Division Report to ALA Council and ALA Executive Board
American Association of School Librarians (AASL)

The following report, organized around the three critical issues in AASL’s strategic plan, provides a picture of the 2018-2019 year in AASL.

Critical Issue #1: Association Relevance
To operationalize AASL’s ability to remain on the forefront of educational and technology trends within the changing societal context to be a stronger voice for school librarians and the profession, AASL engaged in the following initiatives and activities in 2018-2019:

Implementation of the National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries

This year was a pivotal one for implementation of the National School Library Standards released in 2017-2018. New webinars, a Knowledge Quest edition devoted solely to the AASL Standards, blogs, social media, books, and other standards-related resources were developed and made available.

The AASL Past-Presidents Planning Grant for National School Library Standards continued as an important support for AASL affiliates as the school librarian associations plan and execute an event, initiative, or activity focused on the implementation of the AASL National School Library Standards. Two 2019 grants were sponsored by Roger and Susan D. Ballard and awarded to the Pennsylvania School Librarians Association in honor of E. Blanche Woolls and to the Virginia Association of School Librarians in honor of David Loertscher. One of the 2019 grants was sponsored by Cassandra Barnett and was awarded to the New Jersey Association of School Librarians in honor of Helen R. Adams.

Several new resources have been released related to the Standards including:
- Standards Frameworks posters
- Standards Card Game
- Standards Crosswalks
- Publications related to the Standards
- **Defending Intellectual Freedom** LGBTQ+ Materials in School Libraries

With support from Bound to Stay Bound, AASL has launched an important Standards-related initiative. This effort is the release of 100 “AASL District Kits for the National School Library Standards” to support nationwide implementation. The kits include materials for districts to confidently facilitate standards implementation.

To learn more about #AASLStandards, please visit the robust home for Standards-related learning at [http://standards.aasl.org](http://standards.aasl.org).

19th National Conference and Exhibition in Louisville, Kentucky

In November 2019 school librarians will gather in Louisville, KY for AASL’s 19th National Conference. Conference general session speakers include Ellen Oh, co-founder, president and CEO of We Need Diverse Books and Dr. Adolph Brown, III, an American urban and rural school educator, author, research-scientist, businessman, and keynote speaker. *New York Times* bestselling author and illustrator and a two-time winner of the Children’s Choice Book Award Jarrett J. Krosoczka will be the Saturday General Session keynote. Over 170 sessions are planned.
The National Conference Committee, co-chaired by Heather Jankowski and Alice Bryant, has been hard at work preparing the conference. Conference sessions are aligned to the Shared Foundations of the National School Library Standards. The conference includes a Research to Practice strand, special programming specifically focused on school administrators and an IdeaLab.

School Library Month
The theme of AASL’s 34th annual celebration of School Library Month was “Everyone Belongs @ Your School Library.” The 2019 spokesperson was author and illustrator Dav Pilkey. The School Library Month committee, chaired by Shannon DeSantis, worked with AASL staff to provide a video featuring Dav Pilkey, shareable resources, webinars, and graphics to celebrate #aaslslm.

Task Forces
Along with our hard-working standing committees, the following task forces are helping AASL to advance AASL initiatives:

- The Instructional Role of the School Librarian Position Statement Task Force, chaired by Rachel Altobeli, is revising this position statement to align with AASL Standards.
- The Crosswalk Task Force chaired by Jay Bansbach completed the crosswalks between the AASL Standards and the Future Ready Librarian framework, and ISTE standards.
- The Reading Position Statement Task Force chaired by Judi Moreillon is combining and designing revised position statement(s) about reading to align them with the AASL Standards.
- The Role of the School Library Program Position Statement Task Force chaired by Susan Ballard is revising this position statement to align it with the AASL Standards.
- The Position Statement on Appropriate Staffing Task Force chaired by Dedra Van Gelder is revising this position statement to align it with the AASL Standards.
- The School Librarian Job Description Task Force chaired by Cherity Pennington is revising this position statement to align it with the AASL Standards.
- The Scheduling Position Statement Task Force chaired by Ann Martin completed its task of reviewing and aligning this position statement with the AASL Standards.
- The Open Educational Resources Task Force chaired by Lori Donovan worked to position school librarians in OER efforts that will help to extend school librarians’ roles as leaders within their schools, align to our new standards, and provide professional development and completed a series of documents to help librarians in their OER efforts. This task force was created after the AASL Practice Committee articulated the need for more information for our members on this topic. This task force sunsetted at ALA MidWinter 2019.
- The Public Charter Infographic Task Force chaired by Hannah Byrd Little is tasked with curating pertinent information and data for the creation of an infographic that will be used as a key communication tool for stakeholders to convey the value of a school library and school librarian in public charter schools.
- The Presidential Initiative Task Force co-chaired by Bethany Bratney and Casey Rawson is developing resources to support an understanding of the role of school librarians among stakeholders including school administrators.
- The NGSS Crosswalk Task Force chaired by Deborah Rinio is developing a crosswalk between the National School Library Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).
The CS First Crosswalk Task Force will align the *National School Library Standards* and the CS First curriculum.

