx Community College

"Helping reentry minority women gain mathematics skills"

A four-session counseling program was developed to help math-anxious students—primarily older, urban, minority women whose occupations are becoming obsolete—confront and combat their fear of mathematics and enable them to learn the required course materials. The WEEA program helped them learn the basics and allowed them to move on to higher level courses.

Results:

• Students' self-confidence increased, thus lessening the stigma associated with failure in math.

• Greater likelihood of students remaining in their math class until they passed the course.

• The story of one participant:

    JG is a very bright woman in her late 30s who quit learning math in the third grade after being humiliated by her teacher, a fact she successfully concealed from everyone. She left school at 16. . . . Despite the repeated urgings of her [job] supervisor, she shrugged off the need to acquire any academic credentials. New regulations led to her dismissal after 10 years on the job. At the time JG participated in the WEEA program, she had reached the point where continued failure in math was more painful than the risk of humiliation. At the center we diagnosed her weakness and set up a tutoring schedule.

    JG was able to pass the first half of the course by the end of the semester.

• Inclusion of aspects of the WEEA program in the mathematics curriculum at Bronx Community College. The Project Directors report that this institutionalization "is a recognition that the program may be an improvement in the teaching of math to a sizable number of students."
**Problem: High School Girls Avoid Math.** Many girls preclude future educational and occupational opportunities by not studying basic math concepts in junior high school. Girls are underrepresented in advanced high school math and science classes. Girls rationalize their math avoidance by believing that math is irrelevant to their own lives. A joint study by the National Science Foundation and the Department of Education concludes that “women still remain the largest pool of talent available for increasing the size and quality of the science and engineering force,” but without basic skills, girls cannot pursue these growing occupational and educational opportunities.

**WEEA Project: MULTIPLYING OPTIONS AND SUBTRACTING BIASES**

University of Wisconsin, Madison

“Videotapes to increase girls' participation in high school math”

Four videotapes inform math teachers, students, parents, and counselors of the importance of math to educational and occupational opportunities and address specific biases which limit females' interest and success in math. Each tape offers suggestions for eliminating these biases and for expanding opportunities.

**Results:**

- Increased awareness by teachers, parents, and students of the subtle, yet pervasive, forms of discrimination which inhibit girls' study of math. One videotape depicts the problem of different teacher expectations for male and female students:

  (Math class with the teacher moving around to help individual students)

  Teacher: Have you figured out the answer, Marcia?
  Marcia: Uh--no. Not yet.
  Teacher: Eric, how about you?
  Eric: I can't get it!
  Teacher: Come on, Eric. You can do it.
  Teacher: What's the exponent?
  Eric: Oh yeah, x to the fifth. I get it now.

  By depicting this frequent student-teacher interaction of lowered expectations of females and the perception that math is more important for males, the tape helps its audience move towards eliminating these biases.

- Increased female enrollment in mathematics classes increased after high school students viewed the WEEA tape.

- An article in the *Journal of Research in Mathematics* reporting that those females who participated in this WEEA program increased their knowledge about sex related differences in mathematics, and also indicating that they were going to study more mathematics both during and after high school.

- Test data showing that male peers, math teachers, and counselors who viewed the WEEA tapes demonstrated changes in their knowledge and attitudes toward sex related biases in math.
Problem: Teachers Working on Sex Equity Need to Share Information.
Many individual teachers interested in developing and teaching nonsexist materials feel isolated. Frequently, they would like to share their ideas or receive other nonsexist teaching ideas, but the lack of colleagues committed to equity practices can leave teachers feeling isolated and in need of fresh materials to aid their efforts to promote educational equity.

WEEA Project: PROJECT-SHARE
Organization for Equal Education of the Sexes, Brooklyn, NY
"Linking classroom teachers together and sharing ideas"

Project Share reduced the sense of isolation of sex equity teachers by linking them with other teachers nationwide. They were linked through TABS: Aids for Ending Sexism in the School (the quarterly magazine published by OEES). They were encouraged to send in their own nonsexist materials— anecdotes or reports of successful activities; lesson plans; feature articles on innovative local projects; quizzes or puzzles. The WEEA project staff evaluated and published the best of these ideas. Teachers were also encouraged to expand the network by becoming "idea scouts." Both the idea scouts and the project staff did extensive outreach to locate the best sex-equity materials produced by classroom teachers.

Results:

• Increased opportunities for classroom teachers to learn about classroom-tested sex equity materials.
• Development of Project Share Handbook, featuring tips on developing ideas into lesson plans, examples of successful project materials, and a resource list, all submitted by teachers.
• Continuation of Project Share through each TABS edition, although the WEEA grant has ended. The network for exchanging nonsexist teaching ideas continues to expand.
• Other educational periodicals enlisted as copublishers of these nonsexist materials, increasing the number of teachers reached by the WEEA project.
• Success in locating people who have tried educational equity ideas in the classroom, and putting these individuals in contact with one another.
3. INFUSING EQUITY IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

In my study of the problem sex discrimination in education, I have been shocked at the pervasiveness of this discrimination. Education has traditionally been regarded as a 'women's field.' Yet... it is mostly men who have had the opportunities, and men who have had the power.

—Sen. Walter Mondale (D-MN)

Problem: Few Women Administrators. Although education is considered "a women's field", women are seriously underrepresented in public school administration. In 1982 there were 4% women superintendents, and only 16% of principals were women. Equal employment legislation has not overcome stubborn barriers. Understanding and attitudes of policy makers (predominantly male) must be broadened and women must be actively assisted up the ladder.

WEEA Project: AEQUUS III
Commission for Sex Equity, Los Angeles Unified School District
“Activities to enhance sex equity in a major school system.”

The Los Angeles School Board appointed a Commission to advise it on Title IX and other sex equity issues. With WEEA funding, the Commission played a major role in implementing an important court decree setting targets for promotions of women to administrative positions, as well as numerous other equity activities throughout the school system.

Results:
- Conferences and workshops for the topic of nonsexist career options, math, and science, and women in sports.
- A masters degree/administrative credentials program for aspiring women administrators.
- Analysis of District policies and practices relating to women’s employment opportunities.
- Management training and a manual for the Superintendent’s Council.
- An options analysis on equal pay for jobs of comparable worth for the Board of Education and the Superintendent.
- Ten newsletters on educational equity issues sent to 5,000 readers; frequent press releases.
- Testimony on sex equity concerns before Congress and the California Assembly.
- Commendations awarded by the California State Senate and Assembly, the Los Angeles City Council, the Mayor, and a Parent-Teacher Association.
- Concrete progress:
  - Between 1980 and 1983 the number of women elementary school principals increased from 151 to 175, high school principals from 4 to 12, assistant superintendents from 2 to 7;
  - Every school has a copy of the women’s history curriculum;
  - California now has a law comparable to Title IX.
Despite much controversy with the Board of Education and others, the Commission concluded, at the end of the WEEA grant, that:

· friends of educational equity can take heart in knowing that the current momentum will continue. In one form or another, women's educational equity is here to stay.

**Problem: Faculty and Administrators Need Information About Equity.**

Programs have not been available to support women's equity needs among students, staff and faculty in higher education.

**WEEA Project: LEADERSHIP AND EDUCATIONAL EQUITY PROJECT,**

University of Maine at Orono

"Enlisting institutional leaders in promoting sex equity"

A model program was designed to broaden faculty and administrators' understanding of and support for the equity needs of women students, staff, and faculty. The project is intended to engage the visible support of key "opinion leaders" to move the University toward equity in its curricula, policies, and procedures. Materials were field tested at UMO and other regional colleges and universities, which now function as an equity network in Northern New England.

