



Resolution to Promote Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Efforts in AASL While Addressing Historical Effects of Racism

Whereas the American Library Association (ALA) Council adopted resolution CD#41-7618 "Resolution to Honor African Americans Who Fought Library Segregation" stating that the American Library Association participated both passively and actively, in the disenfranchisement of African American librarians, depriving them of the resources of a professional association;

Whereas between 1954 with the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision through 1968, the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) took no action to publicly support *Brown* or to oppose segregated public school libraries;

Whereas Koch wrote in 1975 "from their late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century origins, southern state library and education associations to which school librarians belonged had been segregated. AASL not only said nothing and took no public position against these racist practices, it continued to accept delegates from segregated school library associations as AASL representatives until the mid-1960s. In 1951, AASL quietly decided that in its state-member Assembly, segregated black and white state library associations could each appoint one representative, but those representatives would each get only half a vote" ;

Whereas AASL acknowledges the racist experiences suffered by Black school librarians including Ernestine Denham Talbert, Jurl Portee Watkins, Carrie Coleman Robinson, and many others who did not have the voice of the association advocating on their behalf;

Whereas the inactions of AASL also caused harm to Black and Indigenous People Of Color (BIPOC) members of the school library profession;

Whereas AASL acknowledges harm done to fellow BIPOC colleagues and offers a sincere apology as an important and necessary first step in the process of reconciliation;

Whereas AASL must communicate how the association has worked to create documents and initiatives to support equity, diversity and inclusion such as "Developing Inclusive Learners and Citizens Activity Guide", "Defending Intellectual Freedom: LGBTQ+ Material in School Libraries" Toolkit, Mary Keeling's 2019-2020 Presidential Initiative, Office Hours, and Increasing Representation Mentoring Program (IRMP), and the *Knowledge Quest* March/April 2021 issue *Black School Librarianship: Navigating Race and Creating Change*;

Whereas, AASL has and continues to be a sponsor of the Spectrum Scholars program since its inception;

Whereas AASL affirms the importance of equity, diversity & inclusion as core values of our profession;



Whereas equity, diversity and inclusion are at the forefront of AASL policies, our strategic, and our operational plans;

Whereas equity, diversity and inclusion are within every area of school librarian practice including collection development, professional development, recruiting, mentoring, and instruction through our National School Library Standards and opens opportunities for future members to see themselves as an integral part of AASL; and

Whereas the inclusion of all perspectives enriches and builds understanding which in turn impacts our school library profession, our learners, and our community; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members

1. Acknowledges the American Association of School Librarians' past actions and inactions that have harmed members of the profession;
2. Apologizes to Black school librarians for wrongs committed against them and for AASL's inactions on behalf of segregated school libraries and school library state associations;
3. Apologizes to all Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) school librarians for AASL's part in historical racism and segregation in the school librarian profession;
4. Commits to promoting diversity in school librarianship in undergraduate and graduate programs and at school recruitment fairs;
5. Commits to ensuring a diverse and inclusive membership by recruiting, welcoming and encouraging BIPOC school librarians to consider leadership opportunities within ALA and AASL;
6. Commits to applying and prioritizing an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) lens in all aspects of the greater work of AASL and ALA;
7. Commits to sustaining a more diverse and inclusive leadership within ALA and AASL in terms of ethnicity, gender, and ability representation;
8. Communicates and aligns all EDI initiatives throughout AASL, ALA (in response to the newly adopted DEI Scorecard), and the profession;
9. Creates opportunities and resources for collaboration with ALA divisions, ALA chapters, AASL chapters, ALA Roundtables and National Affiliates of Librarians of Color (NALCo) to create a stronger voice for our profession.



Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association
Thursday, March 10, 2022, ALA Virtual March Council Meeting

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Tracie Hall". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Tracie D. Hall, Executive Director, and
Secretary of the ALA Council



Endorsers:

Diane R. Chen, AASL Division Councilor
Erika Long, Chapter Councilor
Kathy Carroll, Councilor-at-Large
Kathy Lester, Councilor-at-Large
Brenda Pruitt-Annisette, MLS, Ed.D., Chair, Coretta Scott King Book Awards Committee
Dorcas Hand, Councilor-at-Large
Joyce Kasman Valenza, PhD, Councilor-at-Large
Dr. Daniella Smith, Councilor-at-Large
Sara Dallas, Councilor at Large
Amy Lappin, Councilor-at-Large
Sara Kelly Johns, Councilor-at-Large

