Resolution to Support AASL School Library Chapters and ACRL Academic Library Chapters

Whereas there are 26 American Association of School Librarians (AASL) School Library Chapters and 7 Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Academic Library Chapters that are separate from ALA Chapter organizations, and therefore do not receive the same benefits from the ALA Chapter Relations Office (CRO), ALA Chapter Relations Committee (CRC), Public Policy and Advocacy Office (PPAO), or the state ALA Chapter Councilors as their official ALA Chapter counterparts;

Whereas some School Library Chapters or Academic Library Chapters, are divisions or sections of the ALA Chapter organization, but do not receive the same information or benefits from the CRO, CRC, PPAO, or state ALA Chapter Councilors that their public library colleagues receive because communication lines are unreliable at the state level. For example, there is the assumption that the members of some AASL or ACRL chapters are receiving information and benefits when they are not;

Whereas many members of the AASL School Library Chapters or ACRL Academic Library Chapters are members of the AASL or ACRL, and are therefore also members of ALA;

Whereas some state departments of education and/or state library agencies have severed ties with ALA and/or state and regional chapter organizations, ALA chapter membership and ALA personal memberships are even more important for information dissemination and advocacy support;

Whereas the Chapter Relations Office (CRO) provides services and facilitates communication to ALA Chapters as detailed on the referenced ALA Chapter Relations Office webpage.

Whereas the Chapter Relations Committee (CRC) serves as an advisory committee to CRO as detailed at the referenced ALA Chapter Relations Committee webpage.

Whereas the Public Policy and Advocacy Office (PPAO) provides support to follow and influence legislation, policy, and regulatory issues of importance to the library field and its public as detailed at the referenced ALA Public Policy and Advocacy Office webpage.

Whereas the ALA sample Chapter Councilor job description was written in 2000 and many Chapter Councilor job descriptions are written by the ALA state chapter. This means not every Chapter Councilor communicates beyond their single organization rather than also representing separate American Association of School Librarians (AASL) and Association of College and Research Librarians (ACRL) chapters;

Whereas the State Intellectual Freedom Network (SIFNET) as well as their virtual meetings are open to AASL and ACRL chapters, that access is not consistently known to AASL and ACRL state and regional chapter leadership;

Whereas the previous lack of equitable access to CRO, PPAO, and other ALA information and services limited the ability of all state-level library organizations to speak with ONE VOICE and participate fully and actively in the ALA Ecosystem, for example:

- Invitations to ALA Chapter meetings and/or webinars, such as the Chapter Advocacy Academy Workshop, were not reliably issued to AASL or ACRL Chapters, and thus, they are not heard within their ALA Chapter leadership.
- AASL and ACRL chapters have not reliably received needed information offered to Chapter Leadership Forum members at meetings or on their Connect space.
- Decisions concerning accessible workshop and webinar times/dates did not always recognize the schedule constraints of the AASL or ACRL Chapter members including frontline workers.
- Challenges specific to AASL and ACRL chapters were not always brought to the attention of Council or the ALA Executive Board, like university library faculty tenure or youth library intellectual freedom issues;

Whereas the ALA Chapter Relations Office has recently increased support and expanded services to AASL State Chapters by:

a. inviting one leader from each State ALA Chapter and one leader from each state AASL Chapter to the December 2023 Chapter Advocacy Academy Workshop,
b. creating a new ALA Connect Group for the Chapter Advocacy Academy Workshop attendees,
c. Hosting online convenings of the Chapter Advocacy Workshop attendees to connect and continue support based on needs identified in a survey,
d. inviting Chairs of state library associations (including AASL Chapter associations) to the State Legislative Chairs ALA Connect Group and their monthly virtual meetings,
e. committing to partnering with other units and divisions of ALA to provide ongoing webinars to support both ALA and AASL State Chapters
f. opening up access to OneClickPolitics and BillTrack 50 tools to AASL Chapters that do not receive access through their ALA Chapter; and

Whereas the ACRL Chapters Council continues to request support from the Chapter Relations Office (CRO) and receive timely responses, but CRO has not yet increased its direct offers of support or expanded services to ACRL State Chapters.