**Results:**

- Models and materials developed to help education leaders to analyze and eliminate inequities in curriculum content.
- At UMO a budget to fund faculty and departmental proposals to integrate scholarship on women into the curriculum. This budgetary commitment demonstrates the success of the WEEA project in obtaining the commitment of the University's leaders to sex equity.
- Equity networks at eight other colleges and universities in New England.
- Institutional support for a mentoring system to help female assistant professors understand the administrative structure of the university and help them obtain tenure and other benefits.
- Increased understanding by the faculty of the importance of the scholarship by and about women and the unique values of women's studies training.
- A two day regional symposium on "Moving Toward a Balanced Curriculum."
- Training workshop for equity leaders in Northern New England to promote equitable administrative policies and practices, as well as a gender balanced curriculum.
- The University of New Hampshire's new course on educational equity in the School of Health Studies curriculum.
- Texts written by and about women incorporated into the UMO liberal arts curriculum, including political science, French, sociology, and history.
Our educational and community institutions will need substantial assistance if they are to help women gain their place as equal participants and beneficiaries of our society... Unless institutions receive help of this sort, they will be vulnerable to continued charges of discrimination, as well as being unable to adequately fulfill their responsibilities to women.

Bernice Sandler, Association of American Colleges

Problem: Physical Education Faculty Need Help to Adjust to Title IX.

Because of Title IX, women and girls now have more opportunities to participate in competitive athletic programs at all levels of education. Equally important is the instruction students receive in their physical education classes. Physical education teachers historically taught single sex classes, so under Title IX there is a need for new techniques and materials.

WEEA Project: PROJECT TEAM

University of Massachusetts, Amherst

"Teaching physical educators to be fair"

Physical education teachers were instructed in how to become aware of and identify bias in their teaching which reduced the participation of students in the classroom. The intervention/in-service training program helps teachers in developing new methods of instruction and new class activities to implement race and sex equity concepts.

Results:

• Development of a useful and needed model which has been validated through field tests in Massachusetts.

• One participant’s reaction:

  Having taught physical education for over 20 years, it sometimes becomes very hard to change your techniques. But after the first day, and the realization that I had been picking teams improperly for over two decades, I became a little shook, and determined to straighten out inequities which have existed in my classes. On returning to school, many other equity issues came to light... I am still dealing with each and every one.

• Another response:

  Being the only woman left on the staff in physical education at the high school, I was a little afraid that the workshop would do more harm than good... I was wrong... you have made us more enthusiastic about what we can achieve in our coed physical education classes and you have renewed our dedication to physically educate all of our young people.

• Workshop participants' use of their new skills in their own school systems. They have also been disseminating these teaching techniques to others at regional and state conventions and writing about them in professional journals.

Problem: Many Parents and Students Lack Information about Title IX.

Some communities might not be aware of the harmful effects of inequitable educational opportunities, or might not be aware of the scope and usefulness of
Title IX. In order for Title IX to be effective, it must be understood and supported by community members, and by its beneficiaries—the students.

WEEA Project: **CHILDREN DESERVE EQUITY**
Rural Alternatives Institute, Huron, South Dakota
"Explaining Title IX to kids and their parents"

Puppets, activity cards, cassette scripts, and student and parent handbooks were developed to explain to kindergarten and early elementary students and their parents what Title IX is and how it affects their lives and futures. This model is designed to assist rural and other communities in the full implementation of Title IX.

Results:
- Students' response that they had learned about greater educational and occupational opportunities through the WEEA curriculum materials.
- A male superintendent's comments:
  Prior to this [WEEA] project, we, like many of our peers, made a direct correlation between equity, women's rights, and the ERA. Equity was that; but it was much more. The slogan for Children Deserve Equity is "Helping Kids Be All They Can Be!" As we learned, the concept of equity applied to both sexes and all races of children. It was not limited except by our own preconceptions.
- High rating of the products by teachers who found them easy to incorporate into the classroom.
- A teacher's reaction: "I highly recommend the package for any school. We enjoyed it, our students enjoyed it, and we know you will enjoy it."

Problem: **Legal Training about Title IX is Needed.** Attorneys, school lawyers, and administrators of Title IX need to know about the scope of Title IX from a legal standpoint, and know of case law as it develops. Legal training for these practitioners is essential if Title IX is to be effective in prohibiting sex discrimination in educational programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance.

WEEA Project: **TITLE IX LEGAL TRAINING WORKSHOPS**
The National Women's Law Center, Washington, D.C.
"Training practitioners about Title IX."

Lawyers, law students, and Title IX administrators were taught about the problems of sex discrimination in schools, the requirements of Title IX, and the way in which Title IX can be used to remedy problems of discrimination. Model workshops were held throughout the nation.

Results:
- Comprehensive materials on Title IX, including case law, available for lawyers, law students, school counsel, and professionals involved with the implementation of Title IX.
- Continuation of the training financed through grants from private foundations.
5. INEQUITABLE AND STEREOTYPED TEACHING

As teachers we must become aware of our expectations for children and realize the influence our attitudes and practices have on the children's expectations of themselves and others.

— Diane McDonald, National Education Association

Problem: Few Materials on Sex Equity are Available for Teacher Training.

WEEA Project: ABC'S FOR SEX EQUITY

New York City School System

"To increase teachers' understanding and awareness of the role that sexism and sex role stereotyping play in individual lives"

ABC's (Attitudinal Behavioral Changes) for Sex Equity developed an in-service teacher training workshop designed to increase teachers' understanding of sexism and sex role stereotyping. The activities were field tested by a group of New York City teachers.

Results:

- Increased teacher awareness of sex bias in classroom practices such as sex bias in books and curriculum materials, sex stereotyping in assignment of classroom tasks, and biased reactions to the same behavior in boys and girls. According to the evaluation, "there was clearly an increased awareness on the part of teachers to sexism as it manifests itself in their lives and in their classrooms."

- Eighty per cent of the WEEA workshop participants reporting changes in their classroom, such as nonsexist lineups and behavior and language changes related to the more subtle forms of bias.

- New curriculum materials or activities utilized by 95 per cent of the teachers as a result of the WEEA workshop. Most frequently mentioned was a classroom discussion of sex bias and sex role stereotyping found in the classroom, in television, and within society.

- Classroom use of curriculum materials that portrayed women's past and future. One teacher explored math anxiety; others modified their use of biased books and modified their career education curriculum to include nontraditional careers.

- Modifications made by teachers in both school sports and music. One teacher organized a girls' baseball team after the girls expressed interest. Another integrated the gymnastic team to include both boys and girls.

- "All of these activities provide substantial evidence that participating teachers of the [WEEA] project did, in fact, initiate classroom activities and materials that reflected the concepts of sex equity," according to the project evaluator. Inservice teacher training using these WEEA materials is a successful method to increase educational equity in the classroom.
WEEA Project: **THE NONSEXIST TEACHER EDUCATION PROJECT (NSTEP)**

The Mid-Atlantic Center for Sex Equity, The American University

“To develop teacher training materials on sex equity in the classroom”

Student booklets and teacher guides were written by different authors for use in three courses common to teacher training programs. Ten diverse universities across the United States used the materials in a one year field trial.

**Results:**

- Conclusion of an independent NSTEP evaluation that producing information on sex equity increases student teachers' awareness of, and sensitivity to, this basic issue.
- Third annual Women Educator's Award given to the Nonsexist Teacher Education Project.

- A physical education student:
  
  "I read it cover to cover. I agreed with it . . . so many times while I was reading it a light went on; and I said 'Yeah. Yeah, that's what happens.' . . . It was like a slap across the face . . . I was very glad that I had the opportunity to read [the materials]. Next semester, I'll be student-teaching and I know I'll have that as a top priority, something to conquer."

- According to a teacher's aide, now a student,
  
  "The main strength of this material is that they discussed male discrimination that we practice in elementary schools. As a female, I'm very aware of discrimination towards women, but not towards men. It made me think, 'Now, wait a minute, when I was a teacher, did I do any of those things?'."

- A Houston woman's words:
  
  "I always felt I was against women's lib and yet I always found things I agreed with . . . Now I know my stand. I want people to have the freedom to do what they choose, men or women."

