We Are ALSC Chat – Notes from February 18, 2021

Hosted by the School Age Programs and Services Committee:

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Question #1—How are you maintaining connections with colleagues? This is a tough time for us all and we’re experiencing a range of things - working remotely, working on different teams, dealing with extreme weather, some cuts in library staffing, and of course, still the pandemic.

- Association commitments, connections in zoom chats that have social components, state associations
- Not being in a physical space makes it more difficult to delineate time
- It can be hard to log into another Zoom after teaching classes via Zoom throughout the day. It’s also important because it allows for a balance and helps not feel so isolated.
- Difficult to stay connected when immersed in a new field (library staff in some counties have been tapped as disaster relief workers and are involved with contact tracing, resource development, etc.)
- Reading books, joining committees, and mock awards facilitate a tenuous connection.

Question #2—Do you find you’ve been partnering more/less with school and public librarians? What’s the most creative way you have created, or witnessed someone else create, a community in our virtual landscape?

- Essay writing contest in city schools sponsored by the Ezra Jack Keats Foundation with creative writing workshops for grades 3-5 in 12 classes in 7 schools. “Write a letter to yourself a year ago giving them advice,” as the prompt.
- Curated menu of books that children can circle interested items and have one or two picked for them.
- Programming where kids can just talk
  - Book club with a short book being read and rambunctious discussion afterward
- Snow Day Winter Fest with storytimes and activities, hosted outdoors
- Partnerships
○ Monthly Zooms with public librarian that includes book talks and database assistance
○ Hosting a lunch program, or book club, that the public librarian could attend
○ Hard for public librarians to connect with school librarians/classrooms because they are so overwhelmed
• Pain points with reaching children
  ○ Lots of virtual programs are geared towards younger children
  ○ Feelings of inequity because not all kids have required tools, such as internet or space, and it impacts their ability to learn