Topic: Mega Issue: How Can AASL/ALA enhance its value to prospective members in order to significantly increase membership?

Background: The Affiliate Assembly began discussion of this mega issue at the 2007 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Seattle, WA. It created the knowledge base and identified choices for consideration. The Board is provided with the following information to continue the discussion begun by the Affiliate Assembly, to evaluate the choices outlined, and to determine next steps based on the goals and capacity of the organization (see Mega Issue framework in the Board Orientation Handbook).

Action Required: Exploration

To inform its discussion of the mega issue, "How can ALA/AASL enhance its value to prospective members in order to significantly increase membership?" the Board has the following documents:

a. Report on the Affiliate Assembly Mega Issue Discussion: How can AASL/ALA enhance its value to prospective members in order to significantly increase membership?
b. Report on membership trends, including a comparison with selected other divisions
c. ALA Joint Membership Programs Summary
d. Report on AASL Dropped Members, Jan 06-Mar 07
e. Demographics and non-member participation in AASL activities
f. AASL membership by age

The following materials indicate that almost 70% of AASL membership is 45-64 years old. Although AASL has more retired members than the other divisions, membership drops significantly among those age 65 and older. Growth patterns in divisions with younger demographics have proportionally more members in the support staff and student categories.

Non-members participate in AASL activities. In the pre-Vision Summit survey, 46.8% of respondents were not members of AASL. More than 50% of participants in the AASL e-Academy are not members of the Association.

In addition, between May 11 and May 17, there was a discussion on LM_Net on the value of ALA/AASL membership. Several non-members indicated that they use the AASL Website and get AASL materials through the Affiliates. The reasons posted for failing to join or dropping membership echo those in the Report on Dropped Members:

- The cost of membership
- Perceived value of membership in relation to cost
- Feeling that school library media specialists are neglected by ALA
- Competing associations/affiliates/union dues
- Competing associations meet my needs (primarily state associations)
- Work of ALA is not apparent in daily lives

ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL LIBRARIANS (AASL)

Affiliate Assembly Mega Issue Discussion:
How can AASL/ALA enhance its value to prospective members in order to significantly increase membership?

January 21, 2007

INTRODUCTION

As part of their role as leaders within the school library media profession, the Association of School Librarians (AASL) Affiliate Assembly on January 21, 2007 discussed one of the association's identified mega issue questions.

The AASL Board engaged a meeting facilitator and consultant, Paul D. Meyer, CAE, Principal Partner of Tecker Consultants to assist them in working through a process to identify the possibilities as well as to provide them with insights into what other strategies associations are undertaking to revive their committee structures. The consultant used the "Knowledge-based Decision-making" process to facilitate the dialogue.

The "Knowledge-based Decision-making" process began with the articulation of a question and a series of possible sub-questions that help clarify the issue. The association's Board had previously identified the mega issue question and the leadership agreed that the Affiliate Assembly was the right leadership body to discuss it.

Mega Issue Question:

How can AASL/ALA enhance its value to prospective members in order to significantly increase membership?

The process of "Knowledge-based Decision-making" recognizes two essential elements to form and guide the development of the background information necessary to identify choices that may be pursued in response to the mega issue question:

I. Knowledge-Based Decision - asking four important questions:

Question 1.	What do we know about our members/prospective members/customers - needs, wants, and preferences that are relevant to the issue?
Question 2.	What do we know about the current realties and evolving dynamics of our members' profession that are relevant to the issue?
Question 3.	What do we know about the "capacity" and "strategic position" of our organization that are relevant to the issue?
Question 4.	What are the ethical implications?

II. Dialogue before Deliberation – ensuring the necessary dialogue takes place before final deliberation:

1. Dialogue – to inform and understand. To illuminate what we know and don't know; to identify choices and assess the advantages and disadvantages of each choice; to determine where consensus emerges or what additional information is needed to decide with confidence.

2. Clarifying Information – session participants were encouraged to begin their thoughts with either "I know" when providing facts, "I

believe" when providing personal insights or "I feel" when making a value statement. By using these phrases, other participants were able to better respond to the information given.

3. Deliberation – to evaluate and decide. To select among the options and commit to appropriate action.

It is important to note that all opinions are relevant in this dialogue as long as participants understand the context of an answer. This assists all participants in determining the level of risk they are willing to take in response to the knowledge gathered and assimilated.

The agenda for the discussion provided a rational sequence for the conversation:

- The presentation of the process.
- An understanding of the mega issue and a formulation of the "mega issue question" and its relevance to the association.
- Dialogue around the four knowledge-based questions listed above.
- Identification of choices and final deliberation on the impact of those choices on the association.
- The articulation of "Next Steps" that guide future actions necessary to move decisions forward.

Meeting participants were asked to consider this mega issue in the context of a 5-8 year planning horizon.

CREATION OF THE KNOWLEDGE BASE

A background paper was prepared by a task force of volunteer leaders using the four knowledge-based questions. Their responses to the questions plus the modifications provided by the Affiliate Assembly are listed below.

Mega Issue Question:

How can AASL/ALA enhance its value to prospective members in order to significantly increase membership?

Background Information:

QUESTION #1: **What do we know about our members/prospective members/customers - needs, wants, and preferences that are relevant to the issue?**

- Advocacy, a high priority for current membership, will also be important to prospective members.
- Many affiliate organizations have members who belong to their state association but are not members of AASL/ALA.

- One obstacle seems to be the price of membership for some; they cannot afford to belong to both their affiliate and AASL/ALA.
- Members want materials and resources that come with AASL/ALA membership.
- Many school librarians are entering the profession by non-traditional paths and do not have adequate knowledge of the associations available to join or the advantages in joining.
- Teachers and librarians are not encouraged by their employers to join their professional associations.
- Many librarians are isolated from their peers at similar institutions in their school districts, and association members don't have the opportunity or the time to commend the advantages of joining to non-members.
- Many librarians are earning their degrees in online programs which may not foster the need for community and support.
- Many librarians are not going to do anything or join anything that they are not required to join.
- Many librarians become so isolated that they forget the need for community and support.
- Many librarians are not members of their state association.
- Most members of AASL are members of their state association.
- Most librarians are in their second career and many are nearing retirement age.

QUESTION #2: What do we know about current realities and evolving dynamics of our member's environment that is relevant to this issue?

- Most librarians feel stretched to the limit by their jobs and do not feel they have time to contribute to an organization.
- Many young teachers and librarians coming right out of school do not feel they have the money to join a professional association and therefore do not join.
- Many librarians have good intentions of joining, but they just never get around to it. As the years pass and they do their jobs without being members, they just never see a need to join.
- Many librarians are so overwhelmed with mail that they never have time to look at association information and brochures.
- There is tremendous competition for membership dollars from other organizations that have similar value for some members in our profession (ISTE, IRA, and their local affiliates as examples).
- Budgets are so tight that many librarians feel guilty if they spend any flexible library money to join an association when they could use the money to buy books or other library materials.
- Most school systems do not provide funds for employees to join professional associations.
- Some librarian preparation programs may not be stressing the need to join professional associations.

- Many librarians see the conference as the only advantage to association membership. When administrators will not give them release time to attend conferences, they see no reason to join the association.
- There is a gap between what librarians believe is important for the association to be doing and their perceptions of what the association is doing.
- The population of the country is growing fastest in the South and in the West which may affect the location of programs.

QUESTION #3: What do we know about the "capacity" and "strategic position" of our organization that is relevant to this issue?

- AASL has almost 10,000 members. There are approximately 78,000 school librarians in the United States.
- AASL is the largest professional association for school librarians in the United States.
- AASL is the most influential professional association for school librarians in the U.S.
- Of the divisions of ALA, AASL is the most likely to advocate for school librarians.
- As a division of ALA, AASL works with the ALA Washington Office to develop positions on federal legislation. AASL participates in the National Library Legislative Day.
- AASL has an active Affiliate Assembly that reaches members and prospective members throughout most of the states.
- Not every state has an active affiliate in Affiliate Assembly.
- AASL will begin conducting a survey to collect longitudinal data on school libraries and librarians this year.
- AASL has limited staff and resources to expand membership recruitment efforts.
- One of the goals of the AASL strategic plan is to make AASL a vibrant, inclusive, accessible, and supportive community for school library media specialists by increasing the number of members involved in AASL and increasing SLMS's understanding and value of AASL.
- AASL's website contains valuable information, toolkits, and resources for school librarians.
- AASL is reaching out to members through technology by establishing online communities, blogs, wikis, etc., which can be used to further increase communication among members.

QUESTION #4: What are ethical implications of our choices?

- AASL/ALA is in a unique position to advocate for members of the library profession.
- As decisions are made about time and money, it should be asked, who might be disenfranchised by the decisions?

- Is it right to use a significant percentage of dues to promote membership to nonmembers? For example,
    - Is it right to create a new project in which a small percentage of the membership will participate?
    - Is it right to spend money to bring in new members when there is a growing demographic of long time members who have served the organization well for many years?

CREATION OF CHOICES

Using the knowledge-base outlined above, the meeting participants brainstormed possible choices that are available in responding to the mega issue question.

Possible choices include:

1. Stay the same
2. **Expand what we're doing – more direct contact and interaction with state affiliates**
3. **Increase collaboration with organizations with regard to shared programs**
4. Compare benefits of this organization with other such organizations
5. **Expand the format of communication and improve the existing forms**
6. **Increase networking opportunities to identify best practices**
7. **Pinpoint our relevancy**
8. Greater opportunity for active involvement in organization
9. Provide some services to prospective members (Website, blog, etc.)
10. **Increase partnership in area of dues**
11. **Target active recruitment while in prep programs**

In reviewing the above list, meeting participants were asked to identify those choices that seemed most appropriate to pursue and those choices are identified in bold within the above list.