The State Standards Workshop Task Force chaired by Cassandra Barnett worked to ensure state level professional development opportunities for the *National School Library Standards* are supported by AASL content (webinars, presentation, printed materials). The State Standards Workshop Task Force finalized the AASL Standards PD Share Site. ([https://www.emailmeform.com/builder/emf/aasl/pd_share](https://www.emailmeform.com/builder/emf/aasl/pd_share)). This task force has been sunsetting.

**New Committees**

- Best Digital Tools for Teaching and Learning is a new committee for 2019-2020 that combines the Best Website and Best Apps committees
- Created a new Member Engagement Committee for 2019-2020
- Created Legacy Committee for 2019-2020
- Created Professional Learning Committee for 2019-2020

**Position Statements**

The following position statements have been sunsetted by the AASL Board of Directors effective January 27, 2019:

- Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards
- Digital Content & Ebooks in School Library Collection
- Quantitative Standards
- Role of the School Librarian in Senior/Capstone Projects

The following position statements are being aligned to the *National School Library Standards*:

- Appropriate Staffing for School Libraries
- Flexible Scheduling
- Instructional Role of the School Librarian
- Labeling Books with Reading Levels
- Role of the School Librarian in Reading Development
- Role of the School Library Program
- Role of the School Library Supervisor
- School Librarian’s Role in Reading
- Support for National Board of Professional Teaching Standards Certification
- Value of Independent Reading in the School Library Program

**ALA Legislative Fly-in 2019**

AASL President Kathryn Roots Lewis and Past President Steven Yates represented AASL at the ALA Legislative Fly-in in Washington, DC, in February 2019. ALA’s Washington Office hosted a professional briefing day prior to meetings with legislators.

**Committee for Education (CEF) Funding 2019**

AASL President Kathryn Roots Lewis represented school libraries and PK-12 education on the 2019 CEF Panel in the Rayburn Building in Washington DC on May 9th. Lewis presented with four other educators from technical education, common education, and college. Lewis focused her remarks on the critical impact that federal funds make on school libraries and the learners they serve, and in turn, the larger educational community.
Presidential Initiative

- AASL and ALA’s Libraries Transform collaborated on a campaign that extended the “Because Everyone Is a Learner” infographic. Through the generous support of AASL sponsor Bound to Stay Bound Books, school library-focused Because statements, supporting data, and downloadable graphics were sent to were mailed to more than 90,000 superintendents and elementary principals nationwide with print advertising in two administrator trade magazines with a combined total circulation of 223,000 readers. Kathryn Roots Lewis and Norman Public School Principal Dr. Scott Beck signed letters that accompanied these infographics.

- Standards Focused Article in District Administration

The September issue of District Administration magazine featured a 2-page advertorial highlighting district-wide applications of AASL’s National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries, including school librarian and school library evaluation rubrics and checklist elements of particular interest to administrators. More than 200,000 district administrators received this publication. Dr. Shirley Simmons and Kathryn Roots Lewis shared how the Standards are impacting teaching and learning in PreK-12 schools.

- AASL President Kathryn Roots Lewis, Norman Public Schools Principal Dr. Scott Beck and AASL Executive Director Sylvia Knight Norton presented at the National Principals Conference in Chicago in July 2018. This presentation highlighted the AASL standards and the role of the school librarian in the school community.

- The Presidential Initiative Task Force chaired by Casey Rawson and Bethany Bratney is developing resources and programming including an administrator toolkit and scenarios to support an understanding of the role of school librarians among stakeholders including school administrators.

