

AASL Region 1

What have you done to represent AASL in each state in your region?

Region 1 Affiliates work collaboratively through the New England School Library Association (NESLA). The NESLA board includes representatives of all six NE state associations and meets four times each year, with two face-to-face meetings and two conference calls. In June, the executive boards of all New England affiliates will come together for an intra-board retreat. The main goal is to share successes and to brainstorm solutions to common challenges. Region 1 is extensively involved with advocacy and professional development and the leaders of the individual affiliates communicate well. I credit the **New England School Library Association (NESLA)** affiliate for much of this positive activity and I commend the sharing and collaboration that NESLA facilitates. As the Region 1 Director, I have ready access to all affiliates.

What AASL regional or state activities have occurred to advance AASL initiatives?

CASL [Connecticut] held their own pre-conference on October 25th: "Implementing the New AASL Standards & Guidelines" http://www.ctcasl.com/conf/Conf09/2009_CASL_Pre-conference.pdf AASL trained coordinators Mary Ellen Minichiello, Katrina Palazzolo and Irene Kwidzinski discussed developing customized state-level implementation strategies for schools and districts. The pre-conference featured a brain-storming session on addressing the objectives of the new standards and guidelines, aligning them with state and local frameworks.

The first act of the new CASL president, Lucia Rafala, was to speak at the July 2009 graduation of thirty five new library media specialists at the ACES Alternate Route to Certification program.

In 2010, CASL will focus more on reading. We will also be trying to contact Reading teachers for input. We will be contacting the Connecticut Association of Publishers and Authors to talk about having Connecticut authors at the conference and maybe to present workshops.

MASL [Maine] members attended a three day "retreat" in July. The main focuses were Literacy and Learning 4 Life.

MSLA [Massachusetts] became an organizational signatory to support the National Action Agenda on 21st Century Skills. The Partnership "meeting in Washington focused on how to engage the new administration and congress with the goal of forwarding the 21st century skills movement and promoting the National Action Agenda at the national, state and local levels."

MSLA president Gerri Fegan spoke at the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioner's Leadership Institute in July to enlighten emerging leaders about the benefits of membership in MSLA and to entice them to take part in any library organization's activities, especially those involving collaboration and advocacy.

MSLA has worked to collaborate with other professional organizations and to offer workshops at their conferences. At the August Massachusetts Teachers Association Conference, two MSLA members offered workshops to encourage teachers to collaborate with their school librarians. The discussion included the various ways that school librarians serve as the conduit of technological learning and professional development, as well as the source of a variety of media and print reference. Similarly, there were many quality presentations by MSLA members at the October joint conference of Massachusetts Superintendents and the Massachusetts Computer Using Educators. A joint board meeting with the Massachusetts Reading Association is planned.

The final version of the revised *Massachusetts Standards for Information Literacy* was distributed at the MSLA conference. A newly-added appendix aligns the MA standards with the MA Department of Education *Recommended Technology Standards* and the *AASL Standard's for the 21st Century Learner*. This is the culmination of many months of work: <http://maschoolibraries.org/dmdocuments/09standards.pdf>

NHSLMA [New Hampshire] Dorothy Grazier and Cathy Higgins, N.H. Technology Director, are working to incorporate 21st Century Skills into state technology grants available to school districts. NHSLMA would provide professional development regarding incorporating 21st Century Skills into the curriculum.

RIEMA [Rhode Island] professional development this year is providing a foundation for members to incorporate into their practice the AASL Standards for the 21st Century Learner. Workshops are being offered around the state to provide an overview with more in depth programs to come at a later date.

VSLA [Vermont]: The UVM certification sequence includes new plans to provide already-certified librarians with professional development courses. The pre-certification program has proven very popular, and with 33

current students. This new level of courses is being designed to meet the needs for practicing librarians to keep current with 21st century and technology standards and new pedagogies and for librarians to become 21st century leaders in their schools.

What are major issues or concerns in your region?

The ripple effect of the economic downturn continues to trouble school libraries with cuts to programs throughout New England at the state and local levels.

MSLA leaders met in July with the Massachusetts Commissioner of Education Mitchell Chester and discussed his vision for the future. He indicated that we in education are only at the beginning of feeling the impacts of the economic down turn. We will continue to be faced with more cuts over the next few years. He is heartened by the fact that we have state and national leadership that value education. In MA, the DESE will be looking at programs that can prove they have positive impact on achievement particularly in areas of diverse ethnicity, English as a second language and special needs. Gathering data and assessments will be strategic activities for school libraries.

CASL: Cuts to libraries and to iConn.org, the Connecticut Digital Library, were avoided in the new state budget. For almost all of the summer it was touch and go on potential drastic cuts to the state libraries. Thanks to a number of lawmakers and the organization of public and school librarians across the state, the budget cuts were overridden and the state library operations remain largely intact.

The Rhode Island Department of Education formally adopted a new Basic Education Program (BEP) in June. **RIEMA** members provided much feedback during the public hearings before the BEP was adopted and will continue to do so as indicators for quality library media programs are being developed. The old BEP mandated staffing and minimal budgets, even though these were frequently ignored or waived. The new BEP states what a quality program consists of, but the indicators for that are not written yet. It's a battle, since school administrators and committees are looking for any way to cut corners. The new BEP: http://www.ride.ri.gov/Regents/Docs/RegentsRegulations/BEP_6409.pdf and the library standards are section G-13-1.3.11, page 15.

