

DORCAS HAND
Houston TX
School Librarian Retired, now Full-time Advocate

Statement of Professional Concerns:

As we seek to solidify our new structure ready for a membership vote, I see the newly imagined Executive Board as especially important in reflecting our new, more effective structure. These last five years of the SCOE/Forward Together/TAG era have demonstrated how thoughtful and invested ALA leadership is, leadership including many beyond Council who have spent many thoughtful hours of discussion. I have watched and joined the association's deep self-examination as we seek to redefine how to best represent the needs of our membership and to forward the library profession in the face of outside forces that would negate much of what we do.



Advocacy is a core value driving the function of ALA, and the EB offers one face of that advocacy. Much of my work since I “retired” has been in the advocacy arena, specifically at the local level supporting the reconstitution of school libraries in the Houston Independent School District. While I have always worked on advocacy initiatives within AASL and ALA, the Houston Students Need Libraries effort was intensely hands-on, focusing on an audience that largely saw no need to restore libraries to the campuses. And we succeeded—school librarians were added as required staff members in every school in fall of 2022. Just as here at ALA with TAG, persistence has been key – I am certainly persistent.

Over my 44 years of membership, I have held many roles in ALA, especially AASL. But my most recent work with the ALA Ecosystem Initiative has clarified my understanding of our need within and beyond ALA to encourage librarians to speak with ONE VOICE, to reach both across our siloes internally and to the non-librarian public whether those are legislators or patrons. I appreciate how easy it is to focus on our personal niche while losing track of the bigger picture and I see much more how to use our individual professional perspectives collaboratively to expand our combined impact. I look forward to working with the EB to facilitate this Ecosystem ONE VOICE focus to the advantage of all of ALA. Our ecosystem needs to be inclusive of all our perspectives, representative of the changes we want to see in our world, and easily understood by the uninformed. Collaboration is essential – I work best when collaborating with a knowledgeable and persistent team, which I know the EB will be.

I also sit on the Board of the Freedom to Read Foundation. In the current climate where censorship of many kinds is favored by a loud minority, ALA is leading efforts to rebuild public awareness of the Right to Read and our collaboration with FTRF is key in this effort. ALA members hold more core values than just Intellectual Freedom, but in 2022-23, the other values are supporting our very public focus on Intellectual Freedom and First Amendment Rights. I am proud to stand with ALA and FTRF members to amplify the message that “Free People Read Freely.”

ALA is strong in the face of naysayers. ALA staff and officers work tirelessly to advance the association's mission. I look forward to standing with them to respond thoughtfully, wisely, and with appropriate speed to decisions that come to the Executive Board.

EDUCATION

M.L.S. School of Library and Information Science, State University of New York at Albany. May 1978.

B.A. Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA. Major: History of Art. Minor: Education. January 1973.

LIBRARY POSITIONS

- School Library and Intellectual Freedom Advocate, 2016-present
- Students Need Libraries in Houston ISD (public), 2013-present
- Annunciation Orthodox School PS-8 Director of Libraries, Houston TX, 1990-2016
- Episcopal High School Head and Founding Librarian, Houston TX, 1984-1989
- Houston Public Library, Jungman Branch Children's Librarian, Sept 1983-Feb 1984
- Boston Public Library, Central Young Adult Room, August 1983-June 1983
- St. Johns School, Lower & Middle School Librarian, Houston TX, 1978-1982
- Teacher. Western Massachusetts public schools. August 1973-June 1976

MEMBER OF

- ALA / AASL / ALSC / YALSA since 1978, 44 years
- TXLA / Children's Round Table / Young Adult Round Table also since 1978.

ALA AFFILIATIONS

AASL, AASL Independent Schools Section (ISS), ALSC, IFRT, IRRT, RMRT, SUSRT, United for Libraries, YALSA

ALA ACTIVITIES

- Texas Chapter Councilor, 2021-present
- ALA Councilor-at-Large, 2014-2016; 2017-20.
- ALA Committee on Library Advocacy (COLA)
 - COLA Liaison from Retired Members Round Table 2022
 - Member, Task Group to update the ALA Advocacy Handbook, 2021-22
 - Member, Task Group to write Students Reach Greater Heights with School Librarians infographic, 2021
 - COLA Liaison from Ecosystem Task Group 2019-21
 - Co-Chair, COLA Ecosystem Subcommittee 2020-22. Continuing as a member.
 - Chair, COLA Ecosystem Task Force 2018-2020
- ALA Todaro Presidential Initiative, School Subcommittee Co-chair, 2017-18
- American Association of School Librarians (AASL). Member, 1978-present.
 - Advocacy Committee (Chair, 2015-16; Member 2011-2016).
 - National School Library Program of the Year Award Committee 2013.
 - Publications Committee, 2010-2012.
 - Various committees over the years including Bylaws c.1990.
- Independent Schools Section (ISS), 1979-present. (Founding member)
 - ISS Representative to the AASL Board of Directors 2009-2012.
 - ISS Chair, 2004-5.
 - Various committees.
- YALSA. Excellence in Nonfiction Award Committee 2013.