- With support from OverDrive Education, AASL launched a two-year initiative to engage with an audience vital to the success of school librarians: school administrators. The AASL School Leader Collaborative: Administrators & School Librarians Transforming Teaching and Learning aims to strengthen AASL’s collaboration with school administrators. The AASL School Leader Collaborative will serve as active ambassadors for school libraries. AASL leaders and K-12 administrators will convene to garner advocacy for school librarians that can be implemented at building, district, state and national levels. Administrators will provide feedback, messaging and advice on strategies to be taken by AASL. This sustained dialogue will deepen understanding of each other’s powerful roles for impacting teaching, learning, and school culture. Lewis will chair this initiative in 2019-2020. This initiative will also identify state-level leaders to serve as a part of a cadre. These state-level leaders will serve as a point of contact to initiate activities developed by the AASL School Leader Collaborative. The leaders will also distribute resources the group creates. Additionally, the leaders will identify school librarians in their state to present at state or regional school administrator conferences and work with their state association to develop a state-level school leader collaborative.

Critical Issue #2: Membership Development

In order to strengthen relationships with state affiliates and other ALA communities and to build a stronger professional community for its members, AASL completed the following initiatives and activities in 2018–2019:

Support for State and Local School Librarians

AASL works closely with ALA’s Office for Library Advocacy and the Office for Intellectual Freedom to provide letters of support and assistance when school librarians face budgetary, school library
position or intellectual freedom challenges. ALA President Loida Garcia-Febo enthusiastically co-signs each letter with AASL President Kathryn Roots Lewis. In 2018-2019, letters were sent to districts and entities in Washington, Ohio, California, Connecticut, New Jersey, Texas, Utah, Maryland, Virginia, Georgia, Alabama, and Kentucky. This list is just a sampling of the numerous ways that AASL, working with our ALA colleagues, provide support for school librarians and library funding throughout the year.

**Fight for School Libraries Summit Follow-up**
As a result of ALA Past President Jim Neal’s Fight for School Libraries Summit, AASL is working to identify actions in four critical areas.

1. Collect quality data on standards and policies regarding school library staffing, funding and accreditation.
2. Develop compelling stories and messages for national and community audiences.
3. Strengthen partnerships with public and academic libraries to further build support. At this point
4. Implement support for school libraries consistently into political advocacy work.

**Student Memberships**
To assist students in school library programs AASL, in partnership with ALA, has offered any program in which the *National School Library Standards* are adopted as a required text a one-year complimentary student membership to those enrolled in the course. This complimentary membership ensures that those responsible for the future of the school library profession will have access to the valuable resources offered through an AASL/ALA membership as well as instant member pricing. To date over 131 courses have adopted the text and over 946 students have joined AASL.

**State Affiliate Visits**
The AASL President, President-Elect, and Immediate Past President attend state affiliate conferences on a scheduled rotation and present informational sessions about AASL. In 2018-2019, AASL President Kathryn Roots Lewis visited the Washington, Florida, and Missouri associations, the Maine Association of School Librarians, and the Alabama Association of School Librarians. Lewis was also a speaker at the New York Library Association School Library Section Conference (NYLA SSL). AASL President-Elect Mary Keeling visited the Hawai‘i Association of School Librarians and the New Mexico Advocacy for School Libraries Special Interest Group. AASL Immediate Past President Steven Yates visited Virginia Association of School Librarians. Executive Director Sylvia Knight Norton spoke at the Iowa Association of School Librarians.

**President’s Program**
Award-winning author Matt de la Peña will headline the American Association of School Librarians’ (AASL) President’s Program taking place at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, June 22, as part of the 2019 ALA Annual Conference in Washington, D.C.

**Awards Ceremony**
The Awards Ceremony will be held Saturday, June 22 at 5:00 pm as part of the 2019 ALA Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. Awards Chair Susan Yutzey and Past President Steven Yates will emcee the ceremony. The evening venue lends itself to a more celebratory event.
**Annual Membership Meeting**
AASL will hold its annual virtual membership meeting on Tuesday, June 4. The annual membership meeting provides a “state of the association” update from leadership. During the event, AASL President Kathryn Roots Lewis will hold an “AASL Community Conversation” on initiatives, programs, recognitions, and financial standing.