Next, small groups discussed the advantages and disadvantages of each choice and created recommendations:

I. More direct contact and interaction with state affiliates

- **Advantages:** A visit by an AASL officer usually will percolate interest in group, shows interest in affiliate, increases the visibility to prospective members, increases communication between state affiliate and AASL, provides personal connection, provides time for AASL to hear affiliate's needs, and helps strengthen affiliates
- **Disadvantages:** Time, money, travel and it is difficult to measure the impact on membership

II. Increase collaboration with other professional organizations with regards to shared programs

- **Advantages:** Mutual discounts, cross marketing, shared standards aligned and promoted, builds relationships across professions, draws new members from other organizations and broaden mind sets
- **Disadvantages:** Could neutralize some funding, lose focus on our own memberships' needs, could lose members to other organizations and there could be difficulty in dealing with established rules and regulations

III. Expand the format of communication and improve the existing forms

- **Advantages:** Establish name recognition, provides members with another method of talking back, target specific audience, find gaps, many channels to pick from, get message out and hit hard
- **Disadvantages:** Too much information may cause members to ignore/delete it, difficulty in measuring effectiveness of communication, identifying audience, cost and time

IV. Increase networking opportunities to identify best practices

- **Advantages:** Increases knowledge base, recognizes good programs, support of peers, a blog could be established, increased opportunities for networking
- **Disadvantages:** If sharing online isn't utilized this could be reflected negatively, who should decide what best practices are, would need monitoring and poses a high risk if potential members don't see relevance in shared information

V. Relevancy

- **Potential Advantages:** creates vibrant organization, directly connects to membership, common message, opportunity for growth, talking points established, creates proactive and reflective organization and allows for potential to streamline services
- **Potential Disadvantages:** risky, hard, money and manpower, need to define target market, could alienate the entrenched and could reaffirm our irrelevancy

VI. Increase partnership with other organizations (both in and outside of ALA)

- **Advantages:** Coordinate conference calendars, prevents information duplication on website, increases AASL advocacy in ALA, attractive to new members
- **Disadvantages:** publication costs still exist, may pull volunteer hours from AASL, working w/other divisions within ALA may be more difficult than working with other organizations outside of ALA

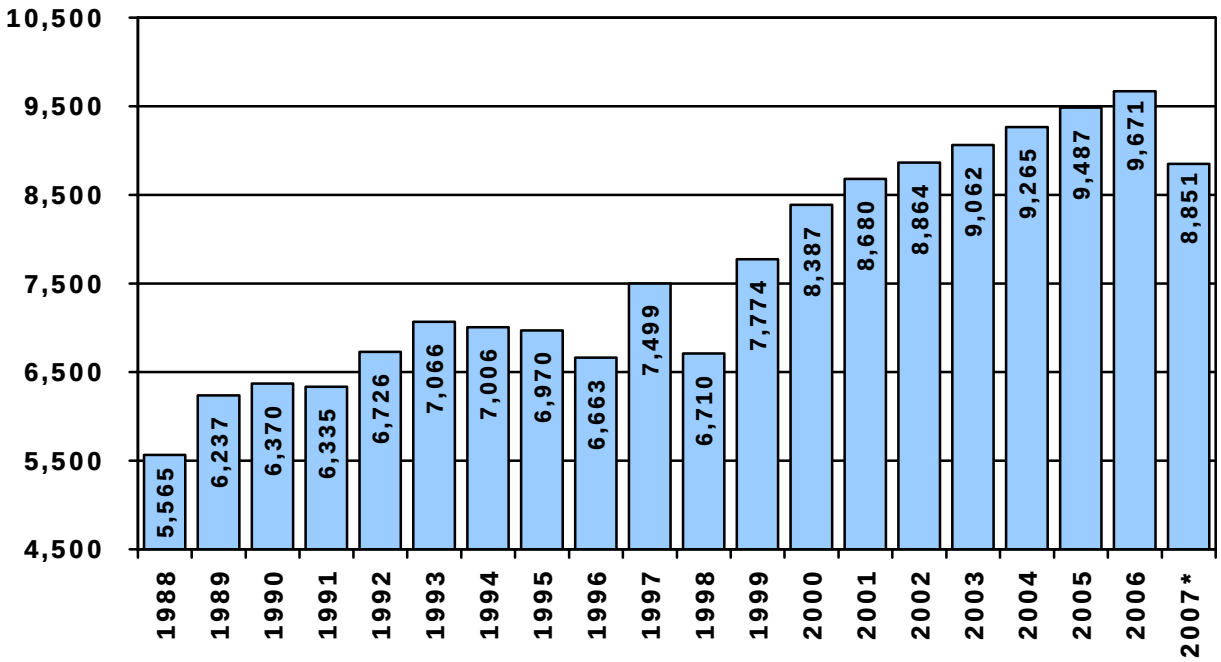
VII. Target active recruitment while in prep programs

- **Advantages:** Get them early – target audience, fairly easy to identify SLIS faculty working with pre-service SLMS members, membership discount as a student member
- **Disadvantages:** time and disproportionate, potentially a disconnect to AASL because of need to join ALA **and** AASL. May join ALA, but not realize need to join AASL and therefore not receive benefits

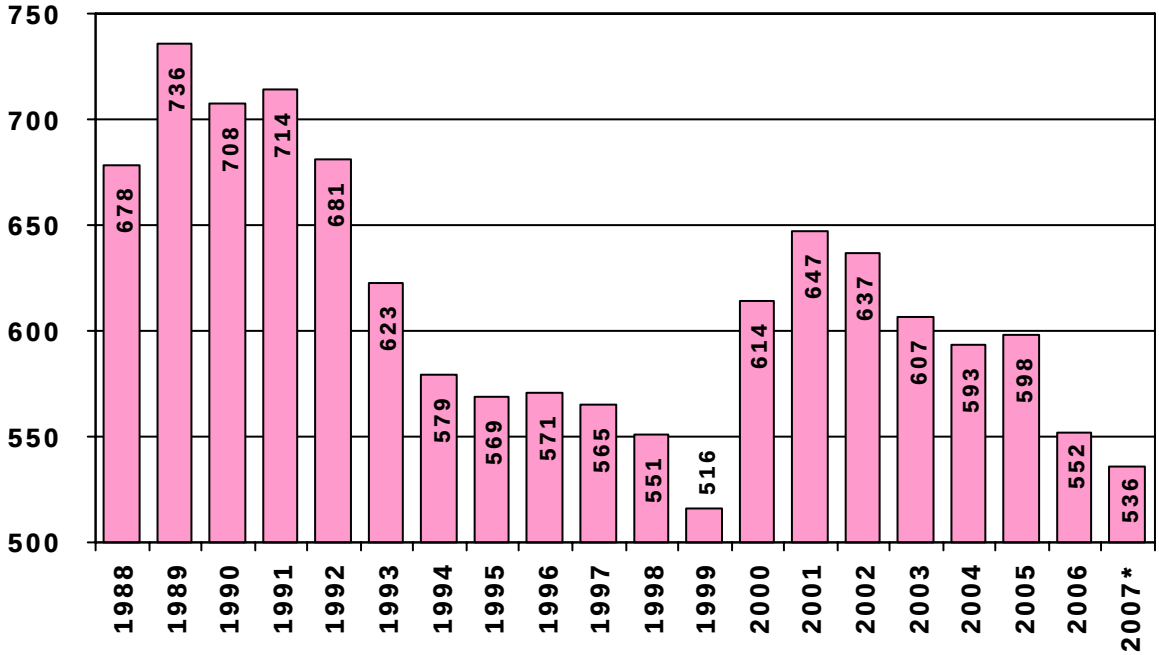
NEXT STEPS

The Affiliate Assembly's work will be considered by the AASL Executive Committee and staff and next steps will be identified.