References:

American Association of School Librarians. 2018. "Defending Intellectual Freedom: LGBTQ+ Material in School Libraries."
https://www.ala.org/aasl/sites/ala.org.aasl/files/content/aaslissues/toolkits/LGBTQ%2BRsource%20Guide_FINAL-180709.pdf

American Association of School Librarians. 2019. "Developing Inclusive Learners and Citizens Activity Guide."
<https://www.ala.org/news/press-releases/2019/07/aasl-releases-guide-develop-inclusive-learners-and-citizens>

American Association of School Librarians. 2021, March/April. "Black School Librarianship: Navigating Race and Creating Change." *Knowledge Quest* vol. 49, no. 4.
<https://knowledgequest.aasl.org/explore-the-experiences-of-black-school-librarians-in-the-mar-apr-issue/>

Koch, Charles William. 1975. "A History of the Association of American School Librarians, 1950-1971." PhD diss. Southern Illinois University.

Wiegand, Wayne A. 2021. "Race and School Librarianship in the Jim Crow South, 1954-1970: The Untold Story of Carrie Coleman Robinson as a Case Study." *Library Quarterly: Information, Community, Policy*, vol. 91, no. 3, pp. 254-269. 2021 by the University of Chicago.

Wiegand, Wayne A., and Shirley A. Wiegand. 2018. *The Desegregation of Public Libraries in the Jim Crow South: Civil Rights and Local Activism*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.



Endorsers:

Diane Chen, American Association of School Librarians (AASL) Councilor
Kimberly Patton, Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) Councilor
Elizabeth Nebeker, Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) Councilor
Kathy Lester, Councilor-at-Large, AASL President-Elect
Jennisen Lucas, AASL President
Dorcas Hand, Texas Chapter Councilor and Freedom to Read Foundation Trustee
Wendy Stephens, Graphic Novels and Comics Round Table (GNCRT) Councilor
K.C. Boyd, DC Chapter Councilor
Deb Sica, Rainbow Round Table Councilor
Leslie Campbell Hime, Ethnic & Multicultural Information Exchange Round Table (EMIERT) Councilor
Erika Long, Tennessee Chapter Councilor and AASL Board Member
Kathleen Breitenbach, Rainbow Round Table Chair
Shauntee Burns-Simpson, Black Caucus American Library Association (BCALA) President
Karen Lemmons, ALA member and BCALA Member
Victor D Baeza, Library Instruction Round Table Councilor.
Barbara Stripling, Freedom to Read Foundation President
Peter Coyl, Intellectual Freedom Round Table Councilor and Freedom of Read Foundation Vice President
Sara Dallas, Councilor at Large and Freedom to Read Foundation Trustee
Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT), endorsed in principle
Freedom to Read Foundation (FTRF)
American Association of School Librarians (AASL)
Association of Library Services to Children (ALSC)
Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA)
Graphic Novels and Comics Round Table (GNCRT)
Maryland Library Association
Heather Sostrom, Florida Library Association
Eileen Palmer, New Jersey Library Association, JLA



Jessamyn West, Vermont Library Association
Lisa Scroggins, Wyoming Library Association

Footnotes:

¹ALA. Freedom to Read Statement.

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>

²ALA. Intellectual Freedom. Core Values.

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/corevalues>

³ALA. Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights. <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/minors>

⁴ALA. Access to Resources and Services in the School Library: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights. <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/accessresources>

⁵ALA. Answering Questions about Youth and Access to Library Resources.

<https://www.ala.org/tools/challengesupport/youthresourcesFAQ>

⁶ALA. Leroy C. Merritt Humanitarian Fund.

<https://www.ala.org/aboutala/affiliates/relatedgroups/merrittfund/merrithumanitarian>

References

American Library Association. (2019, June 25). Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights.

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/minors>

American Library Association. (2014, July 1). Access to Resources and Services in the School Library: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights.

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/accessresources>

American Library Association. (2017, May). Answering Questions about Youth and Access to Library Resources.

<https://www.ala.org/tools/challengesupport/youthresourcesFAQ>

American Library Association. (2004, June 30). Freedom to Read Statement.

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>

American Library Association. (2019, January). Intellectual Freedom. Core Values.

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/corevalues>



American Library Association. (2021, May). Leroy C. Merritt Humanitarian Fund.

<https://www.ala.org/aboutala/affiliates/relatedgroups/merrittfund/merritthumanitarian>