**Social Media Superstar Recognitions**
AASL recognized its third group of Social Media Superstars in 2019. After reviewing all of the endorsements left by peers and the original nominations, the Social Media Recognition Committee, chaired by Marifran DeMaine, named the following 2019 Social Media Superstars:
- Advocacy Ambassador: Rebecca Wyncoop
- Leadership Luminary: Allison Mackley
- Program Pioneer: Amanda Jones
- Sensational Student Voice: Hannah Byrd Little
- Social Justice Defender: Matthew Winner
- Tech Troubadour: Katie McNamara
- Curriculum Champion: Nancy Jo Lambert
- Reader Leader: Laura Gardner

**2019 Awards and Grants**
AASL awards and grants recognize excellence and showcase best practices in the school library field. This year’s award and grant recipients are:
- **Crystal Apple Awards**
  - Awarded to: Marney Welmers
  - Awarded to OverDrive Education
  - The Crystal Apple is given at the discretion of the AASL President to an individual or group who has had significant impact on school libraries and students.
- **National School Library Program of the Year Award**
  - Awarded to: High School District 214, located in Arlington Heights
  - *Sponsored by Follett*, the award annually recognizes a school library program that meets the needs of the changing school and library environment and is fully integrated into the school’s curriculum. The recipient receives a crystal obelisk and $10,000.
- **ABC-CLIO Leadership Grant**
  - Awarded to: South Carolina Association of School
  - *Sponsored by ABC-CLIO*, the up to $1,750 grant is awarded to school library associations that are AASL affiliates for planning and implementing leadership programs at the state, regional, or local levels.
- **Affiliate of the Year Award**
  - Awarded to: Pennsylvania School Librarians Association (PSLA)
  - The award recognizes the AASL Affiliate most active and dynamic in achieving the goals of AASL at the state and local level. The recipient organization receives a $1,000 stipend.
- **Collaborative School Library Award**
  - Awarded to Carolyn Foote & Melinda Darrow Westlake High School in Austin, Texas
  - *Sponsored by Upstart*, the $2,500 award recognizes and encourages collaboration and partnerships between school librarians and teachers in meeting goals outlined in AASL’s Standards through joint planning of
program, unit, or event in support of the curriculum and using school library resources.

- **Distinguished School Administrator Award**
  - Awarded to: Dr. Shirley Simmons Norman, Oklahoma Public Schools Assistant Superintendent
  - *Sponsored by ProQuest*, the $2,000 award is presented to a school administrator who has made worthy contributions to the operations of an exemplary school library and to advancing the role of the school library in the educational program.

- **Frances Henne Award**
  - Awarded to: Holly Schwarzmann school librarian at Largo Middle School in Largo, Florida.
  - *Sponsored by ABC-CLIO*, the $1,250 award enables a school librarian with five or fewer years in the field to attend an ALA Annual Conference or AASL National Conference for the first time.

- **Induction Program**
  - Recipients
    - Kelsey Barker, Longfellow Middle School, Oklahoma
    - Lisa Beal, West Liberty Elementary, Iowa
    - Sharon Frank, Cane Run Elementary School, Kentucky
    - Wendy Garland, Avery Elementary School, Massachusetts
    - Jen Gilbert, Eminence Independent Schools, Kentucky
    - Gretchen Hazlin, Kilmer Middle School, Virginia
    - Katie LaFever, North Tonawanda City School District, New York
    - Peter Langella, Champlain Valley Union High School, Vermont
    - Emily Ratica, Arroyo Valley High School, California
    - Suzanne Sannwald, West Hills High School, California
  - The AASL Induction Program offers a systematic structure to assist future school library leaders in recognizing and developing their leadership abilities. This comprehensive program ensures that members are prepared to actively shape the future of the K-12 education landscape as leaders within their schools and the association.

- **Innovative Reading Grant**
  - Awarded to: Susan Gauthier director of library services for East Baton Rouge Parish Louisiana Schools
  - *Sponsored by Capstone*, the $2,500 award supports the planning and implementation of a unique and innovative program for children that motivates and encourages reading, especially with struggling readers.

- **Inspire Collection Development Grants**
  - Awarded to:
    - Sean Casey, Northeast Middle School, Minneapolis, Minnesota
    - Melissa Iamonico, Sprain Brook Academy, Valhalla, New York
    - Lauren Mabry, Andrew Lewis Middle School, Salem, Virginia
    - Holly Schwarzmann, Largo Middle School, Largo, Florida
    - Ness Shortley, Horton Middle School, Pittsboro, North Carolina
    - Mae-Lynn Smith, Great Oaks Charter School Wilmington, Wilmington, Delaware
  - *Sponsored by Marina “Marney” Welmers*, the grant assists an existing public middle or high school to extend, update, and diversify the book, online, subscription, and/or software collection in their library in order to realize
sustainable improvement in student achievement at their school. The fund is $20,000 per year. The direct assistance grant shall be capped at $5,000.