- “My daughter is good in math and I wouldn't want her stifled,” another project participant's view.
6. DISABLED WOMEN AND GIRLS

The plight of a disabled woman striving to realize her maximum potential as a productive, self-sufficient individual results in large part from a widespread attitude that although the disabled man must become self-supporting, the disabled woman will somehow be cared for and protected.

— Council of Chief State School Officers Resource Center on Sex Equity

Problem: Barriers to Equitable Education. Disabled women and girls face serious, and often unacknowledged, barriers to equitable education—barriers which are products of stereotyping and bias based on both sex and handicapping condition. Like ethnic and minority women and girls, disabled women and girls are victims of “double jeopardy.”

WEEA Project: DISABLED WOMEN’S EDUCATIONAL EQUITY PROJECT

Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund, Berkeley, CA
“Activities to increase educational equity for disabled women and girls”

The project gathered data on disabled women and girls to assess their needs. Materials were developed for educators and counselors. A major national conference was held to bring together people interested in educational equity and the special educational needs of disabled persons, particularly of racial and ethnic minorities. The project also developed model curricula and approaches to training disabled teenage girls and young women in their civil rights, educational and career opportunities, and how to secure them.

Results:

• Publication of No More Stares, a role model book for disabled girls which has been highly praised by users:

The book has been helpful to me, increasing my sensitivity to an area where I have been ignorant. . . . I appreciate the service you are providing women and disabled persons in the community.

—a counselor of disabled people

The book, No More Stares, is beautiful. Reading about each person is like making a new friend. One special person is Lois Dadzie. I feel Lois is a great example of a beautiful, Black, disabled, independent woman to be admired. I am glad I had a chance to meet her.

Am really high on No More Stares, and hope you can get national distribution. . . . It certainly belongs in every school library. It is not only a fine book, but a handsome one too.

• Access to Equality: The First National Conference on Educational Equity for Disabled Women and Girls, attended by over 100 people, a third of whom were disabled. The conference focused national attention on the educational needs of disabled women and girls, particularly racial and ethnic minority disabled women and girls.

• Technical assistance on disability and women in education to over 40 national, regional, and local organizations; over 2000 requests for information, materials, speakers, and articles, in one year.

• A network of disabled women concerned with educational equity issues established.
• Training of disabled women who were previously without training, which started some on the road toward economic self-sufficiency.

Problem: *Curricula Omit Disabled Persons.* Elementary school curriculum materials generally exclude images of children and adults with disabilities. Without this early exposure and opportunity to discuss disability and sex-role stereotyping, children may develop attitudes which perpetuate the exclusion of the disabled from the mainstream.

WEEA Project: **PROJECT REED**
Women's Action Alliance, New York, NY
“Images of the disabled in elementary school curriculum”

Nonsexist, multicultural materials designed for easy incorporation into the elementary school curriculum include: hand-puppets showing adults and children with the same disabilities (designed to help children understand that disabled children often grow up to be disabled adults), wooden puzzles, block accessories (an eight figure community set depicting disabled people and people in nontraditional careers), and resource photos. The project also developed a training guide to help teachers and parents understand and combat stereotyping on the basis of sex, race, and disability.

Results:

• Evaluation data showing that WEEA materials stimulate discussion about disabilities and sex roles and create an opportunity for the teacher to clarify and expand young children's understanding concerning these issues.

• Discussions occurring both between teacher and students and between students only, which shows that WEEA materials are not totally dependent on teachers to stimulate discussion.

• An example reported by an elementary school guidance counselor who used the WEEA materials in his work with a disabled child:
  The child, who would not talk about his disability with the counselor, noticed the WEEA puppets during one of their sessions together. The child began to talk to the puppets as if they were real, told them how scared he felt and how he was afraid that other children would reject him because of his disability. After talking to the puppets for a while, the child began to cry. The counselor saw this as a major breakthrough for the child, who returned on another day, asked to see the puppets again, and remembered the names he gave them during the previous session.

• A parent's appreciation for these WEEA materials:
  My daughter is in a wheelchair. She is eighteen years old and it took a long time to get my younger children to understand why their sister used the chair. They needed this kind of puzzle [one of the WEEA products depicting a female athlete in a wheelchair] long ago in the classroom.
7. REENTRY WOMEN

Women entering or returning to college after years away from formal education have psychological and academic needs which differ from those of girls just out of high school. These women and their families need support services from academe and the community.

— Mary Purcell, President, American Association of University Women

Problem: Colleges Are Unprepared for Increasing Numbers of Older Women Students. The traditional college and university age (18-22) population is dwindling. Older ‘reentry’ women are returning to college, but colleges must meet their different needs. Unlike the post World War II male veterans who entered higher education institutions, the current reentry students do not have the societal and institutional supports which helped the reentry men cope with their new academic programs.

WEEA Project: REENTRY WOMAN SERIES

Project on the Status and Education of Women Association of American Colleges, Washington, D.C.

“A comprehensive series of papers to show college administrators the barriers facing returning women students.”

The fifteen papers describe potential problem areas and offer detailed pragmatic suggestions for change and additional resources. The topics include: recruitment and retention, part time enrollment, student support services, financial aid, child care, minority women returning students, and an annotated bibliography.

Results:

• Distribution of the papers to some 15,000 administrators, faculty, educational, and professional organizations.

• Reports from hundreds of administrators, teachers, and students who reviewed the papers that virtually all found the papers useful in helping them to evaluate or change policies, start new programs, identify new resources, improve recruitment, and train and educate staff and others on the issues.

• The reaction of one student at a large public Colorado university:

  This paper was very interesting to me because it made me more aware of how difficult it is for older women to go to graduate school. Many things mentioned in this paper (Reentry Women and Graduate School) I’ve never considered. I think this paper should be made available for all undergraduate women.

• A career counselor’s comment:

  Your paper was useful as a catalyst to developing specific programs for more effective recruitment, retention, and mental health. I plan to bring up your ‘What the Institution Can Do’ suggestions when we discuss Fall plans in the Counseling and Advisory Center and I sent the paper on Child Care on Campus to the Director of our Child Creative Education Center.
• According to the Dean of Student Services at a two year college in Kansas:
  Interesting materials, with great ideas. Few programs in this part of the country. We need more information like this.

• The response of an employee at another two year institution in Maine:
  A task force examining nontraditional students extensively utilized these materials in preparing recommendations to serve specific population groups, particularly reentry women.

• The views of a college personnel officer:
  The paper provided some excellent ideas. I am sure that many of us dealing with education do not think along the lines mentioned. . . . I am certain that all institutions could gain from receiving this paper, since it brings out problems and needs that should be taken into consideration.

Illustration: Karin Foget
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
8. PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

How well would the resources and strategies for educational equity which WEEA grantees had developed actually work in local schools and classrooms? To find answers to this key question, the WEEA program awarded four-year contracts to five institutions (universities, research centers) to carry out comprehensive demonstrations of educational equity in five diverse school districts. They were:

- Reidsville, N.C.—a rural area with small, declining school enrollment, almost half Black;
- Lincoln County, Oregon—a largely rural area with diversified schools, mostly white, stable enrollment;
- Quincy, Massachusetts—an old, small city with white, declining school population;
- Tucson, Arizona—a large, rapidly growing city with almost half Mexican-American school enrollment;
- Broward County, Florida—fast-growing, with the nation’s 10th largest school system, one-fourth Black.

Each district assessed its own needs and developed its own action plans to meet locally defined equity goals. But all of them were designed to:

- showcase WEEA and other resources and strategies intended to promote educational equity;
- train and assist educators in the use of equity concepts and practices;
- collect information to use in judging how well the program achieves its aims.

Within each district, the project was active in elementary, middle/junior high, and senior high schools. “Core groups” of faculty and administrators were the leaders. Teachers were involved in extensive reviews of equity materials and selected those considered most useful. They generally preferred classroom-ready resources and those which could be adapted to fit existing curricula. Fewer resources were available for early childhood classrooms than for higher grade levels. The low cost of most items was appreciated. Collections of lesson plans and other equity activities were prepared by some of the sites and shared with others.

