

TO: Shirley Aaron, President of AASL and AASL/ALSC/YASD Executive Committees
FROM: Lucille C. Thomas, Chair, Marian Haines and Roslyn Rubinstein

CHARGE TO THE COMMITTEE:

1. Review the report prepared by AASL/ALSC/YASD Task Force on Alliance for Excellence (Phase I)
2. Make recommendations for future directions.
3. Design a specific plan with a time line.

The Committee Chair received the charge on May 24, 1986. Since that time the committee has met three times:

June 2

June 9

June 16

The committee reviewed Recommendations A - M in Alliance for Excellence and read the reports submitted by the Phase I Committee.

Due to the limited amount of time, we did not establish a time line for each recommendation. However, we feel that the recommendations dealing with research and assessment should receive top priority. Of course AASL is working on the "new" standards at the present time. Many other units in ALA are working in the other areas and we cited a few. However, the plans are not coordinated. Greater use can be made of the leadership, as well as the members, of the affiliates, chapters, etc.

Alliance for Excellence encourages an active attack, urging librarians to "leave behind their isolation and develop more effective interactions with the communities of which they are a part." In addition, we strongly recommend continuing the cooperative efforts of the AASL/ALSC/YASD Executive Committee to promote an increased amount of cooperative planning and programming with emphasis on leadership development.

ALLIANCE FOR EXCELLENCE TASK FORCE

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Council on Library Resources (CLR) should be contacted and encouraged to include grants for research in the area of library services for youth in school and public libraries.
2. (Alternative Recommendation) If CLR is not interested in expanding its program to include the above, establish a counterpart to CLR which will focus on providing grants for research in the area of library services in the area of library services for children and young people.
3. Urge the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) to provide a grant to study the role in promoting literacy at an early age (early literacy) of elementary school library media centers and children's services in public libraries.
4. Assess the level and quality of library services for children and young people in schools and public libraries.

STANDARDS

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Collect information about the existence of state library standards for library services to children and young people in school and public libraries.
2. Identify exemplary library programs.
3. Design an aggressive publicity campaign regarding the standards for school library media centers (upon completion of revision).

LIBRARY AWARENESS/APPRECIATION

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Design a master plan for a library awareness program.
2. Involve teachers, parents, administrators, deans and professors of education and general public.

RECRUITMENT/CONTINUING EDUCATION/STAFF DEVELOPMENT/LIBRARY EDUCATION

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Survey entrance/graduation requirements of library schools.
2. Survey (combine with above survey) library school curricula; analyze in terms of availability of courses in age level work.
3. AASL/ALSC/YASD should establish liaisons with existing groups with similar projects.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS (continued)

SALARIES/WORKING CONDITIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS: Work closely with the ALA Office for Library Personnel Resources and study the Pay Equity Task Force Report.

CERTIFICATION

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Work closely with groups already dealing with professional standards.
2. Study the Carnegie Report, Nation Prepared: Teachers for the Twenty-first Century, to determine how the report can be used to achieve our objectives.

RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT

Recommendation "K" deals with "Leadership through Research and Assessment." It states that "the nation's school library-media centers ... be assessed for their ability to respond to the urgent proposals for excellence in education and lifelong learning." In addition, the report recommends that research be conducted in such vital areas as:

- 1) the information-seeking skills and behavior of children
- 2) why young adults stop using libraries

If school library media centers and library services for youths in public libraries are to meet their obligations in intellectually, economically, and socially appropriate ways, more support for assessment and research is needed.

For twenty-nine years academic libraries have been able to apply to the Council on Library Resources (CLR) for grants. Public libraries have been given support by the Federal government (LSCA, etc.). However, few programs for children and young adults have been funded under LSCA. School libraries have received "little notice" since the demise of categorical aid (ESEA Title II and IVB).

RECOMMENDATION: That the Council on Library Resources be encouraged to include grants for research in the area of library services for youth in school and public libraries.

STRATEGIES

1. Contact CLR regarding the inclusion of youth library services in its regular program
2. Contact foundations which fund CLR. Document the rationale for expanding research grant opportunities in the area of youth library services.
3. Write a proposal for a CLR component which includes youth library services

OR

ALTERNATIVE RECOMMENDATION: The establishment of a counterpart of CLR which will focus on providing grants for research in the area of library services for children and young people in school and public libraries.