AASL Personal Membership Trends 1988-2006

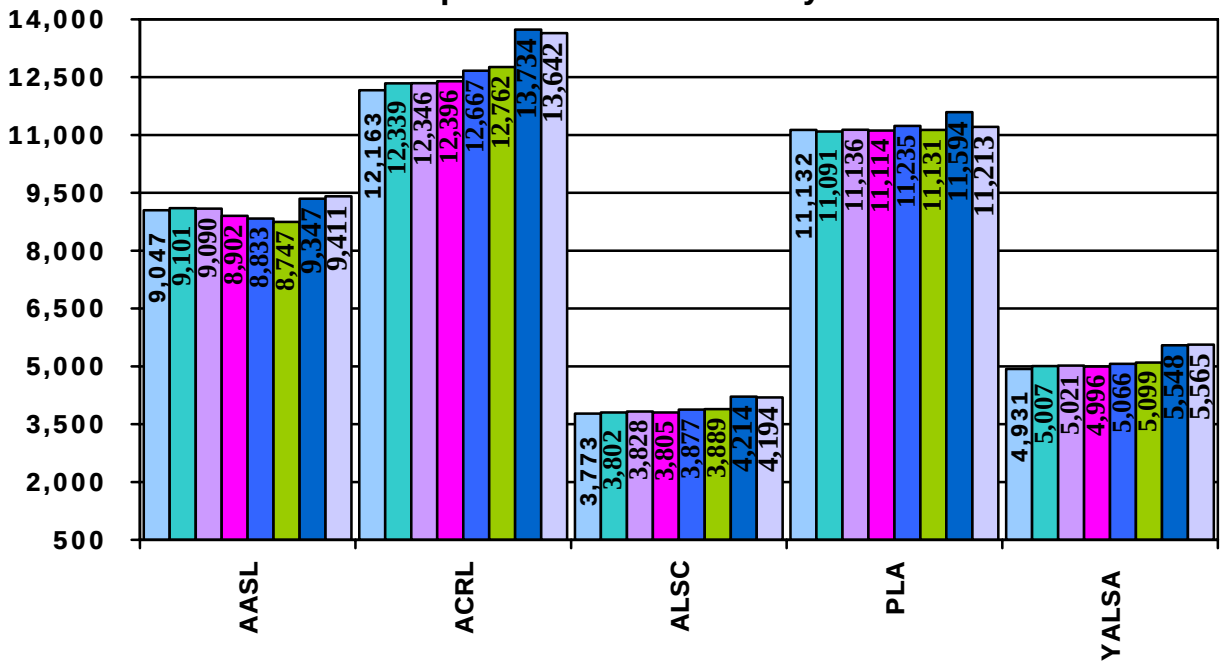


Organizational Membership Trends 1988-2006

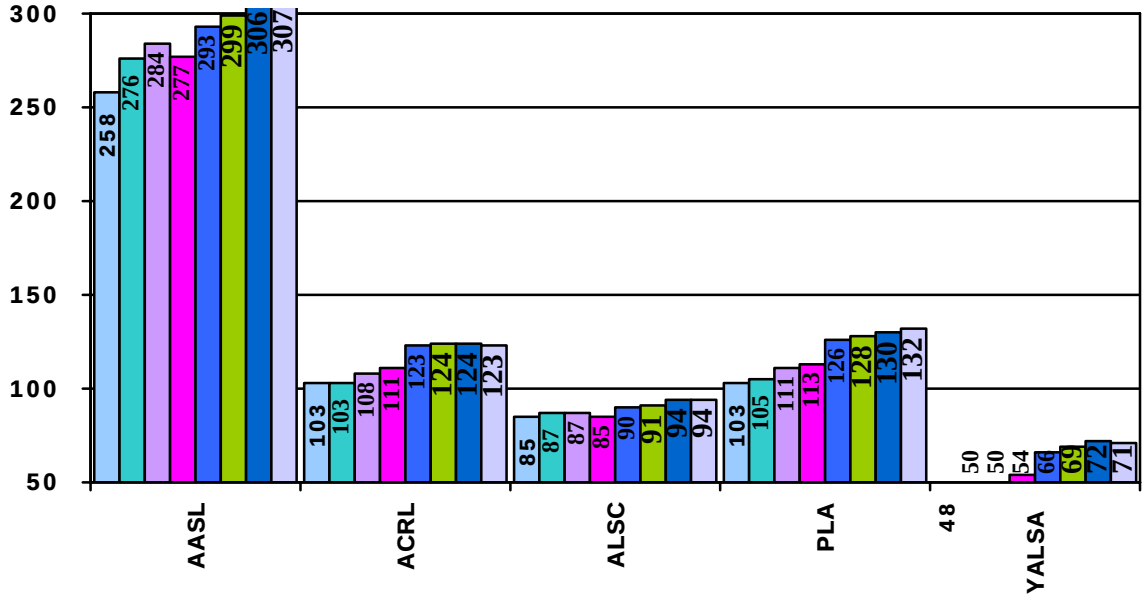


*As of April 2007

Division Personal Membership Comparison
September 06 - February 07



Division Retired Membership Comparison
September 06 - February 07



Division Student Membership Comparison
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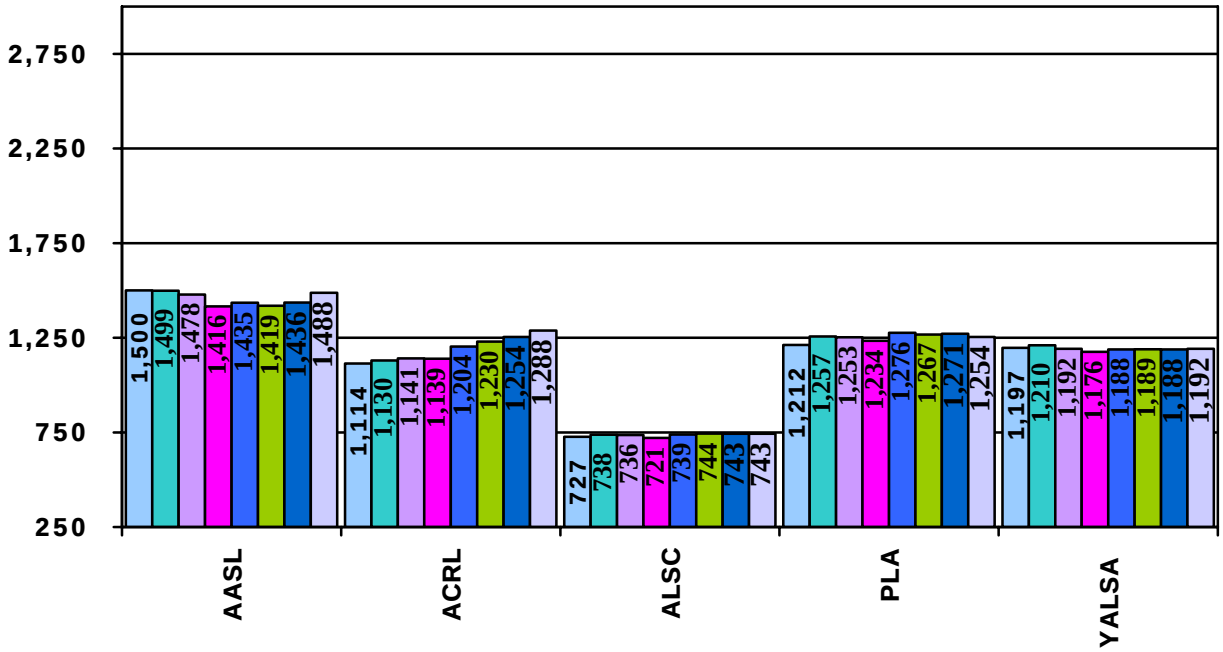
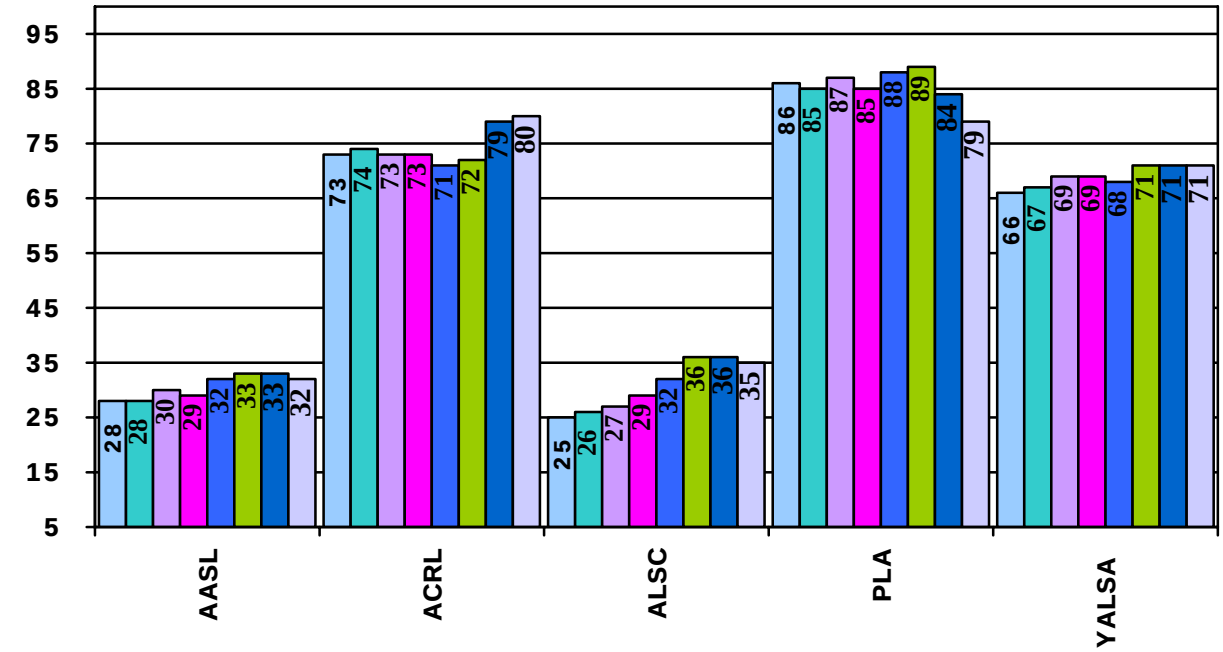
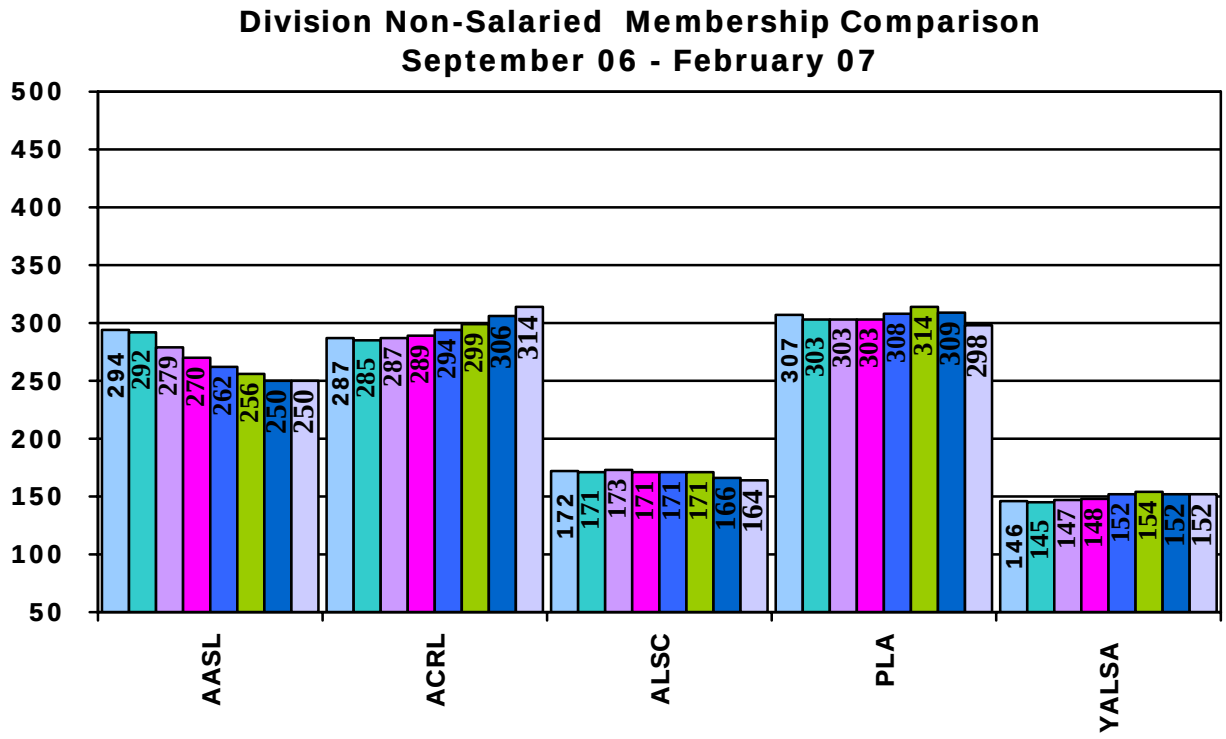


Division Support Staff Membership Comparison
September 06 - February 07





Data Trends

AASL membership is increasing each month. This is likely due in part to the Reno conference registration and a couple of targeted recruitment mailings (New NBCTS and district administrators/supervisors). According to the numbers AASL has more student and retired members than any other division and is proportionately equal to other divisions in the category of non-salaried members.