Training was the major component of the five projects. As their joint evaluation report stated:

We strove to develop a cadre of educators committed to sex equity, capable of identifying discriminatory practices and knowledgeable about procedures aimed toward reducing sexism in the schools... We hoped to reach many of those key influences, educate and train them to balance educational opportunities for all students, and contribute to young people’s knowledge and understanding about realistic occupational choices.1

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The training focused on teachers, librarians, counselors, and administrators, but occasionally included aides, clerical, and maintenance staff. Parents and other community groups were also involved. In the first year the emphasis was on faculty awareness of discriminatory attitudes and practices; in the second and third years training stressed skills in analyzing resources for bias, practices to combat bias, and creativity in providing equitable learning opportunities for all. Peer group sessions were common and core faculty shared their knowledge and resources widely with colleagues.

All five projects hosted visitor days and ran intern programs for educators from other schools and districts. In the third year, a total of 517 interns participated in two to eight day programs. Their home districts shared the cost and made commitments to follow up on the equity training. While differing in specifics, all the intern programs included classroom observations, formal and informal exchanges between interns and their counterparts, and the development of action plans by individual interns. All interns were exposed to the WEEA and other resources and given information about sources and availability of such materials. Follow-up a few months after the internships revealed a variety of activities underway or planned by the interns.

The demonstration projects conducted extensive community outreach, making presentations at local meetings, presenting workshops and exhibits, sparking Women's History Week displays and programs. Newsletters and media exposure spread the word about educational equity. Work with parents was intended, as the Tucson report stated: "...to help parents help their children explore all of life's opportunities and to give them confidence to choose from traditional and nontraditional roles in adult activities."

What were the accomplishments of these complex demonstrations?

Student outcomes differed significantly by age level. The "before and after" attitude measures showed more movement toward equity by elementary students than secondary students, although the latter also showed less stereotyped attitudes and behavior after involvement in the project. Enrollment by females in nontraditional vocational courses and in math and science classes increased. Students showed awareness of sex bias and stereotyping in classroom practices. The greater change by younger students may be due to the fact that:

- elementary school children spend most of the day with one teacher, while secondary students are exposed many influences and teachers;
- secondary teachers tend to be more subject-matter oriented;
- older students are more influenced by their peers, who may be less supportive of sex equity than the teachers.

Faculty surveys revealed extensive changes in awareness of sex equity issues, in attitudes, and in classroom behavior. Nonproject teachers showed changes, although not as marked as those of project activists. The fact that nonproject teachers also changed reflects dispersal of project faculty, sharing and discussion of equity resources, and an increased "equity climate" resulting from the demonstration projects. Evidence of this includes reports that:

- teachers use and adapt equity resources in their classrooms (especially elementary faculty);
teachers alter segregated practices such as grouping or assignments;

- faculty identify obstacles to equity in their districts and take steps toward reducing such barriers;

- teachers adopt nonsexist language and assist others to do the same.

Perhaps most important of all, teachers report both personal and professional changes in their lives. Such feelings will not disappear when the projects end.²

Classrooms and schools in the demonstration projects—and, to a lesser extent, in districts which had interns visit the projects—have gained valuable sex equity resources and improved environments. Many of their staffs and students have broadened perspectives and skills. The infusion of equity principles and attitudes in a school or district can and should continue without further expenditure of earmarked Federal funds. In the words of the demonstration projects’ evaluation summary, “Our overall goal was to institutionalize educational equity in our host districts. We believe the principles of equity have been incorporated throughout the systems and that continuation of these efforts is not linked to district financial resources.”³

The Tucson project expressed three fundamentals which undergirded all of the demonstrations:

- Equity is not a woman’s issue; it applies to all students who are treated differently for any reason—race, handicap, ability, sex.

- Quality teaching cannot be separated from equity, so the educator must enhance opportunities for all students to learn.

- Educational equity should be an integral part of the educational process; it is not an add-on to the curriculum.⁴

²Ibid., p. 69.

³Ibid., p. 70.

⁴Schubert, Jane G., Five National Demonstrations of Educational Equity. Activities and Accomplishments, October 1983, p. 36.
WEEA'S MANDATE

Through contracts and competitive grants, WEEA funds support activities designed to achieve educational equity for women and girls at all levels of education. Such activities may include:

- development, evaluation, and dissemination of educational materials, including curricula, training for educational personnel, guidance and counseling tests;
- programs to increase opportunities for adult women, such as continuing education and projects for under- and unemployed women;
- expansion of programs for women in vocational education, career education, physical education, and educational administration.

WEEA funds ($5.765 million in fiscal year 1984) may be awarded to:

- public agencies, such as state and local education agencies;
- nonprofit organizations, including colleges, women's and community groups;
- individuals.

The Act has several other significant provisions:

- In addition to grants for model projects which have broad applicability and can be replicated for use in many places, WEEA will support projects to assist local educational agencies and institutions to implement Title IX and achieve equity; this second competitive grant program (known as "tier two") is not to be initiated until appropriations exceed $15 million, which has not yet occurred.
- Men may not be prohibited from participating in WEEA-supported activities.
- In addition to the program of general grants described, small grants of up to $25,000 are awarded annually.
- The Act established a National Advisory Council on Women's Educational Programs of 17 citizens appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, plus two ex officio members; the Council is mandated to advise the Secretary of Education concerning educational equity for women and the operation of the WEEA program.
HOW WEEA OPERATES

How are grantees selected for funding? The major steps are:

1. The Secretary of Education publishes a regulation setting forth priority areas of greatest need which are to be supported each year; the regulation also specifies extensive requirements which grant applicants must meet.

2. A "Notice of Closing," giving dates and other information, is published in the Federal Register.

3. Applicants submit proposals to the Education Department.

4. Proposals are reviewed and rated against the evaluation criteria published in the regulation by panels of three readers, formerly from outside but more recently largely Federal employees.

5. The WEEA program office prepares a recommended slate of grantees, weighing not only the numerical ratings, but also the need for geographic diversity, for funding diverse types of applicants and education levels, and for not duplicating similar projects previously funded by WEEA.

6. The grants office negotiates budget details with the grantee in order to spend Federal dollars as economically as possible.

7. Grants are usually awarded in August or September, to be spent in the following fiscal year.

What is the WEEA priority system? The program regulation lists the following areas of need, from which each year the Secretary selects the priorities to be funded and the per cent of available money expected to be awarded to each:

- **Priority 1.** Title IX compliance by educational institutions. These models would be especially useful if "tier two" were funded to help individual institutions comply with this crucial law.

- **Priority 2.** Educational equity for racial and ethnic minority women and girls. These models seek to remedy double discrimination, bias, and stereotyping.

- **Priority 3.** Educational equity for disabled women and girls. WEEA is the only Federal program which addresses the special educational needs of this group.

- **Priority 4.** Influence on leaders in educational policy and administration. Educational equity will only be realized if the leaders and policy makers (predominantly men) are committed to equity.

- **Priority 5.** Elimination of persistent barriers to educational equity for women.
Do grantees receive help or supervision? Yes, both.

- Each grantee is assigned a program officer in the WEEA program office, who provides information and technical assistance as required.
- When travel budgets permit, program officers and members of the National Advisory Council visit grantees. Program officers conduct monitoring and technical assistance through these visits.
- One or more conferences of project directors are held in Washington to provide information, problem sharing, and networking benefits.
- Final reports, fiscal accounting, and appropriate products are required of all grantees.

For what period of time are grants awarded?

- Formerly grants were awarded for one, two, and three year periods.
- In 1983 the Department stated a preference for one year proposals.
- One year may be too short a period to carry out, validate, and evaluate an equity project, but there is some risk in committing most of the funds to multiyear projects, thus limiting the money available for new proposals.

What happens to the grantees' products?

