

Massachusetts School Library Association: Executive Summary

September 19, 2012

Chelmsford High School

Attending: Hugh Ahearn, Leigh Barnes, Amy Bloom, Nancy Boutet, Kim Cochrane, Valerie Diggs, Cindy Erle, Julie Farrell, Linda Friel, Susanna Hall, Sharon Hamer, Laura Hibler, Sandy Kelly, Kathy Lowe, Sharon Lux, Erin McNeil, Judi Paradis, Ann Perham, Sharon Shaloo, Amy Short, Christine Steinhauser, Carrie Tucker

Letters about Literature: Sharon Shaloo of the Massachusetts Center for the Book spoke regarding Letters about Literature, an endeavor sponsored by the Mass Center for the Book since 2000. Students write authors short letters about the impact of their books. AP teachers say this writing is good prep for AP exams and college application letters. Each year between 3000 and 4500 letters are submitted across the Commonwealth. Sharon wants school librarians to promote and manage the program in the schools. This year letters are due January 2013. Writers of the top 1% of letters are recognized at the Massachusetts State House. Sharon also wants a librarian as the point person for each student at the State House. Mission of CFB is to work with librarians to promote books and reading. Goals: 1. a robust connection with MSLA, 2. communication with our membership regarding Letters about Literature. Judi Paradis points out that as librarians, we have a better fix on pleasure reading than classroom teachers. Letters is an opportunity to show our expertise. Board voted in favor of partnership.

Media Literacy Consortium: Sharon Lux and Erin McNeill of Media Literacy Consortium were present to seek support of MSLA. They want students not only to know media but also to produce media. Curriculum needs to be systematic and legitimized. Right now it is taught in business, library, technology, even health. Judi asked if they have a curriculum; no, they are an advocacy group. Valerie asked what they want from MSLA. They want to use our name on web site, according to Erin. Judi asked for precedent in other states. New Mexico has a similar initiative. Consortium's platform is to advocate for a k-12 comprehensive curriculum. Amy Bloom read from Common Core; it is already there. Discussion will continue at October meeting.

Meeting dates: Valerie presented dates for the 12-13 Board meetings as follows:

All at Chelmsford High School, Wednesdays, 4:00

October 17, 1012

November 14

December 12

January 16, 2013

February 13

March 20

April 10

May 15

June 12 (first meeting of the 13-14 year)

Remote board participation: Judi will email screencast of Google Hangout to board members as a proposed method for remote participation.

Conference: Sharon Shaloo is organizing a speed-dating with the author event for Saturday night. Participants will break into small groups and authors will rotate from table to table every 5-7 minutes. Each participant enjoys a small-group chat with each author. Anyone arriving to the conference on Saturday can join this event for an additional fee of \$20. Event will be capped at 60. Authors will have books available for sale as well.

Common Core workshop: September 22 event sold out in August with unexpectedly high demand. Seventy-eight additional attendees will participate via Elluminate webinar.

AASL Affiliate letter: Every state is asked to send two representatives to the AASL Affiliate Assembly at the ALA Midwinter Meeting and ALA Annual Meeting. MSLA received a certificate verifying its participation in this event, which Valerie circulated.

Banned website awareness day 2012: It is in October and will become an annual event sponsored by AASL, reported Kathy.

Legislative update: Legislative breakfast is in Whately on Friday, Julie reported. There is no date for Legislative Day yet. Kathy Lowe testified at the MBLC hearing on behalf of the bill we are filing asking for a commission to investigate the status of school library programs in Massachusetts. Rebecca Morris (Simmons College) and Julie Farrell wrote letters of support. Inclusion of our bill in the state library lobbying effort ensures more legislators will see it. MBLC is making a greater legislative effort on behalf of school libraries, Kathy reported. We will have presence on MBLC web site, for example, which is symbolically significant.

