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Other comments on how to improve communication between the branch presidents and the rest of the state board:

- 1.** I am aware of the problems with attendance of presidents but I really don't believe I could support any of these suggestions. If I HAD to choose, it would be #16 (by cluster) but if the President isn't interested, what is to be expected of the branch?
- 2.** I don't think any of the above would help get Branch presidents to meetings. Reimburse the president for the trip and the AAUWNC state president must constantly connect with Branch presidents by e-mail, telephone etc. The direct communication is the only way to keep people involved.
- 3.** I think we need to describe more fully 17 and 18 for the branches and then have them vote as to how they want to be represented on the State Board. Otherwise I think they will say this is a decision made by the Board for the entire membership without the input of the membership. Depending on the outcome at winter retreat, this could need to be discussed in a business session at convention.
- 4.** Have all branches represented at the board meeting at Convention, then Summer, Fall and Winter meetings use 16 or 18 above.
- 5.** The cluster representative would be the best solution since those branch presidents would be near each other and feel more connected.
- 6.** Branch Presidents should be on the board or send their representative.
- 7.** Of the ideas suggested, I would like to rank them. First of all I would like to say that any plan that we come up with should have at its roots the idea of grooming people for the work of the state. Right now, I think that we have more of a chance having the cluster come up with the at-large people. At least you would have someone calling/communicating on a regular basis. Hopefully, someone "regionally" would have a closer link. #17 has merit from the standpoint that Presidents would help develop newer people and get them in the pipeline. They would also have a "buy-in" for making the idea work and be more willing to keep a closer link on their end. #18 is just a bad idea. I'm not sure that we would come up with a committed group of people. It's hard enough coming up with a nominating committee. #19 I probably like the best. I have long felt that we should find a way to involve the people who host a convention. You have their attention for a whole year, but no buy-in for what goes on after that. Maybe if we had two people from the previous convention and two people from those planning the new convention working together with the Executive Committee, we would have better mentoring. One thing we haven't talked about is a full-time Convention Chair. Virginia used to have one. Don't know whether they still do or not. The Chair was then in charge of logistics and mentored the host branch. Don't know whether she was elected or appointed or the length of term.
- 8.** Keep branch presidents on the board with elected officers who comprise the Exec. Committee. All appointed chairs should be responsible for reporting to the state president and the bulletin editor. Cutting costs would bring branch presidents to board meetings. In my former state, branch members voluntarily hosted board members -- a great idea for fostering fellowship and sharing of ideas. Bonds were forged and programs strengthened. Transportation not housing costs prohibit attendance.

