

## **NEA unanimously votes to support AASL and the Strengthening America's School Act**

Delegates at the 2013 National Education Association (NEA) Annual Meeting and Representative Assembly adopted without debate a new business item which called on NEA to support the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) in its lobbying efforts with regard to the Strengthening America's School Act. Presented by Susan Ridgeway, AASL member and advocacy chair for the Ohio Educational Library Media Association, the business item read:

The NEA will assist the American Association of School Librarians with public support of its lobbying efforts, in the passage of the Title IV, Part A, Subpart 2 (Improving Literacy and College and Career Readiness Through Effective School Library Programs) under the Strengthening America's School Act. This act includes the dedicated funding for:

- staffing of all school libraries with state certified or licensed school librarians;
- up-to-date books, materials, equipment and technology (including broadband);
- the development of information, digital and research literacy.

The measure was supported by the NEA Library, Information Literacy, and Technology Caucus.

"I am so happy that the item passed unanimously," said Ridgeway. "That tells me that my colleagues agree wholeheartedly with all of the studies that have been conducted in the last twenty years. They know students perform better when they have access to certified school librarians. This will send a clear message to the Senate that this portion of the ESEA needs to be included and the whole bill needs to be passed by both houses as soon as possible."

"This high profile show of support by NEA will encourage school librarians across the nation," said Gail Dickinson, AASL president. "AASL would like to thank the NEA, the caucus, and Susan for championing the profession and we look forward to continuing our strong partnership."

The American Association of School Librarians, [www.aasl.org](http://www.aasl.org), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), promotes the improvement and extension of library services in elementary and secondary schools as a means of strengthening the total education program. Its mission is to advocate excellence, facilitate change and develop leaders in the school library field.

## Support of 'Improving Literacy and College and Career Readiness through Effective School Library Programs'

Year:  
2013

WHEREAS, the Strengthening Kids' Interest in Learning and Libraries Act (SKILLS Act) was introduced by Sen. Jack Reed (D-R.I.) in the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress; and

WHEREAS, the SKILLS Act includes Section 1251, "Improving Literacy and college and Career Readiness Through Effective School Library Programs"; and

WHEREAS, Section 1251 includes important and dedicated funding for:

- Staffing of all school libraries with state certified or licensed school librarians;
- Up-to-date books, materials, equipment and technology (including broadband);
- The development of information, digital and research literacy;
- Professional development in the acquisition of digital literacy skills and literacy instruction that is appropriate for all grades;
- Activities that foster increased collaboration among school librarians, teachers and administrators; and
- Providing students with access to school libraries during non-school hours, including the hours before and after school, during weekends, and during summer vacation periods;

**RESOLVED**, that the American Federation of Teachers believes strongly that the next iteration of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act should include Section 1251 of the SKILLS Act; and

**RESOLVED**, that the Aft will assist the American Association of School Librarians with public support of its lobbying efforts for the passage of Section 1251 of the SKILLS Act of 2013.