

## **Massachusetts School Library Association: Executive Summary**

February 13, 2013

Chelmsford High School

**Attending:** Leigh Barnes, Amy Bloom, Nancy Boutet, Robin Cicchetti, Kim Cochrane, Valerie Diggs, Cindy Erle, Julie Farrell, Linda Friel, Sharon Hamer, Cecily Houston, Sandy Kelly, Kathy Lowe, Judi Paradis, Ann Perham, Kathleen Porter, Amy Short, Chris Steinhauser, Carrie Tucker

**MLS ebook project:** Deb Hoadley, Advisor with the Massachusetts Library System, met to discuss plans to pilot a statewide ebooks resource sharing program. Massachusetts is the only state considering a statewide ebooks project at this time and has initial funding of \$2.5 million. MLS hopes to launch with 10,000 titles.

After a six-month evaluation period based on a 50-library pilot ending in December 2013, it will go live statewide with a statewide group selecting content. MLS envisions a hybrid model where local content can be uploaded to supplement the statewide ebook collection. Currently being negotiated are simultaneous-use ebooks versus single-use ebooks and leased versus owned content. MLS wants to include content specific to schools and content addressing Common Core standards.

The 50 pilot libraries will comprise 10 academic libraries, 25 public libraries, 10 schools or school districts, and 5 special libraries. Deb invited us to share questions and concerns about the project. Board comments and questions included these:

--How will books be downloaded? We should not need special software/program.

--What do schools want to see as a core collection?

--MSLA offered to recommend schools to participate.

--Focus on Common Core content and interactive content

Valerie Diggs said pilot schools should be ones where librarians are leaders in their schools who can promote these resources to the school community and be actively engaged in the process.

**MLS long-range planning workshop:** Frontier Regional High School will host a long-range MLS planning workshop on March 14.

**Rob Maier:** A retirement celebration is planned for Tuesday, March 5. MSLA will contribute \$100. Board acknowledges and appreciates Rob's solid commitment to school libraries during his tenure as Director of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

**Conference update:** Valerie Diggs reported that the committee is fully prepared for the annual conference. Kathy Lowe said 340 attendees were registered as of February 13 and expects attendance to top 400.

**Advocacy update:** Amy Bloom reported that Professor Jim McCormack of Bridgewater State University has agreed to work on a public relations branding proposal for MSLA with his marketing students. The goal is to develop a public brand promoting the value of school libraries.

**Legislative Day:** It is March 26, 2013, from 9:00 to 1:00. Board discussed ways to promote the event, and Valerie Diggs provided talking points and a copy of the bill. Conversation turned to the merits of school library involvement with legislative breakfasts, which are always impressive events.

**Legislative chair:** Valerie Diggs talked to Rebecca Morris of Simmons College about working with MSLA as a legislative chair. She would be helpful as MSLA moves forward with its legislation initiative requesting the formation of a state commission to evaluate the status of school libraries in Massachusetts.

**Nomination committee:** The slate of nominees for area director includes Ellen Brandt, Anita Cellucci, Laura Gardner, and Leslie Lomassen. Slate of nominees was uniformly approved.

**Marlene Heroux and conference support:** Valerie Diggs reported that she talked to Marlene Heroux of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners regarding Marlene's concern about the lack of school library grant applicants. As discussed at previous board meetings, the required long-range planning process needs streamlining. Still, the MBLC seeks to support Massachusetts school libraries in some way. After brief discussion it was agreed that Valerie will ask for \$3000, though Kathy Lowe thought we could ask for more, citing high fees for conference presenters Alan November and Jack Gantos.

**MSLA advocate award:** Sandy Kelly reported that the School Advocate Award would be presented to retiring MBLC Director Rob Maier March 3 at the annual conference dinner.

**MLA/YSS joint statements:** Kathy Lowe suggested the joint statement with the Massachusetts Library Association be revised to something with tighter language. Nancy Boutet, Sandy Kelly, and Sharon Colvin volunteered to take this on.

**Tour of State House for librarians:** This is planned for April 25 in conjunction with Massachusetts Library Association conference.

**MBLC's support of bill:** Kathy Lowe has asked the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners to endorse the school library bill requesting the formation of a state commission to evaluate the status of school libraries in Massachusetts. MBLC will vote at its March meeting; Rob Maier expects endorsement to pass.

**Search committee for MBLC Director:** A planning meeting is set for Monday, April 8, at the Massachusetts Board of Commissioners office in Boston, with interviews planned for April 29 and May 1. Amy Short agreed to serve on this committee. Brief discussion ensued about the importance of good interview questions.

**New England School Library Association update:** Each New England state contributes \$200 to send a NESLA representative to the American Library Association conference. NESLA is also planning an August 5 conference at the Eric Carle Museum with special sessions for school librarians.