- **Inspire Special Event Grants**
  - **Awarded to:**
    - Melissa Cortese, Buffalo Academy of Science Charter School, Buffalo, New York
    - Amanda Jones, Live Oaks Middle School, Watson, Louisiana
    - Lori Quintana, Griffin Middle School, Smyrna, Georgia
    - Anne Reis, Homewood Center, Ellicott City, Maryland
  - **Sponsored by Marina “Marney” Welmers**, the grant supports a special event so that an existing public middle or high school library can create new or enhance its extracurricular activities in order to increase student academic achievement at their school. The fund is $10,000 per annum. The direct assistance is capped at $2,000 per grant.

- **Roald Dahl's Miss Honey Social Justice Award**
  - **Awarded to:** Joquetta Johnsons, school librarian at Randallstown High School in Randallstown, Maryland for project entitled “Lyrics as Literature: Using Hip-Hop to Amplify Student Voice (Activism) and Social Justice”.
  - **Sponsored by Penguin Random House**, the award recognizes and encourages collaboration and partnerships between school librarians and teachers in teaching social justice through joint planning of a program, unit, or event in support of social justice using school library resources. The award includes $2,000 to the school librarian, up to $1,000 in reimbursement towards travel and housing to attend the AASL awards presentation at the ALA Annual Conference, and a $5,000 book donation by Penguin Random House.

- **The Ruth Toor Grant for Strong Public School Libraries**
  - **Awarded to:** Jennifer Sturge, specialist for school libraries and digital learning for Calvert County Public Schools in Prince Frederick, Maryland
  - **Sponsored by Jay Toor**, the award provides funding support on a competitive basis to public school libraries for the creation and implementation of a local public awareness/marketing campaign that promotes and positions their school library as a necessary resource in the community. The grant includes $3,000 to create and implement a project and $2,000 for both the school librarian and school official to attend the AASL National Conference or the ALA Annual Conference.

- **Beyond Words: Dollar General School Library Relief Fund** donated a total of $185,000 in 2018-2019 to public schools whose school libraries have been impacted by a disaster. Grants are to replace or supplement books, media and/or library equipment in the school library setting.

- **Inspire Disaster Recovery Grants**
  - **Awarded to:** Jones County Schools in North Carolina in the amount of $7,060
  - **Sponsored by Marina “Marney” Welmers**, an AASL member and retired middle school librarian, Inspire Disaster Recovery Grants are available to help support pre-existing public middle or high school libraries—led by a certified school librarian—that have incurred damage or hardship due to a natural disaster (tornado, earthquake, hurricane, flood, avalanche, mudslide), fire, or an act recognized by the federal government as terrorism.
or provides funding to public middle or high schools that have been impacted through an increase in enrollment due to displaced/evacuee students.

- **(AASL) Distinguished Service Award**
  - Joyce Valenza, assistant teaching professor of library and information science at Rutgers University, was the recipient of the AASL Distinguished Service Award.
  - Sponsored by The Rosen Publishing Group, the $3,000 award recognizes an individual member of the library profession who has, over a significant period, made an outstanding national contribution to school librarianship and school library development.

**Critical Issue #3: Association Governance and Leadership**

AASL is constantly working to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its internal governance and leadership. In 2018-2019, AASL worked in the following areas:

**Emerging Leaders 2019**

Corey Hall and Bianca Spurlock were selected as the two participants sponsored by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) in the ALA 2019 Emerging Leaders program.

**Strategic Planning Process**

AASL member leaders met for a full day strategic planning session at Midwinter in Seattle, WA. Members were guided through a series of exercises facilitated by Paul Meyer of Tecker Associates. The group looked at their task with the goal of considering how AASL could effectively and efficiently work within its capacity considering the resources it has. This hard working team proposed changes that will impact AASL members for years to come. The AASL Board met the following day to review and continue the work of the larger group. This spring the Executive Committee reviewed the document that will be reviewed and voted on by the Board of Directors at ALA Annual. The proposed plan is on the agenda for consideration at the 2019 Annual Conference. The plan features:

- Draft Vision: Every school librarian is a leader; every learner has a school librarian.
- Three goal areas: Research, Leadership Activation, Educational Policy.

We look forward to the ALA Organization Review and other initiatives designed to position librarians and libraries - including school librarians and school libraries - at the center of all communities.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn Roots Lewis
2018-2019 President, American Association of School Librarians