

American Association of School Librarians President's Report, 1994 [woolls]

Blanche Woolls

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(reprinted courtesy of Libraries Unlimited from *School Library Media Annual*, c.1995)

Matching the Presidential theme "Changes," AASL's changes included following a planning grant of \$604,000. ALA/AASL received \$2,800,000 from the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund. AASL staff will administer and provide technical support for the 13 sites of the Library Power Project.

Changes in Staff

1. The Library Power Program funded positions and increased services. Existing staff were given some responsibility for Library Power sites and new members were added in the areas of publications, public relations, and expanded continuing education.

Changes in Committees

2. Two committees were formed, a vision committee and an implementation committee, to start the process for the development of new national guidelines. As the year ended, negotiations were underway to join again with AECT. Past ALA and AASL president Marilyn Miller will serve as coordinator.

3. Two special task forces were named to work with the Research Committee and the Affiliate Assembly. The first task force was charged to encourage replication of the Lance Study.¹ The second, Count on Reading, was to design and implement a free voluntary reading program.

Changes in Statistics

4. Statistics were collected by two agencies. The National Commission on Libraries and Information Science funded a survey of school libraries in 12 states.

5. The AASL Statistics Committee joined the National Center for Education Statistics and the U.S. Bureau of the Census in a discussion of the appropriate analysis of statistics related to staffing, collections, and budgets of school library media centers. These will be published in the biennial School and Staffing Survey (SASS).

Changes in Legislation

6. A legislative campaign was begun to have every member of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives called upon by a school library media specialist. AASL members actively supported H.R.6 and S.266, the School Library Media Act, which had been introduced in the Senate by Paul Simon (Dem., Illinois) and in the House by Jack Reed (Dem., Rhode Island). This would have provided dedicated funding for media programs throughout the country. The AASL president gave these two advocates of good school library media programs the Crystal Apple award.

7. The Affiliate Assembly conducted a special training program in Miami for members of their affiliate organizations. The purpose was to increase the presence of school library media specialists in lobbying with local, state, and national governments.

Changes in Publications

8. A second trial issue of *Connections* was published. It was determined that this would be continued, but it would be folded into the AASL Presidential *Hotline*.

9. Dr. Mary Kay Biagini was reappointed as Editor of *School Library Media Quarterly*.

10. The Follett Company, in cooperation with AASL, provided a user's manual for *Kaleidoscope*.

Changes in Public Awareness

11. AASL received a grant to sponsor a summer institute, funded by the U.S. Department of Education: Meeting in the Middle: Library Media Specialists and Administrators Collaborate.

Have there been enough changes? AASL members are asked to become leaders and change agents in education and librarianship, in recruiting new members to AASL, and in becoming lobbyists. In these areas, Unfortunately, the answer is no. It is critical that AASL members indeed make changes in leadership and advocacy if we are to continue to improve provision of information resources to our students and teachers.

Notes

1. Keith Curry Lance, Lynda Welborn, and Christine Hamilton-Pennell, *The Impact of School Library Media Centers on Academic Achievement* (Castle Rock, CO: Hi Willow Research and Publishing, 1993).