

American Association of School Librarians (AASL)

Affiliate Assembly Self Study

Committee

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What is the purpose of the AASL/Affiliate Assembly (AA)?

- Connect the building level LMS to the AASL Board and the AASL Board to the building level. (Sample of a potential Vision Statement, needs to be developed)
- Link between the state affiliate organizations and the national organization - AASL.
- Identify the issues and trends for the AASL Board.
- Conduit for AASL to bring national issues and Standards to the states and through them to the building level practitioner.
- Empower AA leadership to assist AASL leadership in identifying and understanding grassroots issues, developing policy, and implement programs and policies for the good of the Association and its membership.
- Communicate important issues and initiatives between AASL and the Affiliates.
- Provide forum for State Affiliates to discuss issues and highlight accomplishments, both regionally and nationally.
 - Determine what is happening regionally and in state organizations while maintaining open communication between AA members.
 - Discuss and address issues and initiatives with a focus on bringing each issue to resolution.
 - Network with other delegates and AA officers to learn possible solutions to common problems.
 - Share methods to pass critical information through state organizations to building level LMS.
 - Share what is happening in school libraries across the country—issues, successes, and challenges.

- Opportunity for Affiliate Assembly members to become more nationally involved.
 - Networking with State Affiliate leaders and AASL leadership.
 - Learn about AASL and opportunities for involvement, including committees and taskforces.
 - Participate in a national school library forum on issues, policies, and solutions.
 - Mentoring for leadership and committee involvement.
 - Leadership opportunities both within AA and within AASL through knowledge of opportunities and identification by peers.

What needs to happen to make participation in AASL/Affiliate Assembly (AA) a meaningful experience?

Before the Affiliate Assembly is held:

- Identify new delegates, mail AA Handbook, and have Regional Director-Elects contact delegates regarding functions and processes involved with AA.
- Link online for new AA members to view a greeting from the AA Chair and see upcoming dates and times for meetings.
- Facilitate discussion groups of state affiliate counterparts, such as Presidents, Program Chairs, Newsletter editors, to discuss issues and programs via a bulletin board, listserv, or e-mail.
- Utilize the formal reporting system from the *AASL Affiliate Assembly Handbook for Delegates*
 - Statement of Concern
 - Statement of Commendation
- Post draft of agendas to the AA listserv.

During the Affiliate Assembly:

- Introduce new members.
- Utilize “icebreakers” to allow people from other regions to meet one another.
- Conduct the meetings in a professional and respectful manner.
- Become a forum for leadership, educational workshops, and train the trainers.
- Create a definite focus on advocating for the school library media programs.
- Streamline the issues, concerns, and commendations to allow time for focused discussions.
- Allow for time to communication and updates within the regions.
- Allow time to communicate in small groups with other delegates who share common issues.

- Provide committee summaries stating what has been accomplished and what is still in process.

After the Affiliate Assembly:

- Follow-up, by Mid-Winter, on the Statement of Concerns presented at Annual AA and action taken by AASL.
- Disseminate information back to the affiliate delegates.
- Post minutes from AA meetings.

How can AASL more effectively respond to the issues that emerge from the Affiliate Assembly?

- Continue to have the AA Chair report AA concerns at the Second AASL Board Meeting at Annual. Chair attend the first AASL Board Meeting at Midwinter to hear the AASL President's report addressing AA concerns from the Annual meeting, and provide clarity to any questions from AASL Board.
- Attendance of Directors-Elect at AASL Board meetings, as observers, is required. Stress to Directors-Elect the importance of attendance in order to gather information, provide input to Directors, and transmit AASL Board actions to delegates at AA.
- Recognize Regional Directors at first meeting of AA at Annual and Midwinter.
- Encourage Regional Directors to participate in AA meetings, AA state caucuses, and regional meetings outside of ALA conferences.
- Flow of information begins with AA reporting to the AASL Board. AASL Board reports to AA with clear information on actions taken.
- Utilize the thoughts, concerns, influence, and voting power of the Regional Directors that sit on the AASL Board.
- Address issues succinctly.
- Create committee summaries stating what has been accomplished and what is still in process.
- Notify delegates about "Hot Track" issues between annual and mid-winter. Issues should be brought forth as well as progress updated.
- Encourage presence of AASL officers during discussions and sharing at AA. Place AASL President and other officers on AA agenda, as appropriate.

- Allow for inclusion of time sensitive “emergent” issues when developing statements of concern and commendations.

How can AASL and/or the AA Leadership help manage expectations so that there is less frustration on the part of AA representatives? For example, sometimes the statements of concern have been in the realm of AASL should “compel Congress” and that leads to disillusionment on AA’s part.

- Communicate to AA if an issue is out of the realm of the bylaws of the AASL.
- In caucuses, have Directors-Elect remind AA members on how the AA operates and what can or cannot be done.
- Clarify guidelines for Statements of Concern with the Regional Director-Elects.
- Counseling of state delegates by the Regional Director-Elects so that in writing a “Request for Action” they are aware of previous requests and parameters.
- Provide committee summaries, from the President of AASL, stating what has been accomplished and what is still in process.
- Chart Statements of Concern and their resolution in the AA Handbook for reference by state delegates and to help eliminate duplication.
- Identify a keyword or words for statements of concern,
- Establish categories for issues that arise (legislative, nation, local, AASL board, AA board, or ALA board) and direct the issues to the proper channel via a bulletin board or electronic means.
- Remind members of the AA’s advisory body status.
- Investigate the format and/or time of the meetings. Consider an earlier meeting such as a pre-conference time.

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