- 9.** In NY branch presidents were not board members. Cluster representatives should communicate important board meeting news/decisions to their branches. A cluster rep. could be elected at each convention by the present cluster members. At the same time each cluster could elect a rep. to the Nominating Committee.
- 10.** I think that 1 or 2 'designated communication people' per region is a good idea. Don't limit this to people who attend convention - may be able to use this position to draw uninvolved people into state participation. Would these appointed people be voting members of board or not? I would like them to vote instead of branch presidents. Or maybe a mixture of elected at state convention and appointed "communication points".
- 11.** I like #16 choice more than #17choice.
- 12.** The branch presidents in a cluster already feel a kinship and communicate rather well. This would be a more natural way to go: choose among themselves who goes to a particular meeting, then disseminate the information to the other branches in the cluster.
- 13.** Implementing #16 may strengthen the Cluster concept, which I feel is a valuable concept. Other suggestions may also work using e-mail.
- 14.** I like 16, because many members have indicated they would like to see our clusters strengthened. Also, when we have meetings, officers and appointed folks are on tge agenda. Branch presidents are not. They need to be on the agenda and need to participate more.
- 15.** First, I had some technical problem with this section. I could not get my incorrect answer erased on #17 I do have some comments on this section. I think electing presidents reps at the STATE CONVENTION is a bad idea because---many branches may not have elected their presidents until May meetings. Here in Chapel Hill our elections are held in April-the third Sat in April. Convention may already have been held. My suggestion for this follows: If reps are to be elected to represent this group--it should be done at Summer-Leadership. I suggest that all presidents be required to attend Summer-Leadership which would include them at at least one meeting a year, they would meet their follow presidents and elect their own representitives to speak for them. This would not dismiss them from state board meetings intirely and give them a voice in their own representation. Since Sumemr-Leadership meeting should set the tone for training, goals setting for the year etc.--this would be the time for this. My opinion only. Also, when Nancy and I spoke to the Sandhills/Southern Pines Branch--they made an excellent suggestion. They thought it would be very useful for the state president to communicate with them once a month by email. This would allow communication on issues needing attention and anything else the president wanted to pass on. I think this suggestion has real merit. Also, I think 3 representatives is enough. (See my answer to clusters)
- 16.** I've been to just about every meeting on the state level for the past few years. Any of these ideas sound OK to me. Suggestions: Use email as much as possible, create a statewide branch president's email group for support, and encourage president to create a branch email list(I already have those set up).
- 17.** If the cluster elects a rep from their branch presidents, the geographic representation across the state would be easily met. Whereas, it the reps are elected at the State Convention, there is no guarantee that the geography of the State would be balanced in the reps elected. These reps could communicate to all branch presidents via e-mail to give a report of State Board activity.
- 18.** find a way to get branch presidents to attend. This is an important connection to the state and should be encouraged. If pres. cannot attend a representative from branch should be given her vote.
- 19.** This is the 20th century -- let's use some technology to help us and cut costs. Instead of trying to have ALL branch presidents attend a single meeting, consider splitting the meeting into regions (2 or 3) to make it easier to attend. For those items that are in common, use technology (i.e., web cams, or web meeting) to allow those not in attendance to participate. Alternately, have a single meeting with those not in attendance plugged in via web.
- 20.** Counterparts mean a lot! All branch presidents do not know they are members of the State Board. For some reason the word was never been passed to them. Each year the AAUW NC president needs to send a letter of welcome to the State Board to her counterpart in each branch. (Not in the TAR HEEL NEWS.) She needs to give the dates of the Leadership Workshop and welcome other officers to the LW through the president.
- 21.** anything would be better than the current bylaws which make each branch president a member of the AAUW NC board!
- 22.** Branch Presidents who are active will resent being left off the Board. I like making it possible for the Branch President to send a representative to Board meetings. We should provide Branch Presidents with some financial assistance to attend Board meetings. The theory is that the Branch provides funding for the President to attend State Board meetings. This does not happen: some Branches have little money; Branch members do not want to provide funds for the President to attend something that they cannot attend (more Branches provide some funding for attendance at State Convention for officers and other members); some Branch members do not care what is happening at the State level (they are interested in their own projects). I would like to see the Branch Presidents have the same funding that Committee Chairs have to attend State Board meetings. An easy way to assist everyone who comes to State-wide meetings is to provide for morning snacks and lunch from the State funds. Ask members to attend and transport themselves any way they can, but do not charge any money for attending. I feel strongly that the least we can do for volunteer leaders is to provide lunch for them. It is so easy to administer. People do not

have to negotiate how many miles they traveled and how many people were in the car. Another important fact is that the Branch members should see their state leaders. At one time, the State President was required to visit every Branch at least one time during the two years in that office. I did visit every Branch, and most of them two times. I also attended all Cluster Meetings and Committee Meetings. I also wrote lots of letters to Branch Presidents and Committee Chairs -- sometimes same letter, but personalized by typing on the computer. I spent about \$100 per month on telephone calls for AAUW. We did not have email then. The total budget for the President for travel, lodging, attending state and national meetings, and all communication was very small. I spent a great deal of money each year. Everyone is not able or willing to do that. But I feel as if we should make it easier for our leaders to function. All this is to say that I think a way to help Branch members feel part of the State organization is to take the State to them. The Clusters have been a great way for Branch members to meet other members in the State. I wish there were some way that representatives of the leadership of the Board could visit Branches more. Perhaps I could offer to do that, if I can be sure to be "in the loop" on what is going on. Of course, reading all that interesting and informative material on our list-serv gives good info. Probably the marginal members do not read that. I do not travel all the way across the state at all hours of the day and night as I once did. I would need to spend more nights away from home, which would be an added expense. I do think that having a representative of the State organization attend a local Branch meeting usually helps to give the Branch a boost. It is also very important that the visitor have an opportunity to have a conversation with the President. The President always has problems or complaints and needs an outside and informed friend. The visitor can tactfully make suggestions. I am just ruminating on possibilities.

- 23.** Retain some element of local representation by having cluster representation.
- 24.** Election by smaller groups of presidents begs the question as to how these groups would be created. Maintaining that seems to be unnecessary. Election by the presidents or by the conventin body would, I think both work. The major difference is probably in who wants to be responsible for finding candidates -- the presidents or the nominating committee. Appointed reps might work, but I think electing them would give more of a sense of accountability.
- 25.** Each cluster should choose(by vote) 1 branch president to represent the cluster. This person's duties must be clearly defined; communication with other presidents within the cluster is primary. Other duties should be determined by the clusters at their meetings.
- 26.** Try a couple of years without a state board and just a State Omsbudsman to AAUW and see if that works...

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