ALA Joint Membership Programs Summary

Midwinter 20007 - Seattle

	State	Category	MW 2007 Joint Members	MW 2006 Joint Members	Change Between MW 2006 and MW 2007	Total ALA Members by State in Jan 2007	Joint Members as % of ALA Members by State Jan 2007
Support Staff							
	Alabama	LS-AL Count	22	21	1	22	100%
	Kansas	LS-KS Count	30	18	12	47	64%
	Massachusetts	LS-MA Count	41	14	27	72	57%
	New York	LS-NY Count	40	8	32	77	52%
TOTAL			133			218	61%

Students							
	California	ST-CA Count	534	647	-113	926	58%
	Florida	ST-FL Count	164	130	34	439	37%
	Georgia	ST-GA Count	74	85	-11	206	36%
	Hawaii	ST-HI Count	68	88	-20	87	78%
	Massachusetts	ST-MA Count	85	128	-43	280	30%
	Michigan	ST-MI Count	247	286	-39	447	55%
	New Jersey	ST-NJ Count	195	239	-44	299	65%
	New York	ST-NY Count	594	673	-79	1044	57%
	Oregon	ST-OR Count	94	102	-8	130	72%
	Rhode Island	ST-RI Count	24	19	5	74	32%
	Texas	ST-TX Count	155	53	102	435	36%
	Washington	ST-WA Count	117	138	-21	208	56%
	Wisconsin	ST-WI Count	103	136	-33	209	49%

Report on AASL Dropped Members
Jan 06 – Mar 07

Total Dropped Memberships: 3,421

Exit Surveys Returned: 116

Reasons for dropping membership
Retired: 46
No longer working as SLMS: 28
Dues exceed budget: 52
Personal/District/School cutbacks: 9
Another assoc meets my needs: 11 (see below)
Not satisfied with membership: 5

Other Associations:

- Colorado Assoc. of Librarians
- Colorado Assoc of School Librarians
- Rhode Island Education Media Assoc.
- SLMS- New York (NYLA)
- Virginia Library Assoc, Virginia Educational Media Assoc
- Pennsylvania School Librarians Assoc
- YALSA and Assoc of Independent School Librarians
- North Carolina School Library Media Assoc and Christian Educations Association International
- Texas Library Assoc
- ALSC
- Wisconsin Education Media Assoc.
- National Education Assoc.

Comments:

- Did not pursue renewing after first attempt online failed
- Too liberal
- Journals were interesting, but not very useful to me
- Position stretched too thin in district
- I have an organizational membership; don't see why I should pay for *American Libraries* twice
- Don't want to belong to ALA
- ALA too oriented towards public sector
- KQ difficult to read; articles need to be lighter
- Benefits do not mean enough to me or my money

- KQ was sporadic; lack of communication from AASL
- Did not find KQ useful
- AASL should do more advocacy to improve position, recognition, professional consideration
- Difficult to be involved—cliquish, rigid organizational structure
- Programs geared more towards those with their degrees; leaves no room for those who have experience and are still working on their degree
- No support from AASL during 5-year search for employment
- It has lost value to me; I can get information I need for free, why pay? I had trouble with password and the sites being active. Have no desire for membership ever again. I would rather buy books with the money.
- Need more young people in school libraries, need more national recognition of importance of school librarians. Need school librarians who are teachers first. Need presence of school librarians in teacher education programs.
- Combined with ALA dues, membership is rather expensive. Any chance we could join AASL without paying full fare for ALA?
- Membership is too high compared to what I'm getting. AASL needs to be more proactive at the state and local levels to promote school libraries. We're losing a lot in this state (Ohio).

Demographics and Non-member participation in AASL activities

Pre-Vision Summit survey

Total Respondents: 3,479

Members vs. nonmembers: 53.2% / 46.8%

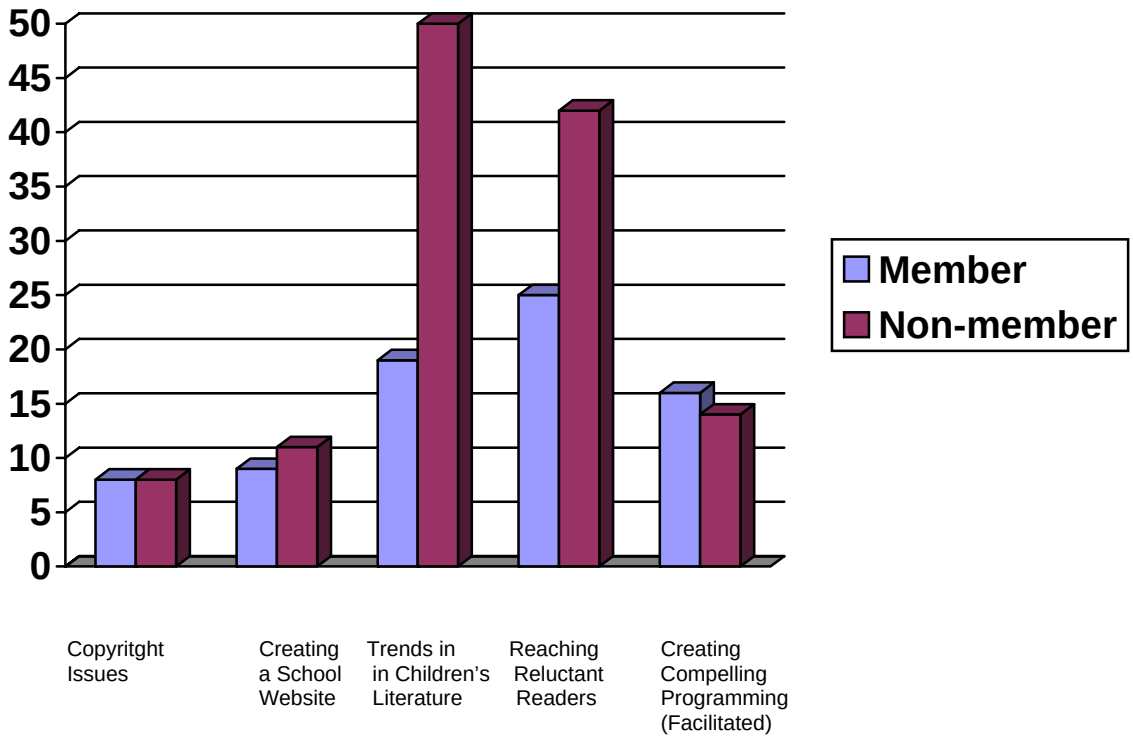
Age of respondents:

18-24	0.5%
25-34	8.6%
35-44	15.7%
45-54	37.8%
55-64	35.5%
65+	2.0%

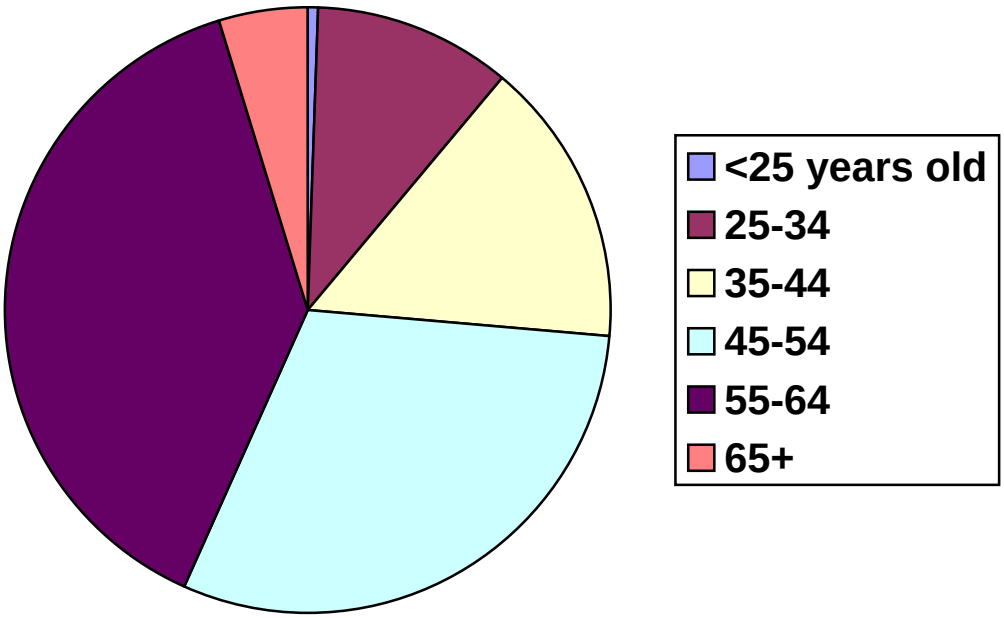
Years in profession:

Student	2.4%
0-2 yrs	9.5%
3-5 yrs	16.1%
6-10 yrs	20.1%
11-15 yrs	14.7%
16-20 yrs	11.3%
21+	25.9%

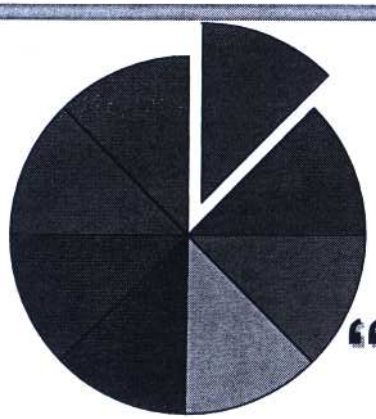
Member / Non-member participation in AASL e-Academy online course
Fall 2006 and Spring 2007



ALA Member Demographic Survey
AASL Membership by Age



<25 years old	0.5%
25-35 years old	10.5%
35-44 years old	15%
45-54 years old	30.5%
55-64 years old	38.5%
65+ years old	5%



Customer Sector: What We See Today

"The Elusive "Member Value"

(Associations will need to better determine whether value is truly being received)

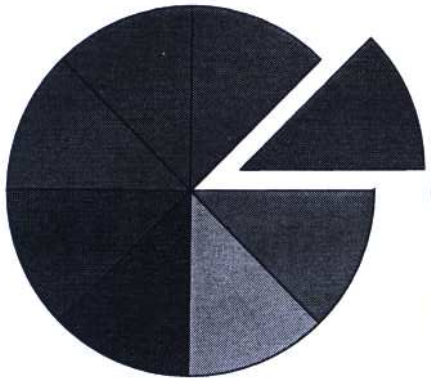
Members are being increasingly judicious in the use of their limited time, and the demand for value has less to do with dollars, and more to do with the investment of time. With additional travel hassles, work and family pressures, etc,. members need to see real value in their attendance or participation. They will not read journals, magazines, newsletters, etc, unless they contain invaluable information. In professional associations, it is also increasingly difficult to establish meaningful links between the value of service to the association and the value of that same service to the member's employer.

Significance to our organization: ___much ____some ___little ____none

Implications for our organization:_____

_____

_____



Competitor Sector: What We See Today

"Who What When"

(Associations will need to focus on not just the what but the when, in order to compete with increasingly association savvy for profit competitors)

Having a stream of meaningful member data that allows associations to better understand their members' worlds, anticipate their needs, and know when to suggest meaningful products, services and experiences, is an essential factor for success. And, targeting information *when* members need it helps an association gain a reputation for relevance in their members' eyes.

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Implications for our organization:_____

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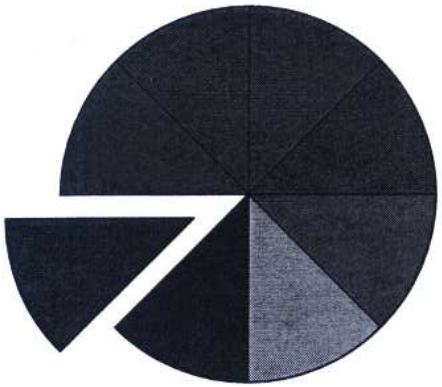

Technological Sector: What We See Today

"Competition From Cyberspace"

(The web is replacing associations as the preferred source of instantaneous and relevant information)

There is increased willingness and ability on the part of members to use the web to instantly search for solutions to needs that traditionally they depended on their association to source. Google and Ask, for example, are becoming major sources of instantaneous information on which many rely.

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Implications for our organization:_____

_____

_____

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ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL LIBRARIANS (AASL)

Affiliate Assembly Mega Issue Discussion:
How can AASL/ALA enhance its value to prospective members in order to significantly increase membership?

January 21, 2007

INTRODUCTION

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CREATION OF THE KNOWLEDGE BASE

A background paper was prepared by a task force of volunteer leaders using the four knowledge-based questions. Their responses to the questions plus the modifications provided by the Affiliate Assembly are listed below.

Mega Issue Question:

How can AASL/ALA enhance its value to prospective members in order to significantly increase membership?

Background Information:

QUESTION #1: **What do we know about our members/prospective members/customers - needs, wants, and preferences that are relevant to the issue?**

- Advocacy, a high priority for current membership, will also be important to prospective members.
- Many affiliate organizations have members who belong to their state association but are not members of AASL/ALA.

- One obstacle seems to be the price of membership for some; they cannot afford to belong to both their affiliate and AASL/ALA.
- Members want materials and resources that come with AASL/ALA membership.
- Many school librarians are entering the profession by non-traditional paths and do not have adequate knowledge of the associations available to join or the advantages in joining.
- Teachers and librarians are not encouraged by their employers to join their professional associations.
- Many librarians are isolated from their peers at similar institutions in their school districts, and association members don't have the opportunity or the time to commend the advantages of joining to non-members.
- Many librarians are earning their degrees in online programs which may not foster the need for community and support.
- Many librarians are not going to do anything or join anything that they are not required to join.
- Many librarians become so isolated that they forget the need for community and support.
- Many librarians are not members of their state association.
- Most members of AASL are members of their state association.
- Most librarians are in their second career and many are nearing retirement age.

QUESTION #2: What do we know about current realities and evolving dynamics of our member's environment that is relevant to this issue?

- Most librarians feel stretched to the limit by their jobs and do not feel they have time to contribute to an organization.
- Many young teachers and librarians coming right out of school do not feel they have the money to join a professional association and therefore do not join.
- Many librarians have good intentions of joining, but they just never get around to it. As the years pass and they do their jobs without being members, they just never see a need to join.
- Many librarians are so overwhelmed with mail that they never have time to look at association information and brochures.
- There is tremendous competition for membership dollars from other organizations that have similar value for some members in our profession (ISTE, IRA, and their local affiliates as examples).
- Budgets are so tight that many librarians feel guilty if they spend any flexible library money to join an association when they could use the money to buy books or other library materials.
- Most school systems do not provide funds for employees to join professional associations.
- Some librarian preparation programs may not be stressing the need to join professional associations.

- Many librarians see the conference as the only advantage to association membership. When administrators will not give them release time to attend conferences, they see no reason to join the association.
- There is a gap between what librarians believe is important for the association to be doing and their perceptions of what the association is doing.
- The population of the country is growing fastest in the South and in the West which may affect the location of programs.

QUESTION #3: What do we know about the "capacity" and "strategic position" of our organization that is relevant to this issue?

- AASL has almost 10,000 members. There are approximately 78,000 school librarians in the United States.
- AASL is the largest professional association for school librarians in the United States.
- AASL is the most influential professional association for school librarians in the U.S.
- Of the divisions of ALA, AASL is the most likely to advocate for school librarians.
- As a division of ALA, AASL works with the ALA Washington Office to develop positions on federal legislation. AASL participates in the National Library Legislative Day.
- AASL has an active Affiliate Assembly that reaches members and prospective members throughout most of the states.
- Not every state has an active affiliate in Affiliate Assembly.
- AASL will begin conducting a survey to collect longitudinal data on school libraries and librarians this year.
- AASL has limited staff and resources to expand membership recruitment efforts.
- One of the goals of the AASL strategic plan is to make AASL a vibrant, inclusive, accessible, and supportive community for school library media specialists by increasing the number of members involved in AASL and increasing SLMS's understanding and value of AASL.
- AASL's website contains valuable information, toolkits, and resources for school librarians.
- AASL is reaching out to members through technology by establishing online communities, blogs, wikis, etc., which can be used to further increase communication among members.

QUESTION #4: What are ethical implications of our choices?

- AASL/ALA is in a unique position to advocate for members of the library profession.
- As decisions are made about time and money, it should be asked, who might be disenfranchised by the decisions?

- Is it right to use a significant percentage of dues to promote membership to nonmembers? For example,
    - Is it right to create a new project in which a small percentage of the membership will participate?
    - Is it right to spend money to bring in new members when there is a growing demographic of long time members who have served the organization well for many years?

CREATION OF CHOICES

Using the knowledge-base outlined above, the meeting participants brainstormed possible choices that are available in responding to the mega issue question.

Possible choices include:

1. Stay the same
2. **Expand what we're doing – more direct contact and interaction with state affiliates**
3. **Increase collaboration with organizations with regard to shared programs**
4. Compare benefits of this organization with other such organizations
5. **Expand the format of communication and improve the existing forms**
6. **Increase networking opportunities to identify best practices**
7. **Pinpoint our relevancy**
8. Greater opportunity for active involvement in organization
9. Provide some services to prospective members (Website, blog, etc.)
10. **Increase partnership in area of dues**
11. **Target active recruitment while in prep programs**

In reviewing the above list, meeting participants were asked to identify those choices that seemed most appropriate to pursue and those choices are identified in bold within the above list.