STRATEGIES

1. Contact CLR to discuss the organization and implementation of the CLR program.
2. Contact foundations funding CLR. Provide rationale for new organization.
3. Write a proposal to present to the foundations.

ALL OF THE ABOVE IN CONSULTATION WITH ALA OFFICE OF RESEARCH

RATIONALE for Recommendation I and Alternative Recommendation

1. To encourage the investigation of questions related to information and its use in teaching
2. To test and develop alternative methods to providing library services for children and young people (sharing resources)
3. To provide forums for discussion about the future role of libraries and librarians that serve children and young people
4. To strengthen professional education for leadership
5. To investigate and study why some young adults stop using the library
6. To study the information-seeking skills and related behavior of children and young people
7. To encourage independent research by librarians who work with children and young people
8. To determine how library programs for youth contribute to literacy at an early age and life-long learning

Findings of the investigation and research will support new programs or provide new directions for both school and public libraries.

RECOMMENDATION: That the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) provide a grant to study the role in promoting literacy at an early age (early literacy) of elementary school library media centers and children's services in public libraries

STRATEGIES

1. Get information about the Project to study the role in literacy education of secondary schools, community college, academic, public, state and state instutional libraries funded by DEO at the University of Wisconsin at Madison.
2. Contact DOE concerning funding a similar project (1) to study the role in early literacy of libraries for youth.
3. Write a proposal to be submitted to the DOE and/or foundations.

RECOMMENDATION: Assessment of library services for children and young people in schools and public libraries. Repeat assessment at least once each decade.

STRATEGY: Submit proposals to private and/or public funding sources.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATION : Seek advice and assistance from -

1. Office of Research (ALA)
2. AASL Research Committee
3. ALSC Research and Development Committee
4. YASD Research Committee
5. PLA Research Committee
6. PLA Children's Services Committee

STANDARDS

While the standards for school library media programs are being revised find out which states have state standards and how they are being implemented.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Youth Divisions of the American Library Association make a survey to collect information about state standards.

RECOMMENDATION: (Post Standard Revision) That an aggressive publicity campaign be designed to be implemented with the assistance of schools, school districts, public libraries, and library systems. Utilize the assistance of the affiliates and Supervisors' Section.

STRATEGIES

1. Publish a discussion guide to accompany the "Standards."
2. Seek advice and assistance from:
 - a. AASL Standards Committee
 - b. ALA Standards Committee
 - c. PLA and other units

RECOMMENDATION: That the Youth Divisions of the American Library Association identify exemplary library programs

STPATEGIES

1. Establish criteria for exemplary programs.
2. Prepare and publish a directory of exemplary programs in each state.
3. Establish a dialogue with prominent educators (Goodlad, Tyler, etc.), schools of education, etc. Invite them to visit the centers and libraries.
4. Publicize the programs widely.

ALLIANCE FOR EXCELLENCE TASK FORCE

LIBRARY AWARENESS/APPRECIATION

Alliance for Excellence examines the changing role of the library in today's society and makes a number of suggestions and recommendations as to the role the library can play in a "Learning Society" of the future. Services for youth in public libraries and school library media centers are among the first items to perish in a budget cut. In order to maintain current service levels and perhaps even allow for the expansion that is called for by the information boom, we must make fellow professionals, teachers, administrators and the general public aware of what libraries and librarians have to offer. In Alliance for Excellence it is suggested that we must form "an alliance among teachers, education administrators, parents and other citizens, and the nation's librarians." Also, "to achieve their potential, libraries will have to be perceived in a new way. They must be accepted as an integral part of the overall education system in your community, the librarian must be considered an educator as well as a librarian."

There are many library awareness/public relations programs being implemented by units of the American Library Association. However, the programs are not coordinated to provide the maximum benefit.

RECOMMENDATIONS/STRATEGIES

Utilize the expertise and services of the ALA Public Information Office to find out what is being done in the area. With their assistance design a master plan for a library awareness plan and prepare materials which will emphasize the important role of library services for children and young people.

1. brochures
2. kits to be used by affiliates, chapters, parents, etc.
3. TV and radio spots
4. cable television programs
5. speakers bureau (speak at library and non-library programs)

Seek advice and assistance from all groups working in this area.

