

AASL Online Committee Chair Orientation - WEEK 1

Hello, AASL Committee / Editorial Board / Task Force Chairs:

Welcome to the annual AASL Online Committee Chair Orientation, "Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Being a Committee Chair." I am grateful and owe much thanks to past-president Helen Adams for beginning this tradition of online orientation.

For the next 5 weeks, you'll receive a weekly message from me related to carrying out your responsibilities as an AASL committee/task force chair.

The purpose of the orientation is:

- to provide you with the necessary information to lead your committee effectively
- communicate with AASL staff and your Board liaisons efficiently
- meet the minimum outcomes for your committee by June 2009, identified for you in the 2008-2009 Committee Chair Handbook.

Every chair was sent a print copy of the Committee Chair Handbook. If you have not yet received yours, please contact Jennifer Habley at jhabley@ala.org. As the ALA website is currently "locked down" as it goes through changes in its infrastructure, the handbook will not be available on the site until mid to late September.

The AASL Board, committee chairs, and AASL staff are all a team, and these weekly messages will prepare you for the coming year. **This discussion list, aaslcom@ala.org, is our official communication vehicle for all committee chairs, Board liaisons and staff. Everyone who receives messages can also post to the list for general discussion.**

Here's what we'll cover over the next 5 weeks to answer "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Being a Committee Chair."

- WEEK 1 (this message): Welcome and Introductions...plus an Important Note About Committee Meetings
- WEEK 2: The 2007-2008 AASL Committee Chair Handbook: Procedures, Policies and More
- WEEK 3: Being an Effective Chair: Tips from the Experts
- WEEK 4: AASL Committee Support OR Who Do You Ask When You Need Something?
- WEEK 5: AASL's Strategic Plan and Where YOU Fit In

Before we begin to work, let's get acquainted. I'm the 2008-2009 AASL President.

I began my library career working in the Charlottesville Virginia Public Library when I was in high school and college. Not only did I earn money for my college education; but, I was introduced to a vocation that I still am passionate about today. My first school library position was in Orono, Maine. My husband was in the army and was stationed in Maine. We eventually returned to Virginia and when I resumed my school library career it was in at Hopkins Elementary School in Chesterfield, Virginia. While working for Chesterfield County Public Schools I opened a new middle school and a new high school. It was at James River High School that I had the amazing opportunity to receive the NSLMPY award. In 2004 Henrico County Public Schools hired me as supervisor of the county school libraries. I have had so much fun in this job and the library media specialists are wonderful. During all this time my colleagues from my

state professional organization VEMA and national professional organization AASL have made all my work richer and more valuable.

On a personal note, I am the mother of two and the grandmother of four. My husband Charlie and I met at Virginia Tech and have been married for 39 years. Each summer all the grandchildren stay with me for a full week. They call it Camp Grandma and I call it the most fun ever.

Michael Phelps brought swimming to national attention at the Olympics so I will tell you about my swimming career. I was a state ranked swimmer back in the late sixties, coached swimming for years and still enjoy getting in the pool and swimming those laps. Although I swam all the strokes my favorite was the individual medley and freestyle.

Now it's your turn. During the next few days, please introduce yourself, personally and professionally, in a paragraph or two, to your fellow AASL committee chairs. Since we are using an electronic discussion list, you can do this by simply replying to this message. One of the benefits of serving as a volunteer in an organization is the opportunity to meet and work with other librarians from around the country. If you are serving a second term as chair, please take the time to review the weekly messages, and be sure to tell us about yourself, as well.

We currently have approximately 50 chairpersons participating in this orientation, and I hope to hear from each of you over the next few days. The full list of AASL committees, linked to chairs and committee descriptions, may be found at <http://www.ala.org/aasl/committees>. If you wish to post an original message to the e-mail list, please send the message to AASLCOM@ala.org. I'm looking forward to "talking" with you next week on this e-mail discussion list.

*****An Important Note about Committee Meetings*****

It is expected that chairpersons will:

1. Initiate electronic communications with all committee members as soon as you receive your roster, but definitely before the ALA Midwinter Meeting in Denver, Colorado, to enable the committee to complete its minimum intended outcomes by June 2009
2. You will be expected to submit a report thirty days before Midwinter that documents your progress toward achieving the minimum intended outcomes.
3. There is never enough time during face-to-face meetings at Midwinter and Annual to accomplish your duties. A special electronic discussion list is created for each committee for this purpose. Many of you may already have begun to use your electronic discussion lists. Contact Jennifer Habley, AASL Program Coordinator, Governance, at jhabley@ala.org to verify that your committee's e-mail list is ready for use.
4. While the workload, timeline, and need for meetings is different for each committee, all committees are expected to meet during the four-hour AASL All Committee Meeting scheduled during the ALA Midwinter Meeting (January 23-28, 2009 in Denver, CO) and during the ALA Annual Conference (July 9-15, 2009 in Chicago, IL). This All Committee Meeting is for all AASL committees to meet and work in a single huge room, which allows the President and other division leaders to visit with as many different groups as possible. In Colorado, the AASL All Committee Meeting will be 1:30 - 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, January 24.

- Although some committees need additional meeting time at the Midwinter Meeting and/or Annual Conference to enable them to complete their minimum intended outcomes, most should only need to meet for a portion of the four-hour All Committee Meeting timeslot.
- One reason for expanding the AASL All Committee Meeting to four hours was to help accommodate those members that serve on more than one committee. All committee chairs are encouraged to poll their members to see what other committees they belong to and then work with other chairs if there is a big overlap. Some chairs might want to be proactive in scheduling their meetings for a specific time during the four-hour All Committee timeslot (for example, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.) and let their committee members know immediately so they can inform chairs of other committees of which they are members. In this way, a member serving on two different committees could attend a meeting for both during that four-hour All Committee Meeting timeslot.
- Exceptions to the All Committee rule are inter-divisional committees and juries that must meet in closed session. Other requests for individual meeting times will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. You will be contacted by your AASL staff liaison with more information.
- After each meeting, a "Committee Meeting Report Form" must be turned in to AASL staff. This form, available online from the Committees page <<http://www.ala.org/aasl/committees>>, will be available on-site at the Midwinter Meeting and Annual Conference.

I look forward to a productive year working together.

Ann M. Martin

2008-2009 AASL President