Next, small groups discussed the advantages and disadvantages of each choice and created recommendations:

I. More direct contact and interaction with state affiliates

- **Advantages:** A visit by an AASL officer usually will percolate interest in group, shows interest in affiliate, increases the visibility to prospective members, increases communication between state affiliate and AASL, provides personal connection, provides time for AASL to hear affiliate's needs, and helps strengthen affiliates
- **Disadvantages:** Time, money, travel and it is difficult to measure the impact on membership

II. Increase collaboration with other professional organizations with regards to shared programs

- **Advantages:** Mutual discounts, cross marketing, shared standards aligned and promoted, builds relationships across professions, draws new members from other organizations and broaden mind sets
- **Disadvantages:** Could neutralize some funding, lose focus on our own memberships' needs, could lose members to other organizations and there could be difficulty in dealing with established rules and regulations

III. Expand the format of communication and improve the existing forms

- **Advantages:** Establish name recognition, provides members with another method of talking back, target specific audience, find gaps, many channels to pick from, get message out and hit hard
- **Disadvantages:** Too much information may cause members to ignore/delete it, difficulty in measuring effectiveness of communication, identifying audience, cost and time

IV. Increase networking opportunities to identify best practices

- **Advantages:** Increases knowledge base, recognizes good programs, support of peers, a blog could be established, increased opportunities for networking
- **Disadvantages:** If sharing online isn't utilized this could be reflected negatively, who should decide what best practices are, would need monitoring and poses a high risk if potential members don't see relevance in shared information

V. Relevancy

- **Potential Advantages:** creates vibrant organization, directly connects to membership, common message, opportunity for growth, talking points established, creates proactive and reflective organization and allows for potential to streamline services
- **Potential Disadvantages:** risky, hard, money and manpower, need to define target market, could alienate the entrenched and could reaffirm our irrelevancy

VI. Increase partnership with other organizations (both in and outside of ALA)

- **Advantages:** Coordinate conference calendars, prevents information duplication on website, increases AASL advocacy in ALA, attractive to new members
- **Disadvantages:** publication costs still exist, may pull volunteer hours from AASL, working w/other divisions within ALA may be more difficult than working with other organizations outside of ALA

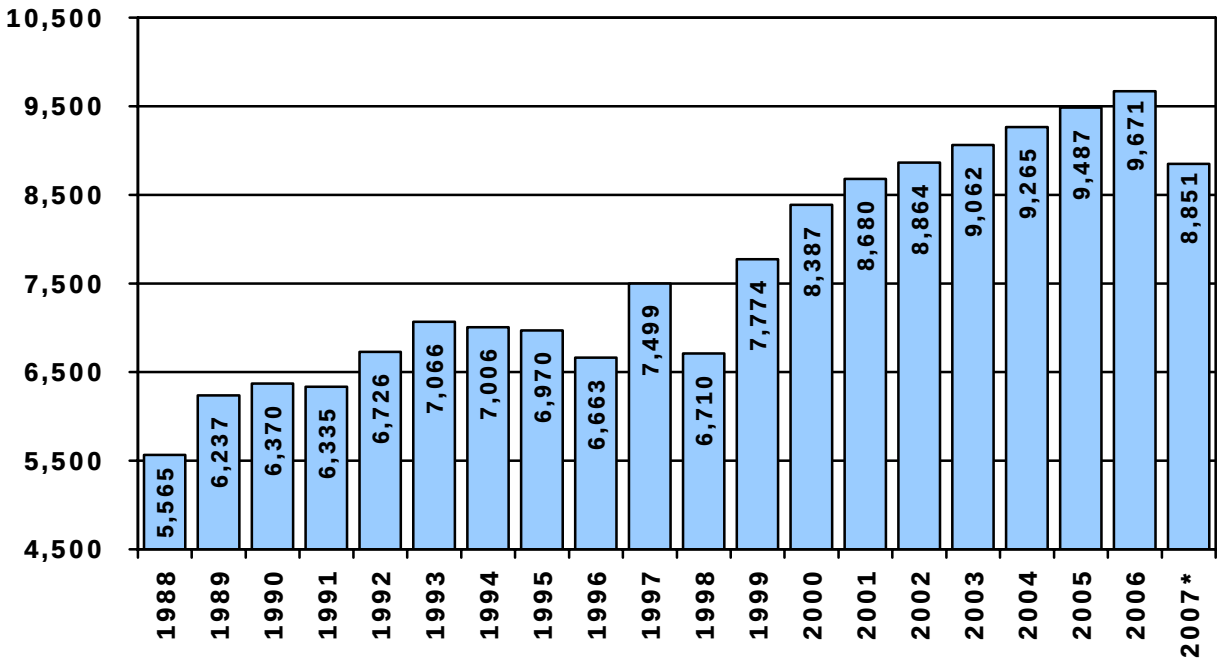
VII. Target active recruitment while in prep programs

- **Advantages:** Get them early – target audience, fairly easy to identify SLIS faculty working with pre-service SLMS members, membership discount as a student member
- **Disadvantages:** time and disproportionate, potentially a disconnect to AASL because of need to join ALA **and** AASL. May join ALA, but not realize need to join AASL and therefore not receive benefits

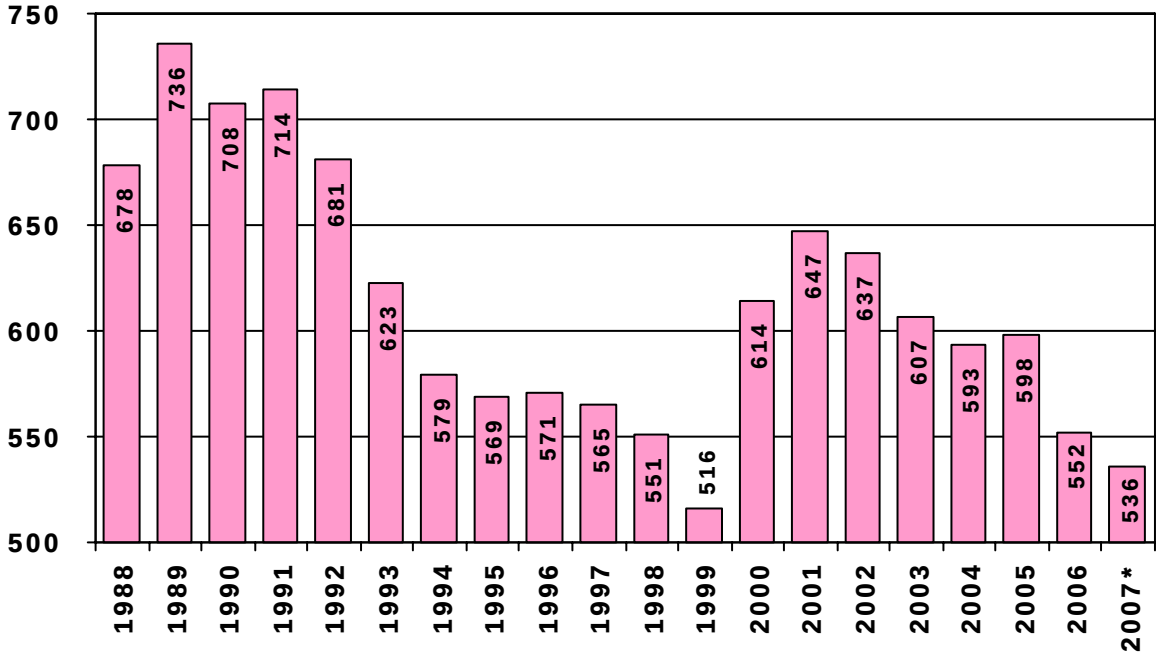
NEXT STEPS

The Affiliate Assembly's work will be considered by the AASL Executive Committee and staff and next steps will be identified.