Standards committee: Amy contacted Sue Kimmell, chair of AASL Quant Standards task force to ask if AASL was moving with national standards. Standards are important for leverage in schools, although recommending counts on books vs electronic content is difficult.

SLJ Summit: Planned for October 2013, it is an invitation-only event. School Library Journal seeks out leadership in each state.

Conference attendance policy (non-MSLA events): MSLA generally sends representatives to ALA Midwinter and Annual Meetings. At present the President appoints MSLA members to attend these meetings on behalf of the organization. Spreading the opportunity may promote new leadership within MSLA. Two opportunities: 1. ALA midwinter, 2. ALA annual. Judi, Kathy, and Valerie met virtually to discuss how people are chosen. We send 1. Executive director, 2. President, and 3. Past president or president elect. Under discussion is affiliate assembly. It was proposed that the two attendees selected meet these criteria: 1. attend all meetings (midwinter, annual, NESLA); 2. understand responsibilities; 3. be our Region 1/NESLA connection and attend NESLA meetings to form a cohesive Region 1; 4. report back to MSLA through written report, *Forum* article, and perhaps blogging from conferences. 5. join ALA and AASL at approximately \$180 (MSLA does not cover membership fees), and 6. refund expenses to MSLA if selected attendee cannot make the trip. Sandy added that grants are available for first time attendees. In order to make this MSLA policy, we must vote twice. Judi will write language for discussion (and eventual vote) at next board meeting. Valerie will solicit Board members interested in this opportunity.

LSTA: MSLA is being asked to promote LSTA grant writing. Discussion ensued about the complexity of the long-range planning process required to qualify for grants. Valerie asked for volunteers for a task force to consider this issue. Sharon Hamer agreed to look at the grant process and frame a response.

California advocacy group: At midwinter San Diego Connie Williams and Jackie Sementis presented California's 'branding' efforts at advocacy, which is something MSLA may consider replicating. Judi spoke with them this summer to see what came from their efforts. They reported that due to this campaign, they have been able to:

- California Model School Library Standards were created by a task force and approved by the state School Board
- School Library Consultant has been staffed at the state level; the person holding this position had been full-time and retired and is now a consultant; CSLA is working with the Department of Education to re-open the position for hiring
- Changing status of "teacher librarian" from "support personnel" to "teacher" in the statewide educational data collection
- Created an "action advocacy" panel that administers funds to local groups to use in order to advocate for local actions to educate parents, administrators, legislators and the community about why students need strong school libraries. This is starting slowly, but energy is going into building this effort across the state

- CSLA members participated in Department of Education groups for Common Core, writing ELA frameworks, etc.
- CLSA worked with Commission on Teacher Credentialing Committee to review new teacher librarian standards/criteria for graduation from Teacher-Librarian credential program; big piece of this was that it enables Teacher-Librarians to teach independently and not just in conjunction with a classroom teacher
- Providing professional development to and collaboration with content associations (English teachers; history teachers) especially around the common core

They have a store—Café Press—selling illustrations and products to aid in the branding effort. They constantly promote, give out products, and fulfill advocacy mission. Amy believes we could be a case study for a college. Amy spoke to Fran Zilonis who suggested we contact Bridgewater State. An MBA class could take us on and standardize our brand. California has a beautiful branding website. It is their public face. California School Library Foundation (<http://librarycampaign.csla.net>). Judi believes we should continue exploring this by locating a willing college. Kim Cochrane will contact Framingham State. Judi and Amy will reach out to Bridgewater or other colleges.

FORUM: Valerie said the recent issue is beautiful and thanked Ann Perham for her efforts. Board agrees.

New teacher evaluation tool: Three rubrics exist: 1. Administrator, 2. Teacher, and 3. Specialized instructional support personnel. Valerie said school librarians should fall under # 2. She believes this is good for the profession. We set our own measureable goals. Tool for evaluators is BaseEdge or TeachPoint. Valerie will cover this topic more fully at October board meeting.