- Although some grantees have money to publish their materials, most are required to submit their final product (see WEEA in Action above and appendix B for examples of these materials) to the WEEA Publishing Center at the Education Development Corporation, Newton, Massachusetts.
- As a subcontractor of the Publishing Center, the Center for Research on Women at Wellesley College arranges for intensive peer reviews of the materials. This leads to recommendations as to whether the items are marketable “as is,” need minor revisions, or contain major weaknesses.
- Various Education Department officials then make the decision concerning publication.
- The Publishing Center (through the Government Printing Office, as required) publishes print materials and prepares audiovisual materials for sale.
- The WEEA Publishing Center markets the products, using catalogues, brochures, attendance at conferences, and other dissemination methods.
- Items are sold at cost; the majority are under $10, which increases their appeal.
HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

Several landmark events affecting sex discrimination in education preceded the passage of the Women’s Educational Equity Act in 1974, notably:

1. The 1954 Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, which outlawed racial segregation in public education.

2. *Title VII*, Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination in employment on grounds of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex. (The Act was amended in 1972 to cover previously excluded employment in educational institutions.)

3. *Title VI* of that law, which prohibits discrimination in programs receiving Federal financial assistance, but not on grounds of sex.

4. *Executive Order 11246* (later modified and extended to cover sex) which prohibits discrimination in employment under Federal contracts, including those held by educational institutions.

5. *Title IX* of the Education Amendments of 1972, which was patterned after *Title VI* and prohibits sex discrimination in education programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance.

6. A 1972 report by the *Commissioner of Education Task Force on the Impact of Education Programs on Women*, which documented pervasive sex discrimination and sex role stereotyping at all levels of education. It stressed the need for action to overcome the problem within the Office of Education and in the programs receiving Federal funds.

Thus, when the House of Representatives and the Senate held hearings on WEEA in 1973 and 1974, there was already much information available concerning the problems faced by girls and women in education. In fact, the Task Force Report stated that: “mounting evidence makes it clear that unequal treatment of the sexes is the rule in education, not the exception.”

The numerous witnesses included members of Congress of both parties, educators, women’s organizations, women athletes, and concerned citizens. The wide-ranging testimony covered many aspects of sex bias, including:

- discrimination in educational administration
- sex role stereotyping in curricula and textbooks
- discrimination in career counseling and testing
- inequities in athletics and physical education
- inequitable and stereotyped attitudes facing females in classrooms
- a widespread need for assistance and know-how in overcoming these problems
Representative Patsy Mink (D.-Hawaii) and Senator Walter Mondale (D.-Minnesota) were the chief sponsors of WEEA, which became part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1974.

When WEEA expired in 1978, Congress reauthorized it with several changes. The most important was the addition of “tier two,” a program of assistance to local school districts and institutions in implementing Title IX. The authorization level was raised from $30 to $80 million. Rep. John Buchanan (R.-Alabama) and Senator Donald Riegle (D.-Michigan) were the chief sponsors.

Financial Frustrations. Appropriations for the WEEA program began at $6.25 million in FY 1976 and rose gradually to a “peak” of $10 million in FY 1980. In 1981 the new administration proposed no funds for FY 1982, a 25% rescission of FY 1981 funds, and asked that WEEA be included with many other education programs in a block grant to the states. Program supporters feared the loss of Federal leadership and the inefficiency of developing sex equity projects within each state (reinventing the wheel). With bipartisan backing, Congress chose to maintain WEEA as a separate Federal program, although the authorization was reduced to $6 million.

In the next two fiscal years, the administration proposed no money for WEEA, but each time Congress appropriated $5.76 million.

Administration. The program is administered by a small career staff in the Department of Education. In 1981 and 1982 the staff and program came under attack by the Heritage Foundation and the Conservative Digest. Allegations were made that the program was a “feminist network” and that the director was “... a monarch ... imperiously guarding her fiefdom” who should be swiftly “dethroned.” In 1982, the director was temporarily removed from her position at a critical time in the grant cycle. In September 1983, despite the objections raised in two joint Congressional committee hearings, the Department carried out a reorganization with drastic impact on the WEEA program:

- downgrading the office by four levels to the lowest bureaucratic level (called “Siberia” by a member of Congress);
- reducing the staff from eight to five;
- replacing specialists in sex equity with generalists lacking expertise in the sex equity field;
- firing the experienced, nationally recognized program director.
THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON
WOMEN’S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

As part of the Women’s Educational Equity Act, passed in 1974, Congress established the National Advisory Council on Women’s Educational Programs (NACWEP) with a mandate to:

- advise the Secretary of Education about equal educational opportunities for women and girls;
- make recommendations concerning the administration of WEEA;
- evaluate WEEA programs;
- report to the President and Congress and disseminate information about the Council’s activities.

The Council is composed of seventeen persons appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate who are described as “... broadly representative of the general public who, by virtue of their knowledge or experience, are versed in the role and status of women in American society.” Two Federal officials also serve on the Council. Members serve for three-year overlapping terms and elect their own chair. The Department of Education provides financial and administrative support for NACWEP, but also imposes a variety of constraints on the Council’s operations, including personnel, travel, and publications.

From President Gerald Ford’s initial appointees in 1975 through 1981, NACWEP members were largely persons of national stature and experience in education and equity issues. They included, for example:

- the chancellor of a state university system
- a state superintendent of schools
- the president of a Catholic women’s college
- two directors of national projects on women’s education

The Council always included three or four men and several minority members.

During those years the Council met frequently in various places. The meetings always included public hearings and participation by local citizens and educators. In addition, the Council:

- visited many WEEA grantees’ projects;
- participated in WEEA project directors conferences;
- testified, on request, at Congressional hearings on issues relating to sex equity in education;
consulted with Education Department staff about program regulations affecting women;

- made many recommendations to the Secretary of Education about WEEA and other education laws and programs;

- maintained liaison with advocates of educational equity throughout the country, serving as a link between them and the educational public policy establishment in Washington;

- prepared an annual evaluation of the WEEA program operation.

In a 1977 review of numerous advisory groups, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare accepted the recommendation of the Commissioner of Education which summarized the contributions of NACWEP:

"I propose that the National Advisory Council on Women's Educational Programs be continued unchanged. Without question, this is one of the most productive and far-reaching councils in [the Office of Education.] The Council has a nearly unlimited charge, to advise us on the specifics of the Women’s Educational Equity Act and in general on all matters affecting the educational equity of women. Moreover, it is unique in speaking for over half of the population of our country.

...the Council has more than fulfilled its mandated functions, providing national leadership in an area of great concern. In every area the Council has entered—regulations, legislation, policy issues, surveys and so on—it has made its impact upon the policymakers in a profound manner. As the evaluation concludes, were this council not in existence, it ought to be."

The Reagan Years. In mid-1982 a full slate of new members was appointed to NACWEP. They included several businesswomen, some teachers, and a number of political activists associated with such organizations as the Eagle Forum. There are no men and only two minority women on the Council. Their biographies reveal little or no background in educational equity or related issues.

During the turbulent events of 1982-83 affecting women’s educational equity (lawsuits threatening Title IX, repeated attacks on WEEA and its staff, the development of math-science education legislation, and appropriations battles), the Advisory Council was not seen or heard from. See appendix C for a summary of the current NACWEP activities.

The law directs the Council to advise and report on educational opportunities for women and girls without reference to any administration's philosophy or legislative program. The Reagan-appointed Council, however, has made clear its partisan viewpoint. For example, the chair stated: "We always have to maintain the Reagan philosophy..." The Council's negative approach toward WEEA projects was illustrated by a member who reported enthusiastically on her visit to a WEEA grantee, and then said, "I'm sorry, but I couldn't find anything to criticize!"

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1 Memorandum from Commissioner of Education, through the Assistant Secretary to the Secretary of HEW, April 7, 1977.
NEW DIRECTIONS FOR WEEA

Clearly, the Women's Educational Equity Act has contributed significantly to progress toward the national goal of a quality education for women as well as men. But it is equally clear—and fully understandable, in view of the enormity of the problems of sex bias in education—that much more remains to be done. The Federal role of providing leadership in this long term effort remains as crucial today as when Congress held the 1973 hearings which led to the passage of WEEA. The experience and the tools derived from the eight years of the WEEA program will serve to shape a revised statute, designed to meet the current needs of the educational system, our society, and especially the girls and women who comprise a majority of our population.