AASL Personal Membership Trends 1988-2006

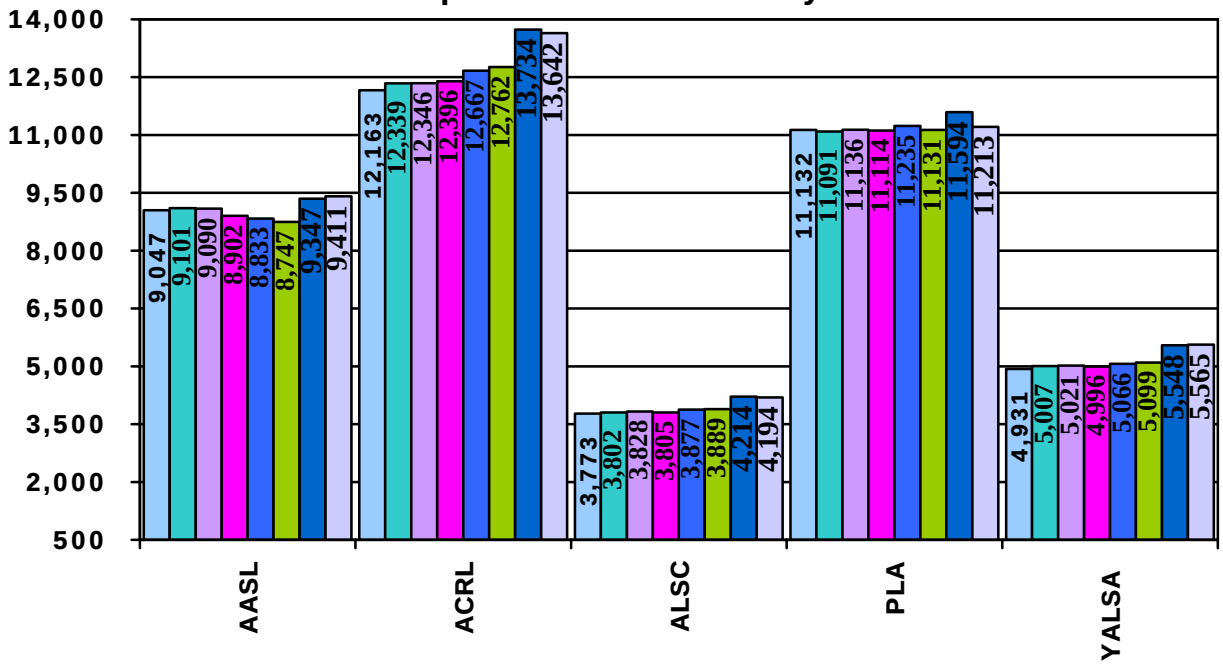


Organizational Membership Trends 1988-2006

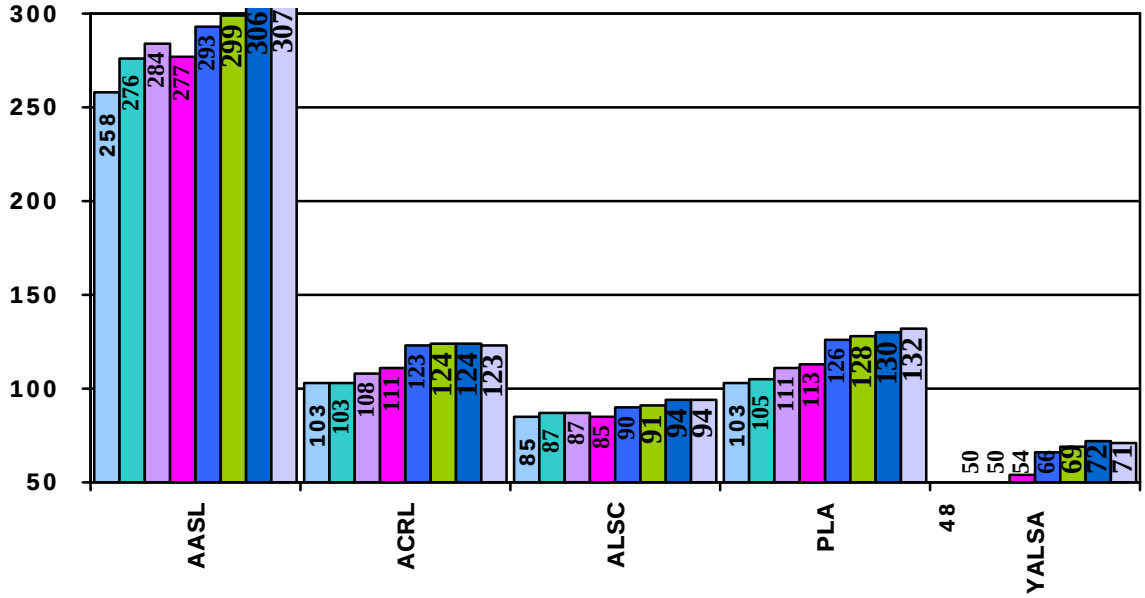


*As of April 2007

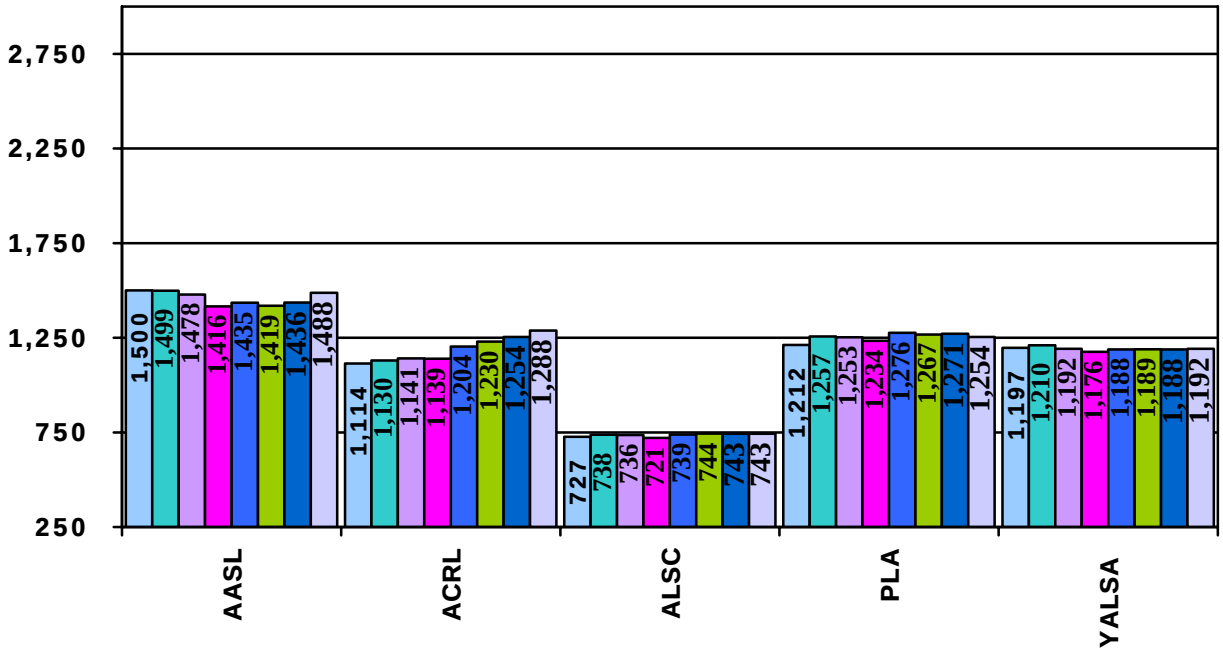
Division Personal Membership Comparison
September 06 - February 07



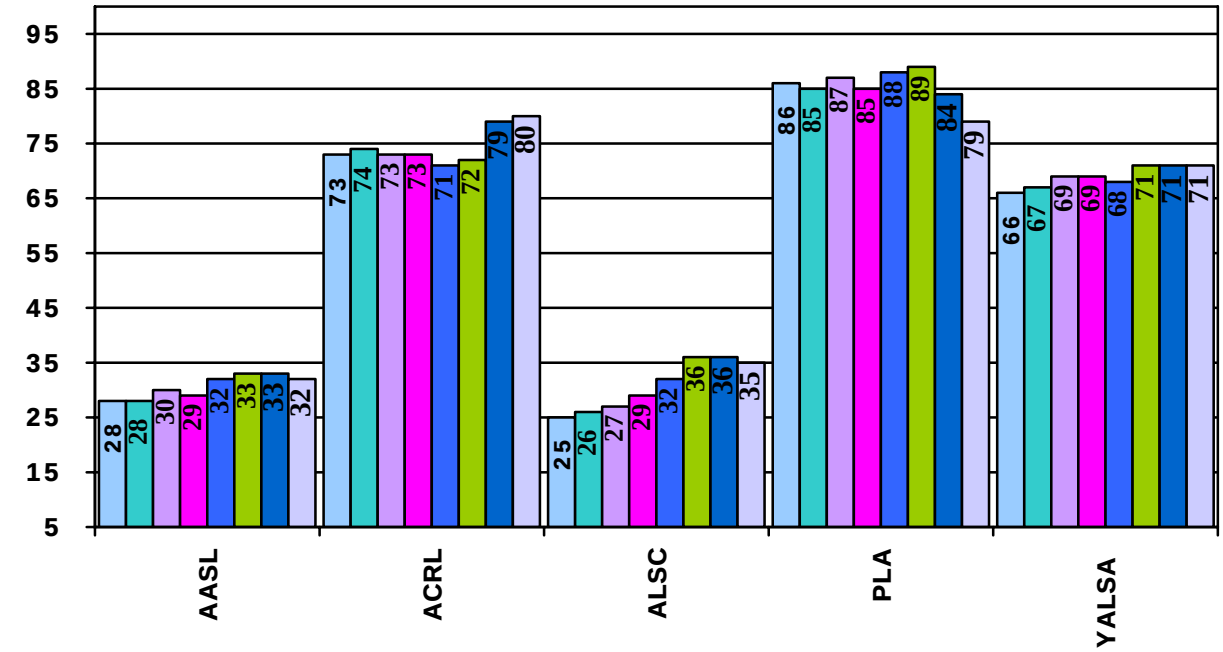
Division Retired Membership Comparison
September 06 - February 07

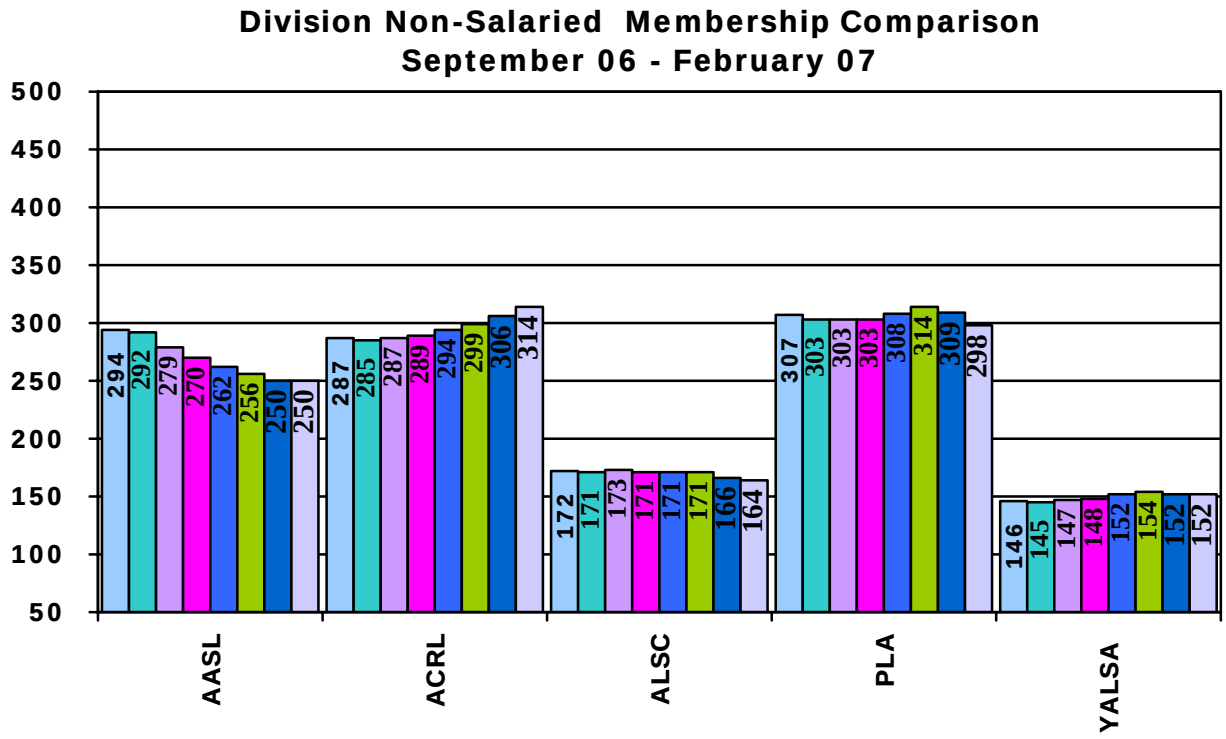


Division Student Membership Comparison
September 06 - February 07



Division Support Staff Membership Comparison
September 06 - February 07





Data Trends

AASL membership is increasing each month. This is likely due in part to the Reno conference registration and a couple of targeted recruitment mailings (New NBCTS and district administrators/supervisors). According to the numbers AASL has more student and retired members than any other division and is proportionately equal to other divisions in the category of non-salaried members.