Therefore, be it resolved that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members:

1. Requests that a Task Force including representatives from AASL, ACRL, PLA, Executive Board, IFC, CRC, an at-large member, and appropriate staff be appointed to further the understanding and awareness of these inequities and to consider action steps to retain and broaden services that CRO, PPAO, and OIF have recently provided including:

   a. Supporting the Chapter Relations Office (CRO), the Public Policy and Advocacy Office (PPAO), and the Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) to coordinate with the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) and the Association of College and Research Librarians (ACRL) in sustaining and expanding services to AASL School Library State Chapters and the ACRL Chapters Council including reliable invitations to advocacy events.
   b. Planning chapter workshops and webinar times, including the State Intellectual Freedom Network (SIFNET) and State Legislative Leader meetings, to accommodate ALA members' employment constraints.
   c. Updating the recommended job description for ALA Chapter Councilors to include two-way communication with all relevant state-level and regional-level chapter organizations.
2. Requires the Task Force to report back to Council by ALA Annual 2025 on indicated action steps.

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Endorsers:
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Cathi Fuhrman, AASL Director-at-Large, Chapters
Kat Breitenbach, Councilor-at-Large
Karen Lemmons, ALA member and BCALA member
Judi Moreillon, ALA member
Ray Pun, CALA Councilor
Dr. Corinthia Price, ALA Councilor-at-Large
Gail Tobin, ALA Councilor-at-Large
Kara Whatley, ACRL Division Councilor
Elizabeth Nebeker, YALSA Division Councilor
Eric Edwards, 2023-2024 ACRL Chapters Council Chair
Dorcas Hand, Texas Chapter Councilor
Sam Helmick, ALA Councilor
Amanda Jones, Louisiana Chapter Councilor to ALA and AASL Chapter Assembly Delegate

Comparison Spreadsheets by Youth Caucus Council Members

Kat Breitenbach spreadsheet used for reference NOTES in citations below: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1kshWilZ8aYq0eUf5hXr7C97BQsfmfSoiO37iQkY-PCw/edit?usp=sharing

Dorcas Hand subset of the Breitenbach spreadsheet listing states with shared or multiple representation: - https://docs.google.com/document/d/1f_dz7KbJzoa_KsAJ4xilwxpbikVpAtEATUAviJeO1fg/edit?usp=sharing

REFERENCES

American Association of School Librarians. AASL Chapter Directory. (Accessed December 21, 2023). https://www.ala.org/aasl/about/chapters/directory

NOTE: States not represented in AASL Chapters: Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, West Virginia

----. School Library Chapter Information. (Accessed December 21, 2023). https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1fY5SZTag5JuK0MVrYkhkY5YpVP78EZLO2CkVygG0wao/edit#gid=0

ALA. ACRL Chapter Roster. https://www.ala.org/acrl/aboutacrl/directoryofleadership/chapters/roster

NOTE: States not represented in ACRL Chapters: Alaska, Hawaii, Wyoming, DC
NOTE: States with shared or multiple representation:
New England Library Association: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island
Western Pennsylvania/West Virginia ACRL: Pennsylvania, West Virginia
Delaware Valley ACRL: Delaware, Pennsylvania
New York: ACRL OF NY Metro; ACRL Eastern NY ACRL
NOTE: Of states with shared or multiple representation, academic librarians are included in the ALA Chapter organization only in these organizations: Connecticut and Delaware. New York Library Association's ASLS section represents both academic and special libraries; NYLA is an ALA chapter.

----. ALA Chapters Directory. (Accessed December 21, 2023). https://www.ala.org/aboutala/affiliates/chapters/state/stateregional#mpla

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----. Roster of ALA Division and Round Table Councilors. (Accessed December 21, 2023). https://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/council/council_roster/div_round_table_council

----. ALA Public Policy and Advocacy office. (Accessed December 21, 2023). https://www.ala.org/aboutala/offices/ppa