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a division of the American Library Association

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AASL President's Report to the Membership and ALA Council

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This year's activities of AASL align closely with the four goal areas of the 2009 Strategic Plan: Guidelines and Standards, Professional Development, Advocacy, and Community.

Guidelines and Standards

The *Common Core Crosswalk* was published which helps school librarians compare AASL's *Standards for the 21st-Century Learner* with the *Common Core Standards*.

The newly released *Standards for the 21st-Century Learner Lesson Plan Database* is an interactive resource and tool to support school librarians and other educators in collaborating to teach skills defined in the AASL learning standards.

A Planning Guide for Empowering Learners is a new rubric that can be used for program evaluation, planning, implementation and advocacy.

The *Building Level Toolkit: Implementing AASL's Learning Standards and Program Guidelines in Your School Library* was added to our already rich array of toolkits.

AASL is seeking member volunteers to present webinars or podcasts on various planning, collaboration, implementation, evaluation, and advocacy topics connected to *A Planning Guide for Empowering Learners* and the accompanying *School Library Program Assessment Rubric*.

I represented AASL with the creation of a video for the P21 National Summit on the topic, "What is the importance of 21st century readiness to our nation?"

Professional Development

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The 2010 Fall Forum, “In Focus: The Essentials for 21st-Century Learning” was held November 5-6 in Portland, Oregon.

The AASL/NCATE Coordinating Committee finalized *ALA/AASL Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians*.

The following position statements were updated: The School Library Supervisor, The Role of the School Library Program, Flexible Scheduling, and Labeling.

I attended the ALA Conference on Privacy and Youth in Chicago in March. A future outcome will be tools for building level school librarians related to privacy.

As AASL President I attended state conferences in Indiana, Florida, New Jersey, Wisconsin, New York, and New Hampshire. I also presented the keynote address at the International Association of School Librarians conference in Brisbane, Australia, “Invited Guest Or Wedding Crasher?: School Librarians’ In National Initiatives.”

The AASL National conference, “Turning the Page,” will be held in Minneapolis on October 27-30, 2011.

AASL continues to look for ways to leverage technology for more inclusive professional development. Some examples included a free online ‘coffee chat’ with the Fall Forum presenters prior to the meeting, and continued offerings of our four-week online courses.

Advocacy

As part of the *Vision Tour* I visited 35 states to advocate for school library programs. I met with hundreds of librarians from all types of libraries, library educators, school administrators, government officials, and thousands of students. School libraries from across the country were celebrated with songs, skits, poems, videos, testimonials and even racing sausages! It brought attention to what great school libraries and librarians can do for students and was covered by television, local newspapers, and electronic media. Data has been collected at each of the sites that will be used for a study of these outstanding programs.

100 Things Kids will Miss was released at the end of the *Vision Tour*. This list is meant to highlight the unique contributions that school librarians and school libraries make to students’ education and enrichment.

AASL continues to lobby for passage of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). We developed the “Position Statement on the Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act” and worked with AASL members who are also members American Federation of Teachers (AFT) or the National Education Association (NEA) to notify their union leaders to include school librarians when advocating on the local, state and federal levels.

School library closings, and layoffs and reassignments of school librarians were evident in the news this year. I spent considerable time being interviewed by press from around the country on this matter. Wisconsin was a particularly a high-profile situation and I used the opportunity while I was there to compose a news release in response to the elimination of school librarian positions in schools facing budget shortfalls. Other activities related to cuts included writing letters to school boards and administrators in support of retaining school librarians and thanking those outside our



profession, like Pam Munoz Ryan, who stood up for us. Although these have been some hard times, we should still need to emphasize the programs that are succeeding in spite of economic challenges.

AASL's Learning4Life in My School Library student video contest attracted many outstanding entries. The winners are elementary - Robert N. Wilentz School, Perth Amboy, New Jersey; middle - Johnston Middle School, Houston, Texas; and high - Avon High School, Avon, Indiana.

The President's Crystal Apple Award is being given to Dolly Parton for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. This program for low-income children provides a new, age appropriate book each month from birth until the child turns 5 in various parts of the United States.

School Library Programs Improve Student Learning is a new series of advocacy brochures designed to help school librarians generate and guide discussion with stakeholder groups in the school library community, including administrators, policymakers, parents, and teachers.

AASL supported the education of one Spectrum scholar, Latanya Ingraham, to attend Clarion University. AASL also financially supported Emerging Leaders, Alicia Blowers of Alexandria, Virginia and Sara Kelley-Mudie of Litchfield, Connecticut to attend the ALA Midwinter Meeting and the Annual Conference.

AASL member Buffy Hamilton's school library program, The Unquiet Library, was one of four recognized by the ALA Office of Information Technology Policy to honor cutting-edge technologies in library services.

AASL sent a response to the U.S. Department of Education highlighting the role of the school librarian in implementation of the National Technology Plan.

AASL's *Advocacy Tip of the Day* was established whereby members can receive tips delivered daily, weekly or monthly to their email account or mobile phone.

Community

Knowledge Quest has made some significant changes. There is now an Editorial Board chaired by Ann Martin who has produced five outstanding issues this year. New editor, Markisan Naso, has elevated both the writing and the aesthetics of our journal.

The endorsement of the official term of "school librarian" for the profession has had a ripple effect both within AASL and with our affiliates. For example, the former ELMSS (Educators of Library Media Specialists Section) has been renamed ESLA (Educators of School Librarians Section) and state organizations have also changed their names to reflect the term.

This was the fifth year of the *School Libraries Count!* Survey.

Four online orientation sessions were conducted for AASL Committee Chairs using iLinc software. Two new task forces were developed: Retirees and Leadership Development.

Essential Links has been moved to a wiki platform that should encourage all AASL members to contribute resources.

The AASL Board discussed the mega issue at midwinter - How should AASL change its volunteer structure to maximize member value and more effectively conduct the association's work? This led



to expansion of the duties of the Leadership Development Task Force, and the formation of a task force to study reexamine the purpose and need for director-elects on the AASL Board.