ALLIANCE FOR EXCELLENCE TASKFORCE

RECRUITMENT/CONTINUING EDUCATION/STAFF DEVELOPMENT /LIBRARY EDUCATION

CONCERN: Library schools must develop and train professionals "with broad general education that is geared to meet the challenges of the Information Age. They must enliven their recruitment, reshape curriculum, and raise to a new level of professionalism the continuing education of their peers in the field."

RECOMMENDATION/STRATEGIES

1. Survey library schools for entrance/graduation requirements; assess and make recommendations.
2. Contact other groups
 - a. ALA Realities Implementation Committee
 - b. ALA Committee on Accreditation
 - c. ALA Standing Committee on Library Education (SCOLE)

CONCERN: As age-level specialists, we are concerned with the dearth of qualified librarians who work with children and young people and with the "chicken-and-egg" situation regarding the lack of courses in library schools on children's and young literature/services.

RECOMMENDATIONS/STRATEGIES

1. Survey (combine with above survey) library school curricula; analyze in terms of availability of courses in age level work, faculty status of professors teaching courses (permanent staff vs. adjunct staff); elective courses vs. required components of program.
2. Establish a Speakers Bureau which will work with counterparts in state and local organizations to set up a structure whereby representatives can speak to library school students about the importance of and excitement of working with young people in school and public libraries.
3. Contact other groups
 - a. ALA Chapters
 - b. ALA Membership Committee
 - c. ALA Chapter Councilors
 - d. PLA Service to Children Committee
 - e. RASD Reference Services to Children and Young Adult Committee
 - f. ALSC Liaison with State Associations
 - g. ALA Realities Committee
 - h. AASL Affiliates

CONCERN: Schools of Education must insure that "candidates for teacher or school administrators receive meaningful instruction in the role and activity of a school library center," as well as the role and activity of the public library and its services to young people."

RECRUITMENT/CONTINUING EDUCATION/STAFF DEVELOPMENT (continued)

RECOMMENDATIONS/STRATEGIES

Outreach to schools of education, survey curriculum and analyze to determine if the role of the library is part of course work; courses required for potential teachers should include the role of the library as part of teaching.

Write a proposal that includes the specifics as to what should be included in courses for potential teachers.

Identify Schools of Education that will implement a pilot project.

Seek the advice and assistance of other organizations:

1. NASSP - National Association of Secondary School Principals
2. NAESP - National Association of Elementary School Principals
3. ASCD - Association of Supervisors and Curriculum Developers
4. ALA Realities Implementations Committee

CONCERN: "Continuing professional development is more of an obligation in librarianship than ever before. Every library and library system should budget annually to cover continuing education costs for professionals and other staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Many groups within and outside ALA are dealing with this concern. AASL/ALSC/YASD should establish liaison and work with existing groups. More joint continuing education programs should be encouraged.

Groups to Contact:

1. ALA Continuing Library Education Network and Exchange Round Table (CLENERT)
2. PLA Education of Public Librarians Committee
3. ALSC Education Committee
4. YASD Education Committee
5. AASL Continuing Education Committee
6. COSLA (Chief Officers of State Library Agencies)
7. LITA and LAMA
8. NASSP & NAESP
9. ALA Realities Implementation Committee

SALARIES/WORKING CONDITIONS

CONCERN: Librarians have always been underpaid. In no other profession that requires the level of education required of librarians is the monetary compensation as poor. "The library community has the obligation not only to campaign for keeping those institutions alive, but also to apply its full strength to recruiting the best and brightest neophytes into this career avenue." Offering salaries commensurate with education, responsibility and implicit societal value of service/expertise offered is an all important first step to this end.

RECOMMENDATIONS/STRATEGIES

On many fronts ALA is exploring the many issues, conflicts, controversies about salaries, comparable worth, pay equity. AASL/ALSC/YASD should establish liaison and work with existing groups.

Groups to contact:

1. ALA Office for Library Personnel Resources
2. Pay Equity Taskforce
4. Realities Implementation Committee

CERTIFICATION

CONCERN: Standards for librarian competency should be enforced.

RECOMMENDATIONS/STRATEGIES

1. Work with groups already dealing with professional standards.
2. Study the Carnegie Report, Nation Prepared: Teachers for the Twenty-first Century. Determine how the report can be used to achieve our objectives.
3. Groups to contact
 - a. ALA Standards Committee
 - b. AASL Standards Committee
 - c. PLA Service to Children Committee
 - d. ALA Chapters

Respectfully submitted,

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Alliance for Excellence Task Force
(Phase II)