On the basis of these eight years of experience, what do we recommend for a revised Women's Educational Equity Act?

- An additional purpose should be included: "to provide educational equity for racial and ethnic minority women and disabled women and to overcome the additional discrimination which they encounter in education."

The current WEEA regulation recognizes this problem of "double jeopardy" and two of the five priority areas for the grant program relate to these groups; however, regulations can be changed by executive action. A matter as important as this requires the force of law.

A number of WEEA grants have produced valuable products for and by minority and disabled women. In fact, one of the program's greatest strengths and contributions has been its focus on the multiple impact of race, sex, and disability bias. We must build on the experience of these grantees and make further progress toward meeting the needs of the women who suffer "double jeopardy" in our society.

- The Act must be detailed and prescriptive to carry out the will of Congress.

In recent years members of Congress—in both parties and both houses—have expressed deep interest in many aspects of the WEEA program. Through oversight hearings, special General Accounting Office and Congressional Research Service reports, correspondence and meetings with department officials, and extensive constituent contacts, Congress has become well informed about this small but sensitive program. Congress has repeatedly rejected administration proposals and objected to executive actions affecting WEEA. Therefore, it is both feasible and necessary for Congress to prescribe in detailed language the nature of the WEEA program. Among the issues which the statute should specify are the following:

- Development of tools and strategies to achieve educational equity must continue to be supported.

New and changing equity needs emerge. Just as the special needs of rural women and disabled women were not foreseen during the original WEEA hearings in 1973, so we can expect other problems to arise. For example, serious problems of equity in computer access and training are coming to our attention today. New research findings should be translated into classroom materials.
Furthermore, just as a commercial publisher continually produces new editions of existing books along with new publications, WEEA needs to update some of its products and replace others with up-to-date models.

- **Dissemination of equity materials** must be emphasized in the statute.

Congress will undoubtedly want to see increased "payoff" from the seed money invested by WEEA since 1976. Both the existing and new equity products must get into local communities and institutions—to the school boards, teachers, parents, counselors, community colleges, displaced homemaker centers, community-based organizations, etc., who can use the Federally-funded models to meet their locally determined needs. The WEEA Publishing Center has made a good start on a distribution program; the new statute should provide for even greater emphasis on dissemination throughout the country.

- **Continuation of the low-cost policy for equity products** is necessary.

By selling WEEA products at cost, the Publishing Center has kept most prices under $10. This has greatly helped the marketing effort and should be continued as a means of facilitating dissemination to local schools and community groups.

- The **authorization level for WEEA must be restored to the previous level of $80 million**.

The expanded program of distribution and assistance to local education agencies will require that funding be increased if the benefits of WEEA are to be widely shared. That the several recent studies of American education rarely mention the special needs of over half of the student population shows how far we have to go to achieve equity.

- **Eligible applicants** should include student and community groups, among them those with expertise in the needs of racial and ethnic minorities and of disabled persons.

Even though these groups are now eligible, it is desirable to specify them because of the added purpose of WEEA. Eligibility should continue to be limited to public and nonprofit agencies and individuals.

- **Administration**: The Act should require that the program be administered by an Office responsible directly to the Assistant Secretary for Educational Research and Improvement; that the Director of the Office be an expert in educational equity and in the career Senior Executive Service; and that an adequate staff, composed of persons with expertise in women's educational equity, be assigned to the Office.

Congress has detailed knowledge of the downgrading of the WEEA program and its staff. There is precedent for this type of specificity in the Vocational Education Act.
The National Advisory Council on Women's Educational Programs section of the Act needs revision.

Membership should specify several categories, as does the Vocational Education Act for its Council, in order to assure expertise and diversity:

a. Persons with experience in sex equity activities in elementary, secondary, postsecondary, vocational, and adult education;

b. Persons representative of and sensitive to the educational needs of minority and disabled women;

c. Students;

d. Persons of both sexes;

Demonstrated commitment to the purposes of the Act should be required of all appointees.

Terms of members should continue to be for three years and overlapping to provide for continuity and stability in Council functioning.

Mandate should specify the following duties:

a. Advise the President and Congress about educational needs and opportunities for girls and women. The present requirement that the Council merely "report" to them is inadequate. Advice would include legislative recommendations when appropriate.

b. Oversee the evaluation of the WEEA program. The present directive that the Council evaluate WEEA projects is not appropriate or feasible for an advisory council.

c. Advise the Secretary of Education about the administration of WEEA, including broad allocation of funds and the selection of program priorities. This would not involve the Council in the awarding of grants and contracts, but would go beyond the present weak directive to "recommend criteria for the establishment of program priorities."

d. Advise all Federal agencies which have education programs concerning aspects of those programs which affect women's and girls' needs and opportunities. Federal support of education is not limited to the Department of Education, so it is important for the Council to advise other agencies about sex equity in their education programs.

e. Disseminate information concerning the Council's work. The continuation of this directive in the statute authorizes an important public education function by the Council.

The reauthorization of WEEA is an opportunity for Congress to improve the composition and directives of the Advisory Council on the basis of eight years of experience, so that future Councils can be of greater service to Congress, the public, and the cause of women's educational equity.
Appendix A

THE ACT

The Women's Educational Equity Act (P.L. 95-561)

SHORT TITLE: PURPOSE

Sec. 931 (a) This part may be cited as the “Women's Educational Equity Act of 1978.”

(b)(1) The Congress finds and declares that educational programs in the United States, as presently conducted, are frequently inequitable as such programs relate to women and frequently limit the full participation of all individuals in American society.

(2) It is the purpose of this part to provide educational equity for women in the United States and to provide financial assistance to enable educational agencies and institutions to meet the requirements of title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

(c) As used in this part, the term “Council” means the National Advisory Council on Women’s Educational Programs.

GRANT AND CONTRACT AUTHORITY

Sec. 932 (a) The Commissioner is authorized to make grants to, and enter into contracts with, public agencies, private non-profit agencies, organizations, and institutions, including student and community groups, and individuals, for activities designed to achieve the purpose of this part at all levels of education, including preschool, elementary and secondary education, higher education, and adult education. The activities may include —

(1) demonstration, developmental, and dissemination activities of national, statewide, or general significance, including —

(A) the development and evaluation of curricula, textbooks, and other educational materials related to educational equity;

(B) model preservice and inservice training programs for educational personnel with special emphasis on programs and activities designed to provide educational equity;

(C) research and development activities designed to advance educational equity;

(D) guidance and counseling activities, including the development of nondiscriminatory tests, designed to insure educational equity;

(E) educational activities to increase opportunities for adult women, including continuing educational activities and programs for underemployed and unemployed women; and
(F) the expansion and improvement of educational programs and activities for women in vocational education, career education, physical education, and educational administration; and

(2) assistance to eligible entities to pay a portion of the costs of the establishment and operation, for a period of not to exceed two years, of special programs and projects of local significance to provide equal opportunities for both sexes, including activities listed in paragraph (1), activities incident to achieving compliance with title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and other special activities designed to achieve the purposes of this part.

Not less than 75 per centum of funds used to support activities covered by paragraph (2) shall be used for awards to local educational agencies.

(b) For each fiscal year, the Commissioner shall use $15,000,000 from the funds available under this part to support activities described in paragraph (1) of subsection (a). Any funds in excess of $15,000,000 available under this part shall be used to support activities described in paragraph (2) of subsection (a).

APPLICATION; PARTICIPATION

Sec. 933. (a) A grant may be made, and a contract may be entered into, under this part only upon application to the Commissioner, at such time, in such form, and containing or accompanied by such information as the Commissioner may prescribe. Each such application shall

(1) provide that the program or activity for which assistance is sought will be administered by or under the supervision of the applicant;

(2) describe a program for carrying out one or more of the purposes set forth in section 932(a) which holds promise of making a substantial contribution toward attaining such purposes; and

(3) set forth policies and procedures which insure adequate evaluation of the activities intended to be carried out under the application;

(b) Nothing in this part shall be construed as prohibiting men and boys from participating in any programs or activities assisted under this part.

