Policy Statement:
The AASL President will be the primary spokesperson for the association. A member may represent the association only at the direction of the AASL Board of Directors.

Focus:
AASL Members

Purpose:
To provide guidelines for an AASL member acting as a spokesperson on issues related to the field of school librarianship, including but not limited to legal testimony, legislative hearings, and providing interviews or quotes to the press/media.

Procedure:
1. An AASL member may represent AASL only as directed by the AASL Board of Directors.
2. An AASL member who is not directed to represent AASL may use AASL membership or leadership as part of their individual credentials but must state that their participation represents personal opinion and not that of AASL or the AASL Board of Directors.
3. If an AASL Board member or general member of AASL is solicited to give expert legal testimony, provide a quote, write an article, given an interview, or appear within the media or legal system in any way other than as a fact witness, the member should follow these procedures:
   3.1 First disclose that the AASL President is the primary spokesperson for the association and direct the solicitor to the AASL Executive Director, who will then inform the AASL President and ALA’s Public Information Office.
   3.2 In the interest of consistent messaging on behalf of the association, only the AASL President or another representative designated by the AASL President and/or AASL Board of Directors will be called on to respond to media requests as appropriate. If the AASL President declines the opportunity and the AASL Board does not designate the original member approached by the media to represent the association, the original member must disclose that they are not speaking on behalf of the association.
   3.3 When participating in expert legal testimony or a media interview, AASL Board members should use their best judgment, based upon the topic of conversation. Perception often sends an unintended message. If the topic is controversial, i.e., related to an AASL position statement or standard and guideline, the AASL Board member’s message should equal AASL’s position. Otherwise, it disrupts AASL’s cohesion, consistency, and reputation. When in doubt, discuss the situation with the AASL Executive Director and ALA Public Information Office staff.
   3.4 If the media contacts an AASL Board member or general member during a time of crisis, refer the contact to the AASL Executive Director.
4. With AASL’s current strategic focus, additional media outreach may be incorporated into marketing plans and/or efforts. In order to build and maintain a professional and trusted relationship with the media, all responses to press inquiries should be timely and accurate. ALA Public Information Office staff will be the primary point of contact for press relationships initiated by the association.