ALA Joint Membership Programs Summary

Midwinter 20007 - Seattle

	State	Category	MW 2007 Joint Members	MW 2006 Joint Members	Change Between MW 2006 and MW 2007	Total ALA Members by State in Jan 2007	Joint Members as % of ALA Members by State Jan 2007
Support Staff							
	Alabama	LS-AL Count	22	21	1	22	100%
	Kansas	LS-KS Count	30	18	12	47	64%
	Massachusetts	LS-MA Count	41	14	27	72	57%
	New York	LS-NY Count	40	8	32	77	52%
TOTAL			133			218	61%

Students							
	California	ST-CA Count	534	647	-113	926	58%
	Florida	ST-FL Count	164	130	34	439	37%
	Georgia	ST-GA Count	74	85	-11	206	36%
	Hawaii	ST-HI Count	68	88	-20	87	78%
	Massachusetts	ST-MA Count	85	128	-43	280	30%
	Michigan	ST-MI Count	247	286	-39	447	55%
	New Jersey	ST-NJ Count	195	239	-44	299	65%
	New York	ST-NY Count	594	673	-79	1044	57%
	Oregon	ST-OR Count	94	102	-8	130	72%
	Rhode Island	ST-RI Count	24	19	5	74	32%
	Texas	ST-TX Count	155	53	102	435	36%
	Washington	ST-WA Count	117	138	-21	208	56%
	Wisconsin	ST-WI Count	103	136	-33	209	49%

Report on AASL Dropped Members
Jan 06 – Mar 07

Total Dropped Memberships: 3,421

Exit Surveys Returned: 116

Reasons for dropping membership
Retired: 46
No longer working as SLMS: 28
Dues exceed budget: 52
Personal/District/School cutbacks: 9
Another assoc meets my needs: 11 (see below)
Not satisfied with membership: 5

Other Associations:

- Colorado Assoc. of Librarians
- Colorado Assoc of School Librarians
- Rhode Island Education Media Assoc.
- SLMS- New York (NYLA)
- Virginia Library Assoc, Virginia Educational Media Assoc
- Pennsylvania School Librarians Assoc
- YALSA and Assoc of Independent School Librarians
- North Carolina School Library Media Assoc and Christian Educations Association International
- Texas Library Assoc
- ALSC
- Wisconsin Education Media Assoc.
- National Education Assoc.

Comments:

- Did not pursue renewing after first attempt online failed
- Too liberal
- Journals were interesting, but not very useful to me
- Position stretched too thin in district
- I have an organizational membership; don't see why I should pay for *American Libraries* twice
- Don't want to belong to ALA
- ALA too oriented towards public sector
- KQ difficult to read; articles need to be lighter
- Benefits do not mean enough to me or my money

- KQ was sporadic; lack of communication from AASL
- Did not find KQ useful
- AASL should do more advocacy to improve position, recognition, professional consideration
- Difficult to be involved—cliquish, rigid organizational structure
- Programs geared more towards those with their degrees; leaves no room for those who have experience and are still working on their degree
- No support from AASL during 5-year search for employment
- It has lost value to me; I can get information I need for free, why pay? I had trouble with password and the sites being active. Have no desire for membership ever again. I would rather buy books with the money.
- Need more young people in school libraries, need more national recognition of importance of school librarians. Need school librarians who are teachers first. Need presence of school librarians in teacher education programs.
- Combined with ALA dues, membership is rather expensive. Any chance we could join AASL without paying full fare for ALA?
- Membership is too high compared to what I'm getting. AASL needs to be more proactive at the state and local levels to promote school libraries. We're losing a lot in this state (Ohio).

Demographics and Non-member participation in AASL activities

Pre-Vision Summit survey

Total Respondents: 3,479

Members vs. nonmembers: 53.2% / 46.8%

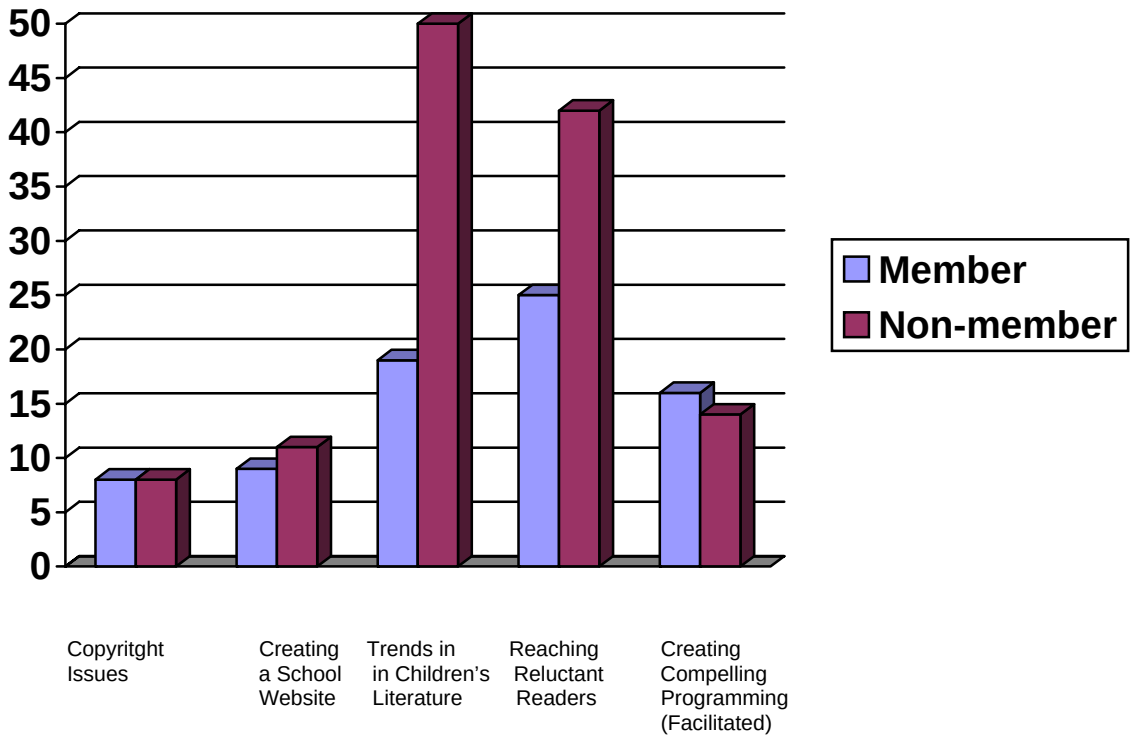
Age of respondents:

18-24	0.5%
25-34	8.6%
35-44	15.7%
45-54	37.8%
55-64	35.5%
65+	2.0%

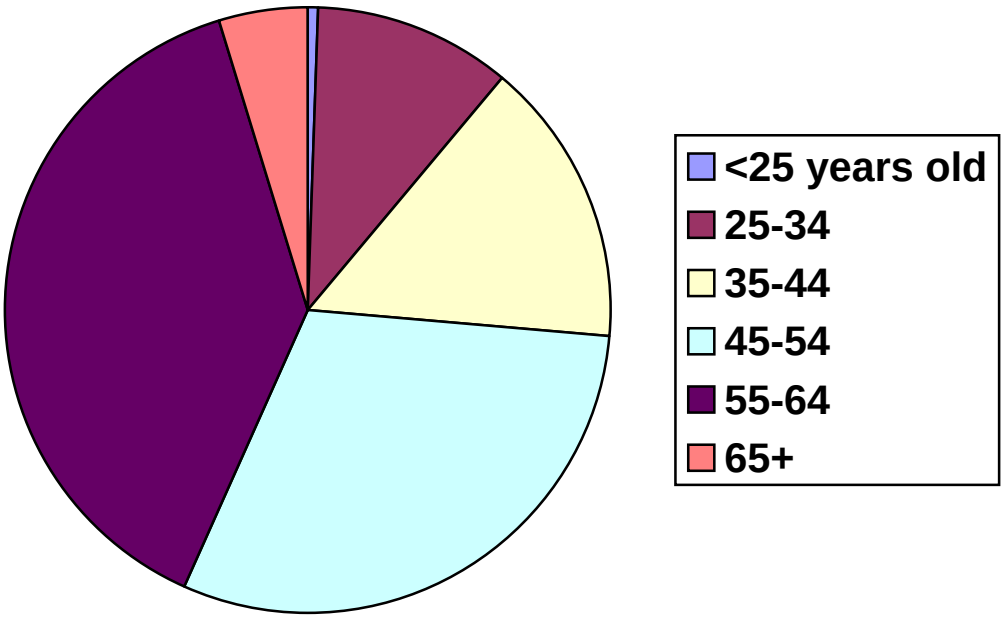
Years in profession:

Student	2.4%
0-2 yrs	9.5%
3-5 yrs	16.1%
6-10 yrs	20.1%
11-15 yrs	14.7%
16-20 yrs	11.3%
21+	25.9%

Member / Non-member participation in AASL e-Academy online course
Fall 2006 and Spring 2007



ALA Member Demographic Survey
AASL Membership by Age



<25 years old	0.5%
25-35 years old	10.5%
35-44 years old	15%
45-54 years old	30.5%
55-64 years old	38.5%
65+ years old	5%