- IRRT Webinar Committee 2020-21
- RMRT Liaison to Committee on Library Advocacy, 2022
- United for Libraries
 - Intellectual Freedom, Advocacy and Public Policy Committee, Fall 2022-present
 - Intellectual Freedom Task Force, 2021-22

FTRF ACTIVITIES

- Board Member, November 2019-present
- Chair, Krug Fund Education Committee, 2021-present
- Member Education Committee, 2020
- Member, Fundraising Committee, 2022

TXLA ACTIVITIES

- Texas Chapter Councilor to ALA, 2021-present
- Texas Association of School Librarians
 - Legislative and Advocacy Committee Chair, 2013-2016.
 - TASLTalks blog Editor, 2014-2016.
 - Various committees.
 - Founder, Private School Discussion Group, 2010-2011
- Texas School Library Standards Professionalism Subcommittee Chair, August 2016-17 (Texas State Library and Archives Commission)
- Texas Library Association (TLA) Conference Program Committee, 2011-2012.
- Young Adult Round Table (TX-YART).
- Children's Round Table (TX-CRT).
 - Bluebonnet Award Program Committee (joint committee of TASL and CRT), April 2005-April 2009.

OTHER LIBRARY ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES

- Students Need Libraries in HISD co-founder 2013-present. Local community advocacy for school librarians in Houston ISD (TX).
- Houston Area Independent School Library Network, 1980-present (Founding Chair)
 - Founding Editor, HAISLN Recommended Reading List (1992-20010)

PUBLICATIONS (selected)

- Co-editor, Ecosystem book title (in progress). ALA, 2024 (we hope)
- "Thank you for Supporting HISD Students' Freedom to Read & Learn." *SNL Houston Speaks Out Blog*, 3 Oct 2022.
- "Students Reach Greater Heights with School Librarians." *SNL Houston Speaks Out Blog*, 5 Nov 2021.
- "Comparing Campus Libraries to Classroom Libraries." *SNL Houston Speaks Out Blog*, 3 Sept 2021.
- Visual Guideline to Staffing Choices in School Libraries. 2018. PDF
- "Students Need Libraries in Houston ISD (TX)." *KQ Blog*, 7 July 2017.
- "Take the Bull by the Horns." *TXASL Talks Blog*, 23 Jan 2017.
- "ESSA and Your Partnerships with Administrators." *KQ Blog*, 28 April 2016.
- "Make Local Data Work for Local School Libraries." *KQ Blog*, 19 Feb 2016.
- Evans, Cathy, Dorcas Hand, Robyn Martin, and David Wee. "The Trailblazers: The Art of Curation in the Information Forest." (*Independent School Magazine*, Winter 2015)
- Abarbanel, Elisabeth; Sarah Davis; Dorcas Hand; Matthew Wittmer. "The New School Library: The Human Connection to Digital Resources and Academic Success." (*Independent School Magazine*, Summer 2013)

- "Youth Matters: Making Progress by Fives", *American Libraries Online*, Dec. 30, 2011.
- Blog posts (2) to *Inside Scoop: Inside Views from Inside AL (American Libraries)* from AASL Turning the Page conference, Oct. 27-29, 2011
 - <http://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/inside-scoop/aasl-day-one-e-ink-and-collection-development>
 - <http://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/inside-scoop/aasl-streaming-and-teaming-strong-school-libraries>
- "The School Librarian as Instructional Partner: Team Up with Teachers to Guide Student Learning," *KnowledgeQuest*, The Journal of the American Association of School Librarians. 35.5 (May-June 2011): p.22+
- Editor, *Independent School Libraries: Perspectives on Excellence*. Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2010. 21 essays by 20 authors.
- "Adolescent Literacies: Reading, Writing, Thinking." *KnowledgeQuest*, The Journal of the American Association of School Librarians. 35.1 (Sept.-Oct. 2006): 40-43. This provides an overview of the AOS History as Story program.
- "Adolescent Literacies: Reading, Writing, Thinking". (*Knowledge Quest* 35:1, September/October 2006).
- "From Lakes to Rivers: The Independent School Library Looks Ahead." *Looking Ahead: Independent School Issues & Answers*. Ed. Patrick F. Bassett and Craig Thorn. Gilsum NH: Avocus Publishing, 2004. 307-310.
- Founding Editor (1993-1998), *HAISLN Recommended Reading List*. Winter 1993-March 1997. Chair, Recommended Reading List Committee for 5th-6th grades, 2008-2012; member 7th-8th grade committee, 2003-2008.
- Houston Area Review Group and Editor, "Adult Books for Young Adults" monthly column in *School Library Journal*. August 1986-June 1989; 2010-2016.

OTHER INTERESTS

- Country Dance and Song Society (CDSS)
 - Member since 1990
 - Governing Board member 2014-2020
 - Vice President 2016-2020.
 - Led bylaws update.
- Houston Area Traditional Dance Society, Founder c. 1985.
 - Contradance caller and dancer.