



Summary of PSLA Board Meeting on March 30, 2017.

President's Report

- **HB 740:** On March 7, 2017, HB 740, the “One Certified Librarian Per Public School” bill, was introduced in the PA House of Representatives, with Rep. Mark Longiotti as prime sponsor and Rep. Thomas Murt as co-sponsor. This is an amendment of the Public School Code of 1949 and the reintroduction of a bill introduced during 2015-2016 (HB 1163). PSLA is proud to be supporting this bill, which would help ensure that all of our PA public school students receive the support of a certified school librarian. We do understand that this will be a long process, but one that is extremely valuable and can serve to unite a large part of our membership in a common goal. A handout detailing how librarians and other supporters can get involved will be distributed prior to the keynote address at Conference and will be explained by our special guest, Rep. Thomas Murt. The handout will also be made available in print form at the registration desk for all conference attendees and is available on the PSLA webpage at <http://www.psla.org/membership/psla-legislation/>.
- **Meetings in Harrisburg:** March 21, 2017: Jennifer Bates (PSLA President-Elect) and I met with Kevin Harley from Quantum Communications, our strategic communications firm, and we visited Rep. Eichelberger (House Education Committee Chair) and Sen. Hickernell (Senate Education Committee Chair) to introduce ourselves and the organization and to bring awareness of basic issues in school libraries. As both are new to their chairperson positions, it was important to provide them with knowledge of today's school library functions and needs. It was suggested to both that they arrange visits to school libraries in their districts and they were encouraged to set up hearings in their districts, as Rep. Saylor did in August, to share more information about school libraries with the committees and the public. We visited with Reps. Longiotti and Murt, who are sponsoring HB 740. Both provided updates on their work for the bill and shared their enthusiasm for the endeavor. After we met with Rep. Murt, he suggested that we go to see Rep. Millard, the representative for our own district. We shared information about the status of our local school libraries, as well as HB 740. We had hoped to meet with someone from PSBA (PA School Boards Association) while we were in Harrisburg, but were unable to arrange a mutually available time.
- **Legislation Task Force (Deb Kachel—Legislative Liaison):** A Schoology group “School Library Legislation” has been created to encourage conversation about current and future legislation. This group is public, so anyone can join after creating a free account at Schoology.com. A great deal of information about how to get involved in legislative issues can be found at <http://www.psla.org/membership/psla-legislation/>.
- **Strategic Communications:** PSLA continues to employ Quantum Communications as our strategic communications firm. Quantum organizes and publishes the PSLA newsletter

(<https://paschoollibrariansassociation.wordpress.com/>) and organized the hearing and meetings in Harrisburg. Allison Burrell and Jennifer Bates participate in biweekly conference calls with Kevin Harley and Taylour Trostle from Quantum to discuss updates and plans for upcoming newsletters, meetings, etc. After July 1, Jennifer and Allison Mackley will continue those calls as our officer positions change. This frequent communication between officers and the firm has greatly improved PSLA Board's understanding of PA politics, as well as the quality and quantity of the product that Quantum can offer our organization. Quantum has been instrumental in getting a number of op-ed pieces about the importance of school libraries placed in publications around the state. These op-ed pieces are also included in the newsletter at the link shown above.

- **Regional Leaders Academy:** Entering their fourth year of partnership through LSTA grants, PSLA and the University of Pittsburgh are beginning the Regional Leaders Academy. The 30 members of this academy, representing 22 of the 29 PA Intermediate Units, will engage in a variety of in-person and virtual trainings throughout the coming year to develop their leadership skills and learn how to become key communicators throughout our state. They will serve an important role in disseminating information and professional development to librarians across the state.
- **Staffing Survey 2016-2017:** Great appreciation is expressed to Eileen Kern for once again spearheading the 2016-2017 Staffing Survey, with the help of leaders across the state who assisted with encouraging school districts to submit their surveys. Their hard work resulted in data from all 500 school districts. This data can be invaluable as we talk with the public, administrators, school boards, legislators and other library supporters to demonstrate the current state of school libraries in PA. Several documents have been created from this data and are available on the PSLA website at <http://www.psla.org/publications/psla-publications/>. Eileen is willing to continue to work on the creation and statistical analysis of the staffing survey for the foreseeable future, but wants someone else to take over the information-gathering portion of the task. It is hoped that the Regional Leaders will assist in this process in the coming year.
- **PA PTA Article**
 - Allison Burrell continues to write a bi-monthly article for each issue of the PA PTA newsletter. Jenn Bates and Deb Kachel will write the summer article on the current legislation bill.

ALA Midwinter Report

- Allison Burrell was the AASL Affiliate Assembly Region 2 delegate and spent the majority of her time at the two Affiliate Assembly meetings.
 - Eileen Kern, AASL Vision for Implementing ESSA chair, shared an update on ESSA and showed members how to access AASL's information on ESSA (<http://essa.aasl.org/>).
 - Joyce Valenza was the President's Leadership Development speaker; her presentation was "Defining your 'Why.'"
 - A new slate of candidates for AASL and ALA was presented. All members of AA were encouraged strongly to vote. AASL is one of the largest parts of ALA, but typically has among the lowest voting rates. There is a great collection of AASL members on the

ballot this year. If AASL members get out the vote, we have a much better chance of having our needs and concerns voiced in ALA.

- Jennifer Bates and Allison Mackley will be the Affiliate Assembly delegates for ALA Annual 2017.

PSEA Opportunity

- John Troutman from PSEA, who is the editor of the PSEA member publication *The Voice for Education*, would like to do a cover story about school libraries. A small focus group of librarians will speak with him at the conference about 21st-century libraries and librarians. He is also interested in visiting schools to better understand today's libraries, the role of librarians, and the challenges we are facing.

Old Business

- Staffing Survey 2016-17 Results: New versions are available with different views of the data collected.
- Legislative Updates: Deb Kachel reported on the legislative work she has been doing with HB 740, her work with Kevin Harley, and her outreach efforts via articles on the PSLA blog and resources on the PSLA website.

New Business

- Annual Report for Committees: The Board will revise this report format to make its purpose clear: to provide a summary of the year's activities at the Annual Business Meeting. The section for Board Action will be removed.
- National Library Legislation Day: Kelly Gustafson and Deb Hoover will be attending as PSLA representatives. They will provide a report at the Leadership Summit.
- Basecamp: The board authorized a subscription to Basecamp, a project management tool that will be used for Conference and Board productivity.
- Freedom to Read Foundation Organizational Membership: The Freedom to Read Foundation (FTRF) is a non-profit legal and educational organization affiliated with the American Library Association. FTRF protects and defends the First Amendment to the Constitution and supports the right of libraries to collect - and individuals to access - information. PSLA will become an annual organizational member.
- The Conflict of Interest Policy was updated for accuracy.
- Awards: In order to reflect on the changing landscape of school librarians in PA and to reward people for outstanding accomplishments, Outstanding School Library Program Award (Individual) and Outstanding School Library Program Award (District) will be suspended for one year, which would remove these awards from the 2018 Conference Awards, while the current structure and requirements for these rewards are reviewed.
- The 2018 conference theme was approved: Limitless Learning.