Region 1 is no longer using the AASL Region 1 Wiki; we are transitioning to the ALA Connect tool. To date, there are 18 members on ALA Connect. It is a very do-able goal to make ALA Connect the main communication tool for Region 1.

What are major accomplishments in your region?

NESLA sponsors the annual Leadership Conference. The January 2010 event, "Knowledge/Learning Commons: The Future School Library?" features AASL Director-Elect Valerie Diggs's Learning Commons as well as other innovators in school library programming

CASL's accomplishments are numerous. Each year CASL invites others to nominate worthy librarians, administrators, and teachers who have encouraged the development of informational literacy skills by supporting library programs, or created innovative programs. Librarians also nominate their colleagues for their services to our profession. These awards were given out at CASL's Fall Festival on October 7. CASL held a joint conference on Oct 26th with CECA (Computer Educators); this looks to be an ongoing collaboration every two years. The conference theme was "Teaching & Technology for 21st Century Learning". Dr. Jamie McKenzie was the keynote speaker with all attendees receiving Jamie's newest book: *Beyond Cut & Paste*. Other presenters included Wendy Mass, Kathy Schrock, Carol LaRow, and Tom Daccord. The poster session "Show and Tell 2.0" featured teachers from around the state exhibiting their technology projects integrating technology into their content areas. CASL will sponsor a program at CLA conference in April. This is not a joint conference but CASL will be involved with it. Of the two days for the conference, one day will feature topics related to school libraries.

MASL [Maine] will not be planning a joint conference with the Maine Library Association. MLA is planning on their own conference. The Spring 2010 conference [dates TBA] will have the theme of Literacy. The School Librarians' Handbook has been over a year in the making and was published in November. Hard copies are sent to all schools in the state, available also on the MASL website. It will be distributed at regional MASL meetings and was distributed at the November Maine Principals' Association meeting in Portland.

MSLA [Massachusetts] has been working on many initiatives in addition to the standards, previously mentioned. They are honored that have been invited to participate in the new Massachusetts Book Festival sponsored by the MLA. The annual MSLA Bookmark Contest committee has a 2010 theme, "School

Librarians Teach It All"; this is an aggressive approach to emphasize the teaching role of school librarians. Winners will be announced at the State House joint Legislation Day with MLA on March 4, 2010. At the Annual Conference, MSLA honored the Commissioner of Education, Mitchell D. Chester. Janet Allison of NEASC received an Advocate Award as well as an AASL commendation. In addition, MSLA honored a long list of members for lifetime achievement, service and contributions to MSLA and to the profession of school librarianship. Conference speakers included Gregory Maguire, Ross Todd, and Nancy Everhardt, Susan Ballard, Beth Galloway, Mitali Perkins, Gregory Maguire, Carol Gordon, Robin Brenner, Valerie Diggs, Ralph Masiello, Melissa Stewart and David Biedrzycki.

NHSLMA has had a name change, from New Hampshire School Library Association to New Hampshire School Library Media Association. The Communication Committee is working to have our listserv, web page, and newsletter converted to the new organization name when the logo is created by a professional artist. NHSLMA hosted a two day July Literacy Event, "Reading and the Library Media Specialist". The speaker was Pam Berger; one day was dedicated to elementary schools and our second day dedicated to secondary schools. President Kathy Lane and Conference Committee Chair Pam Tinker met with Steve Butzel, President of the New Hampshire Library Association, to discuss a joint conference involving both of our organizations. The decision was made to continue separate conferences but to plan a summit in the fall of 2011 that would include all librarians from both organizations who work with children and young adults. The NHSLMA annual conference is May 20th and 21, 2010 at the Radisson in Nashua N.H.

RIEMA had their Annual Dinner was held on October 8. Padma Venkatraman, a Rhode Island resident and author of *Climbing the Stairs*, was the guest speaker. She kept us enthralled with background into the story of the character Vidya, who climbs the stairs in secret every evening, to visit the upstairs library that is forbidden to her. The Annual Conference is scheduled for Saturday, May 8, 2010, in Warwick.

VSLA has been active on many fronts. The VSLA Conference was held on October 22, 2009, with keynote address by J'aime Foust, author of "Dewey Need to Get Organized?" Workshop topics included social bookmarking, multicultural awareness, readers' advisory, using smart boards and the Green Mountain Book Award. State Librarian, Marty Reid, spoke briefly about her 30 years experience as a public librarian and the influential moment in Thailand when she witnessed the power of books and decided to attend library school. The VSLA board has investigated teaming up with VITA-LEARN to blend with their Dynamic Landscapes conference in the spring. The hope is that a 2 day conference will be held jointly in May 2010. Many details need to be further discussed, but this will be an excellent opportunity to establish collaborations with teachers and also provide leadership & training. A statewide consortium is being coordinated for streaming video purchases that will be similarly offered as the movie license consortium. Bids have been received from Discovery and we are waiting for Safari Montage. The VT DOL is interested in joining forces and we are looking into using NE ISTE representatives. A survey will be conducted via the VSLA listserv.