SMALL GRANTS

Sec. 934. In addition to the authority of the Commissioner under section 932, the Commissioner shall carry out a program of small grants (as part of the grant program administered under section 932 (a)(1)), not to exceed $25,000, each, in order to support innovative approaches to achieving the purposes of this part; and for that purpose the Commissioner is authorized to make grants to public and private nonprofit agencies and to individuals.
CRITERIA AND PRIORITIES

Sec. 935. The Commissioner shall establish criteria and priorities for awards under this part to insure that available funds are used for programs that most effectively will achieve the purposes of this part. Those criteria and priorities shall be promulgated in accordance with section 431 of the General Education Provision Act.

NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Sec. 936 (a) There is established in the Office of Education a National Advisory Council on Women’s Educational Programs. The Council shall be composed of—

(1) seventeen individuals, some of whom shall be students, and who shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, from among individuals, broadly representative of the general public who, by virtue of their knowledge or experience, are versed in the role and status of women in American society;

(2) the staff Director of the Civil Rights Commission;

(3) the Director of the Women’s Bureau of the Department of Labor; and

(4) the Director of the Women’s Action Program of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

The Council shall elect its own Chairperson from among the members described in paragraph (1).

(b) The term of office of such member of the Council appointed under paragraph (1) of subsection (a) shall be three years, except that—

(1) the members first appointed under such clause shall serve as designated by the President, six for a term of one year, five for a term of two years, and six for a term of three years, and

(2) any member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of the term for which his or her predecessor was appointed shall be appointed for the remainder of such term.

(c) The Council shall—

(1) advise the Secretary, Assistant Secretary, and the Commissioner on matters relating to equal educational opportunities for women and policy matters relating to the administration of this part;

(2) make recommendations to the Commissioner with respect to the allocation of any funds pursuant to this part, including criteria developed to insure an appropriate geographical distribution of approved programs and projects throughout the Nation;

(3) recommend criteria for the establishment of program priorities;

(4) make such reports as the Council determines appropriate to the President and the Congress on the activities of the Council; and
(5) disseminate information concerning the activities of the Council under this part.

(d) The provisions of part D of the General Education Provisions Act shall apply with respect to the Council established under this subsection.

REPORT

Sec. 937. The Commissioner is directed, not later than September 30, 1980, 1982, and 1984, to submit to the President and the Congress and to the Council a report setting forth the programs and activities assisted under this part, and to provide for the distribution of this report to all interested groups and individuals, including the Congress, from funds authorized under this part. After receiving the report from the Commissioner, the Council shall evaluate the program and projects assisted under this part and include such evaluation in its annual report.

AUTHORIZED OF APPROPRIATIONS

Sec. 938. For the purpose of carrying out this part there are authorized to be appropriated $80,000,000 for fiscal year 1980, and each of the three succeeding fiscal years.

OMNIBUS BUDGET RECONCILIATION ACT OF 1981 (PL 97-35)

Sec. 513(1)(3) The total amount of appropriations to carry out... such Act shall not exceed $6,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 1982, 1983, and 1984.

To obtain further information or obtain WEEA products, contact the WEEA Publishing Center, Educational Development Center, Inc., 55 Chapel St., Newton, MA 02160 or 800-225-3088.
Appendix B

ADDITIONAL SUMMARIES OF WEEA PROJECTS

NATIONAL TITLE IX GRASSROOTS ACTION – operating in California, Connecticut, Illinois, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin

Project on Equal Education Rights (PEER), Washington, DC

The project was organized in two large urban centers, in four small to medium-sized cities, and in one rural county. The objective of the project was to encourage or expand educational opportunities for both girls and boys, through the efforts of community groups, composed mainly of parents with children in the local public schools.

PEER first developed a manual outlining the steps for creating a viable community group. It offered advice on strategy, publicity, outreach and research. The community groups field tested the manual and received additional technical assistance from the PEER staff.

Each community group defined its own objective and strategy, but the primary goal of all groups was to increase parental involvement in local education.

The project demonstrated that parents all over the country can effect change in their local school systems. The products developed by PEER provided the instruction and resources parents need to secure equal educational opportunities for their children.

WOMEN’S STUDIES IN POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

Georgia State University
Montana State University

Two WEEA projects developed strategies to bring women’s studies—the rapidly growing new scholarship on women in many academic disciplines—into the mainstream university curriculum.

Georgia State University (GSU) was funded to design and host a highly successful conference titled “A Fabric of Our Own Making: Southern Scholars on Women.” The objective was to create a network of people interested in integrating research on women in six broad categories into the curriculum at their institutions. The papers are being published to widen the “ripple effect” of the conference, which received two awards for excellence. Participants reported that they gained valuable new knowledge along with increased awareness of the needs for women’s studies and balanced curricula. For example, one faculty member said: “I was forced to consider and to reconsider how I was teaching my courses. I was stimulated to speak out forcefully within the department to encourage others to begin to integrate women into their courses.” Another stated: “I returned to my home institution more determined than ever to work toward gender-balancing in my own courses first and then in the curriculum as a whole.”

Montana State University (MSU), after losing a class action sex discrimination suit, obtained a two-year WEEA grant for its project, “Seeking
Women's Equity Through Curriculum Reform." Forty faculty members from seven colleges received stipends for their participation in training and development of research and materials for curriculum reform. The field testing of new and revised courses met some negative as well as positive responses from 2,000 students. Faculty approaches were analyzed to improve the acceptability of the sex equity emphasis. Male and female sex roles were both explored.

Most of the participating faculty reported behavioral changes such as greater attention to nontraditional students, inclusion of nontraditional role models, and modification of language.

A ripple effect of the WEEA project was the receipt of funds from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education to disseminate the MSU model to ten regional colleges and universities which undertook their own projects to integrate content on women into their curricula.

MINORITY GIRLS AND WOMEN
St. Paul Public Schools
St. Paul, MN

Two WEEA grants were received to develop multimedia curriculum materials for elementary and secondary levels and the strategies to enable teachers to integrate information on minority women into their regular classroom curriculum.

The project director worked with local school district teachers and educators and education majors at a local university to develop five slide tape/sound film strips on America's women of color—American Indians, Asian-Americans, Hispanics, and Blacks—along with a teacher inservice workshop guide, a resource guide, curriculum packets, and an annotated bibliography.

Materials were tested and evaluated by workshop participants and by testing cognitive and attitude changes in the students. Teachers rated the inservice workshop highly in terms of usefulness and interest. A one-year follow-up evaluation on the teachers who participated indicated they had experienced a change in their perspective on the history and social conditions of minority women.

CHINESE AMERICAN WOMEN
Chinese Cultural Foundation
San Francisco, CA

Nearly 150 years of Chinese-American women's history was chronicled. A major exhibition was held in San Francisco, August through October 1983. The exhibition and catalogue of photographs and illustrations detailed the lives, struggles, and achievements of Chinese American women since 1834 with special emphasis on the pioneers throughout the years who, amidst hardships and discrimination, made important contributions to their communities and society at large.

The previously undocumented and unknown history of Chinese American women is now available for the public at large and for incorporation into classroom curricula. Chinese-American girls, and all minority girls, now have role models.
MATH, SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

Two projects were funded to help 8th grade girls understand the importance of studying math and science in order to have wide career options in the future. This is a crucial time to help girls avoid “math anxiety.”

The University of Oklahoma developed MATHCO to increase students’ understanding of the relevance of math to their lives. It consists of a teacher inservice guide, pre and post tests, five curriculum units, six career wall charts depicting math related careers, and five audio cassette presentations. These are among the best sellers at the WEEA Publishing Center. Pre and post test scores show significant improvement, especially for girls. Schools in ten states participated in the testing and validation of the MATHCO products.

