

Massachusetts School Library Association
Board Meeting Minutes
November 20, 2013
Weston High School

Attending: Amy Bloom, Kendall Boninti, Ellen Brandt, Anita Cellucci*, Robin Cicchetti, Cindy Erle*, Julie Farrell*, Linda Friel*, Laura Gardner*, Sharon Hamer, Alida Hanson, Sandy Kelly*, Leslie Lomasson, Kathy Lowe, Suzanne Mathews*, Judi Paradis, Ann Perham*, Amy Short, Carrie Tucker*
* remote participation via Google Hangout

Swampscott Public Schools: Sharon Hamer reported that Judi Paradis' presentation to Swampscott Public Schools in support of restoring school librarian positions was well done and well attended.

Censorship: Kathy Lowe spoke briefly about a situation in Attleboro High School where books may be removed from the collection at principal's discretion. Discussion followed about selection policies and possible ALA involvement.

Tumblehome Learning: This is a vendor for science and engineering titles and activities for upper elementary and middle schools based in Weston, MA. The company is eager to make connections with school librarians. Contact info: penny@tumblehomelearning.com
<http://tumblehomelearning.com/about-us/> <http://tumblehomelearning.com/about-us/>
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Advocacy: Amy Bloom hosted a meeting at the AASL Conference in Hartford attended by approximately 15 MSLA members. The committee discussed 1. creating an advocacy plan over the next year and 2. beginning work on developing quantitative standards for school library programs in Massachusetts. Proposed MSLA advocacy tagline is *School libraries: What can we help you discover today?* A next step is to adopt a design element for use on mugs, tee shirts, bags, and more. Possibilities discussed included inviting a new book illustrator to supply a design every year or tying the design in to our bookmark contest. Café Press could generate branded merchandise. Membership needs to vote on the tagline. The Advocacy Committee's next meeting is planned for late January at the Worcester Public Library.

Teacher evaluation: MSLA is creating a document collecting examples and ideas of what excellence looks like in a school library. It will be organized according to the indicators in the new teacher evaluation tool. The intention is to provide both librarians and administrator evaluators with examples of the kind of evidence that supports the rubrics. DESE will post this as part of its document and resource web page. In lieu of a traditional board meeting, board members will meet in December via Google Hangout. Elementary, middle, and high school groups will meet for 30-45 minutes to generate ideas and examples for all the rubric descriptors. Judi will share Valerie's teacher evaluation resource update with the board. This is an ambitious project.

Legislation: Julie Farrell and Judi Paradis attended the AASL conference in November and worked on legislative initiatives with the help of three volunteers. Goals included: to better inform members about the bill, to urge people to get involved, to find better ways to reach people, and get them to attend or speak at upcoming breakfasts. Legislative web page needs updating.

Good news on the bill: language changes were approved, the letter writing campaign was effective, and there was movement on the bill (according to our representative on the House Ways and Means Committee.) There is a good chance it will be voted out of committee. Judi will follow up.

If the bill passes, the onus is on MSLA implement the study and publicize results. A comprehensive instrument to gather data will be needed. Recommendation is for an educational researcher to assist with design and interpretation. Additionally, a dedicated system to get the information reported out appropriately will be needed as well. School district business managers proved good allies during the Pennsylvania study. Julie thinks the bill may pass in mid-January. Judi suggested we reach out to Simmons and to Carol Gordon. Questions at this stage:

- Composition of the commission?
- Budget needed to pay for this work?
- Can vendors be approached to support school library research?
- Could LSTA funds from the MBLC be applied here?

Legislative breakfasts: Kendall Boninti reported that the goal is one advocacy breakfast per region. Three are planned for high school libraries: Belmonte Middle School (northeast region), Lexington High School (metrowest region), and Westborough High School (central region). Laura Gardner will speak at Middleborough Public Library, and Judi Paradis will speak at Lexington High School. Kendall will create a toolkit for school librarians.

Awards: Sharon Hamer sent emails to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and to Massachusetts principals soliciting nominations for Super Librarian. At least three strong recommendations have been received. Judi Paradis will also email MTA presidents.

Gerri Fegan and Chris Steinhauser prepared Google forms for each award with more specific criteria. Forms are on MSLA website under awards tab. Some awards are still without nominations.

Peggy Hallisey, former MSLA President, was instrumental in creating the 2003 program standards (2003) and a strong, positive influence in the school library community. She passed away last year. Kathy suggests MSLA create an award in her honor or attach her name to a current award, perhaps the Lifetime Achievement Award. A board vote is required. Suggestion was made that the awards committee include biographical information within descriptions of named awards. The Board will vote in January to implement change in time for the March award ceremony.