The American Association for the Advancement of Science was funded to prepare three career information booklets in English and Spanish. Titled “Scientific and Technical Careers: Information and Inspiration for Minority Girls,” the booklets include photographs of and interviews with minority women scientists, as well as material on prerequisite high school courses, college and graduate education, employment opportunities and a reference list.

Purdue University developed a program titled “Putting It All Together” to help women engineering students overcome their limited preparation, in comparison with men’s background. The program includes hands-on experience in a special laboratory, counseling, and role model lectures to broaden career planning. The program was successful in closing the gap in information and in improving the retention rate for the women who participated.

Major elements of the program have been institutionalized at Purdue. Some parts have been updated and expanded. It has been widely disseminated, not only through the WEEA Publishing Center, but through lectures by the Purdue staff, articles, and a slide tape show.

WOMEN’S INFORMATION SERVICE FOR EDUCATION NEEDS
Middle Tennessee State University
Murfreesboro, TN

Two six-week workshops for adults to improve their basic skills in reading, writing, math, how to study and assertiveness were designed to help the community. Participants were 75.5% female, 24.5% male, 26.4% Black, 5% foreign and 2% handicapped.

The success of the program is apparent from both statistics and reactions of enthusiastic participants. Eighty-five per cent of those who took the high school equivalency test passed it on the first try. Fifty-two per cent of those who finished the workshop entered college. There were dramatic gains in reading and vocabulary. Students commented on their increased self confidence, improved study habits, and skills in math and writing. The project director developed such good rapport with local industries that personnel directors of several companies continued to call her about job openings.
Appendix C

WHAT IS THE 1982–1983 RECORD OF THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON WOMEN’S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS?

The Council is directed to advise the Secretary of Education and Congress about equal educational opportunities for women and girls. (See page 21 for more details on the Council’s mandate.)

What have been the activities and accomplishments of the Advisory Council since appointment of new members in mid-1982 and their selection of new staff?

1. The Advisory Council has failed to monitor the Federal Government’s policies and actions in the crucially important area of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Executive Orders 11246 and 11250, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, and the Equal Pay Act.

- The Advisory Council took no action concerning the Grove City lawsuit which is crucial to Title IX, despite equity advocates’ strong pressure on the administration to maintain a broad interpretation in its Supreme Court brief.
- The Advisory Council took no action in relation to the Justice Department’s inaction in the Richmond case which severely limits the scope of Title IX coverage.
- The Advisory Council took no action concerning the Vice President’s Task Force on Regulatory Reform, which targeted the Title IX regulation on intercollegiate athletics and the sexual harassment guidelines of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.
- The Advisory Council took no action on proposed Department of Education moves to exempt student loans from Title IX coverage.
- The Advisory Council has not examined current enforcement procedures for Title IX, procedures which have been criticized by supporters of women’s educational equity and which are also the subject of court proceedings.
- In previous years, the Advisory Council actively monitored all Federal activities and policies which would affect educational equity, met with appropriate officials and advocates, and made many formal recommendations concerning these issues. (See Annual Reports, 1975–1982).

2. The Advisory Council has failed to support WEEA against several moves to weaken it, although WEEA is central to the Council’s mission.

- The Council was not consulted and did not become involved in the reorganisation and reduction in force which led to the reduction of the staff from eight to five, the replacement of expert staff by generalists lacking experience in women’s equity, and the firing of the career director.
The Council did not testify at either of the two Congressional joint subcommittee hearings on the reorganization and RIF.

- The Council did not oppose the administration's request for zero funding of WEEA or the rescission of existing appropriations.

3. The Advisory Council has failed to advise on other legislation of importance to educational equity for women and girls.

- The Advisory Council has not examined or taken a stand on impending vocational education legislation which would seriously affect opportunities for women and girls.

- The Administration has proposed eliminating provisions of the vocational education law which would require state action to meet the special needs of women, but the Advisory Council has never had this item on its agenda.

- Previously, the Advisory Council monitored vocational education, held hearings, published extensive reports, and made numerous recommendations on the subject to the Secretary.

- Previously, the Advisory Council monitored vocational education, held hearings, published extensive reports, and made numerous recommendations on the subject to the Secretary.

- Despite its alleged interest in improving opportunities for girls and women in mathematics and science, the Advisory Council failed to communicate to the Administration any recommendations concerning special attention to females in currently pending legislation.

4. The Advisory Council views itself primarily as a supporter of the President and is reluctant to take any stand that would oppose the Administration.

- The Advisory Council claims that the administration's proposed budget for upgrading math and science instruction was in response to the Advisory Council's recommendation, even though the proposal had no focus on women and girls.

- The Advisory Council's annual report quoted the President's words on equity for women as being responsive to the Council although his speech failed to mention education.

- Previous Advisory Councils had often opposed the policies and actions of the administrations which had appointed them, when these policies and actions were viewed as harmful to educational equity for women and girls.

5. The Advisory Council has held no hearings whatsoever to receive input from the public concerning educational equity issues. Previous Councils held numerous hearings around the country and in Washington to obtain information about vocational education, rural women, displaced homemakers, intercollegiate athletics, ethnic and minority women, counseling, etc.
6. The Advisory Council’s staff has limited or no expertise on women’s educational equity or with legislation, resulting in inappropriate Council action.

- Staff made a recommendation which was approved by the Council and transmitted to the President and Secretary which was in violation of several statutes. They recommended that WEEA funds be used for scholarships for girls to study math in ignorance of the fact that WEEA prohibits exclusion of men and boys.

- The Council voted to eliminate all indirect costs for WEEA grants. They and the staff did not understand that the regulation on such costs covers all Education Department programs, and in any event, is not within the scope of the Council’s mandate, educational equity.

- The Executive Director had testified in Congress, prior to her appointment to the staff, against an appropriation for WEEA.

- No training was given to members before they visited WEEA grant and contract sites for evaluation purposes. In contrast, the former Advisory Council provided specialized training prior to all site visits.

7. Publications:

- The sole publication of the Advisory Council in 18 months, apart from a combined mandatory annual and WEEA evaluation report, is a short list of Federal offices that deal with women’s opportunities. Although useful, this publication does not contribute to educational equity, the Council’s mandate.

- Previously, the Advisory Council averaged three special reports a year, based on extensive research and hearings. They were widely disseminated and contributed to significant areas of educational equity for women and girls. In addition, the Council published separate annual and WEEA evaluation reports.

8. Testimony:

- Because of its inaction and lack of expertise the National Advisory Council on Women’s Educational Programs is no longer sought out for testimony by Congressional committees.
## Appendix D

### CHARACTERISTICS OF WEEA PRODUCTS

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THE NATIONAL COALITION FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS IN EDUCATION

American Alliance for Health, Physical Education and Recreation
American Association of Community & Junior Colleges
American Association of School Administrators
American Association of University Professors
American Association of University Women
American Civil Liberties Union
American Council on Education
American Educational Research Association
American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees
American Home Economics Association
American Personnel and Guidance Association
American Psychological Association
American Sociological Association
Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women
Association for Women in Science
Council of Chief State School Officers
The Displaced Homemakers Network, Inc.
The Federal Education Project, Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights
Federation of Organizations for Professional Women
Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.
Girls Clubs of America, Inc.
League of Women Voters of the U.S.
Lulac National Education Service Centers
National Association for Girls and Women in Sports
National Association for Women Deans, Administrators and Counselors
National Association of Commissions for Women
National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, Inc.
National Coalition of Independent College and University Students
National Commission on Working Women
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of Negro Women
National Education Association
National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc.
National Organization for Women
National Women's Law Center
National Women's Political Caucus
National Women's Studies Association
Project on Equal Education Rights of the NOW LDEF
Project on the Status and Education of Women, Association of American Colleges
Southern Coalition for Educational Equity
United Church Board for Homeland Ministries
United States Student Association/National Student Educational Fund
Women's College Coalition
Women's Equity Action League
Women's Legal Defense Fund
Wider Opportunities for Women, Inc.