Twitter chat: Goals and district determined measures provided the focus of the November Twitter chat with ten active participants and potentially more lurkers. The chat archive attracted 135 views. Next chat is December 10 at 8:00pm; Topic is sharing resources, tools, and ideas from AASL conference. Amy Short will use a Google Form to solicit ideas for future chats. Upcoming dates are listed on MSLA website.

Platform for virtual meetings: Need for more robust online platform for virtual meetings, professional development for members, and for webinars. New England School Library Association could invest in this and allow each state to have space. NESLA President Irene Kwidzinski advocates use of EdWeb, which is also used extensively by Michelle Luhtala. Although it is expensive, Irene believes NESLA can get underwriters to subsidize the cost. Board is invited to participate in online presentation on December 12.

MSLA executive director: MSLA may consider changing the language of the job description from consultant to employee in response to Internal Revenue Service implications. MSLA will form a sub-committee including Ann Perham, Linda Friel, and Judi Paradis to study the issue and make recommendations to the board in January.

MSLA conference: We have thirty-five registrations so far; early bird continues through December. Judi Paradis reflected that while it was encouraging to see so many MSLA members at AASL, it is hoped the high attendance there will not undercut the MSLA conference. It may help to more clearly define the conference theme of third space. Providing clarity and vision for our membership will boost MSLA conference attendance.

Massachusetts Library System: School librarians are needed to serve on the MLS board. Cathy Collins from Sharon High School currently serves on the MLS Board and will provide an updated report to MSLA each month. A big MLS focus is the ebook pilot project.

AASL Affiliate Assembly: Delegates Sharon Hamer and Jennifer Reed need to deliver commendations for what is going well in New England (Region 1), exemplary things that can be replicated across the country, and challenging issues within our region. Suggestions are welcomed. Commendations often go to literacy professionals/advocates, according to Judi Paradis. Our bookmark contest is a good example. We also discussed possible concerns we might raise, such as determining how the school library's role in Common Core implementation is addressed nationally. District Determined Measures may also benefit from national attention. Librarians need feasible ways to measure student progress.

MSLA nominating committee: President-elect is the only elected position that needs attention this year. Judi will ask Valerie to establish a nominating committee. Five people, including Valerie, are needed. Election must be held by April 1. Judi Paradis, Amy Short, and Julie Farrell volunteered. One more board member is needed.

MassCUE/MSLA joint workshop: MSLA and MassCUE (Massachusetts Computer Using Educators) are informally discussing co-hosting a workshop in August or September. Topic ideas include curating information and best projects based on Common Core. Adding an Unconference or EdCamp feel to the event was discussed. Judi Paradis is asking for clever ideas for this professional development opportunity. Anita Cellucci will attend MassCUE meeting on December 2 with Judi and Kathy Lowe to plan the event. Anita will also represent MSLA at the MassCUE Executive Board meeting on December 13.

Working Group for Educator Excellence: WGEE includes heads of several education organizations in the state. Sandy Kelly represents MSLA. Member organizations are being asked to contribute funds to support its work. Board members are asked to read more about it at wgee.org and vote in January. Judi Paradis will share additional information so board can prepare to vote.

ALA mid-winter conference: Meeting is in Philadelphia, a city which recently cut all school librarians. Leslie Lomasson suggested a visible action directed at the city to advocate for the restoration of school librarians. Sharon Hamer suggested bringing the idea to Barbara Stripling (ALA President), Gail Dickinson (AASL President), and Sylvia Norton (AASL Executive Director) to muster support for an action of some sort. Judi Paradis and Sharon will collaborate on a communication from MSLA with this suggestion.

MSLA retiree special interest group: We discussed the possibility of re-establishing a retiree special interest group. Members could attend meetings of other organizations held during the school day and report to the board. Mentoring librarians new to the profession is another possibility. Our New Jersey counterpart has a strong mentoring program. Furthermore, AASL has a retiree SIG at the national level. Leslie Lomasson proposed the idea of a pool of mentors who can be hired by principals to support first-time librarians. Kathy Lowe suggested we might collaborate with Bibliotemps. Judi will contact recent and soon-to-be retirees and report to the board.

Media literacy: A bill proposing a media literacy curriculum is before the Massachusetts legislature. Last year MSLA board voted to take no action; in October it came up for a hearing before the Joint Committee on Education and Judi Paradis sent a letter on behalf of MSLA stating that should this legislation pass, school librarians are the obvious educators that should be called upon to implement the required to deliver the curriculum. The media literacy group initiating the bill asked for MSLA support. Judi's impression is that they are working more closely with school committees than with DESE. Sandy Kelly pointed out that media literacy is already in Strand 25 of Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. We determined that we would not endorse the bill as it is currently written.

Motion to adjourn unanimously approved at 6:04pm.

Next meeting:

Wednesday, January 15, 2014

4:00-6:00

Weston High School