

TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: Status of Advocacy Initiatives

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:
Information only

ACTION REQUESTED BY:
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DRAFT OF MOTION:
N/A

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SUMMARY: Recent activity of the Office for Library Advocacy is featured, including The 2011-2012 Presidential Task Force on School Libraries; Molly Raphael's Presidential Initiative; The Advocacy Institute; Webinars; Library Snapshot Day; COLA and related committees; privatization efforts; and Ilovelibraries.org.

ALA Office for Library Advocacy

Presidential Task Force on School Libraries

Working with AASL, OGR and others, the Office for Library Advocacy is leading efforts for a School Library Campaign. The 2011-2012 Presidential Task Force on School Libraries is being chaired by Pat Tumulty, Chair of the Committee for Library Advocacy, as well as Susan Ballard, Incoming President of AASL.

The Task Force is actively supporting the White House petition on school libraries, initiated by Carl Harvey, 2011-2012 AASL President. It specifically petitions the Obama administration to “ensure that every child in America has access to an effective school library program.” 25,000 signatures are required in order for this petition to be viewed by White House staff, no later than February 4, 2012. To sign the petition, visit: <http://wh.gov/Wgd> .



Petition promotion at the ALA Midwinter Meeting includes a dedicated computer for signing the petition at the registration area; flyer distribution in the Membership Pavilion, in registration bags and inclusion in President Molly Raphael’s, as well as the Executive Board’s talking points. A sticker will also be disseminated.

The Task Force is also organizing statewide coalitions to strategize ways to get Congress to include school libraries in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The coalitions include AASL Chapter Affiliate Chairs or Presidents, ALA Chapter Presidents, FLLAN Chairs and ACRL Chapter leaders, who will organize delegations of librarians and supporters to make home visits over the holidays, specifically before January 23, 2012, when Congress is back in session.

The goals of the Task Force are:

- To secure inclusion of school libraries with certified school librarians in the new federal ESEA legislation
- To galvanize school, public, academic and special librarians to address the crisis threatening school libraries
- To increase public awareness of the impact of the de-professionalization of school libraries on students and student achievement
- To help local advocates save school libraries at the local district level
- To support statewide advocacy efforts

Molly Raphael’s Presidential Initiative: Empowering Voices, Transforming Communities



Molly Raphael’s Empowering Voices, Transforming Communities kicks off a new theme for the Midwinter Meeting. Join visionary professor David Lankes, author of *Atlas of New Librarianship* (<http://www.newlibrarianship.org>), in two afternoons of innovative and interactive conversations about harnessing the evolving role of libraries, and strengthening the librarian’s voice to help shape community perception. Facilitators from the graphic recording company, Sunni Brown (<http://sunnibrown.com/>), will help create visual images of the plenary conversations that conclude each afternoon. The Saturday, January 21, 2012, session focuses on

“Understanding Your Communities.” The Sunday, January 22, 2012, session focuses on “Transforming Librarianship.” Both run from 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Sessions are open to all Midwinter Meeting attendees. Attendees will also receive a coupon for 5% off the price of David Lankes’ galvanizing *Atlas of New Librarianship* (ACRL/MIT Press, 2011) at the ALA Conference Store. At latest count, over 100 people were registered for both events.

Advocacy Institute

“Mobilizing Community Support for Your Library: An Advocacy Institute Workshop,” will take place on Friday, January 20, 2012, from 1 to 4 pm. Attendees will learn how to engage and mobilize friends groups, opinion-makers and civic organizations to support public, school and academic libraries. Rocco Staino, retired New York school librarian, will discuss how to create school library friends groups. The program is cosponsored by AASL and the Texas Library Association.

Webinars

The Committee has opted to forego the Advocacy Institute at Annual Conferences, due to high competition at pre-conferences and cost constraints. Instead, the Committee will focus on Midwinter Institutes and have regular webinars on a variety of topics. The goal is to conduct two webinars monthly when there is not a national conference and to partner with various divisions and committees throughout the association. Upcoming topics include privatization, Molly Raphaels’s Empowering Voices, Transforming Communities theme, ESEA and the school library campaign, and citizen coalitions. A December webinar on how to organize a Library Snapshot Day was designed for ALA Chapters. OLA also partnered with OLOS and Web Junction to produce a webinar for Rural Libraries.

Library Snapshot Day

COLA’s Advocacy Coordinating Group is helping to organize a National Snapshot Day 2012, the goal of which is to collect state data to produce a “national snapshot” to present to legislators and to use in media for National Library Legislative Day, April 23-24, 2012.



Committee on Library Advocacy, Advocacy Coordinating Group, Advocacy Training Subcommittee

COLA Committee Chair Pat Tumulty is instituting regular, monthly calls of the Advocacy Coordinating Group and staff liaisons, in an effort to keep the association better informed of advocacy issues and activities across the association. Pat Tumulty is also conducting regular, monthly calls of the Committee on Library Advocacy. Plans are in the works for the Advocacy Training Subcommittee to survey the membership in 2012 about their advocacy training needs.

Privatization Efforts

OLA has been working with ALA Editions to merge the work that ALA researchers on privatization, Nancy Bolt and Karen Strege, have been doing, as well as Editions' writer Jane Jerrard. A "Special Report on Privatization," produced by ALA Editions, will launch in the spring. It features case histories of libraries recently privatized, a forward written by Pat Tumulty and Marci Merola, and links to "Keeping Libraries Public: A Checklist on Privatization."



The Committee on Library Advocacy's Task Force on Privatization has disbanded. OLA is working on a plan to put a support and information network in place for librarians and library supporters facing privatization.

Ilovelibraries.org



ALA's advocacy website for the public, Ilovelibraries.org, continues to be published twice a month. OLA recently worked with The Huffington Post to incorporate a "Libraries in Crisis" Newsfeed on the home page.

The website is currently generating 9,000 hits daily, with 2,865 subscribers to the e-newsletter. The Ilovelibraries.org Facebook page has more than 37,000 subscribers, and 900 Twitter followers.

Funding Crisis Efforts

The ALA Office for Library Advocacy has organized an "ALA Crisis Team," aimed at the monitoring of and quick response to crisis situations affecting libraries around the country. The team consists of members of OLA, *American Libraries*, the Public Information Office, the Chapter Relations Office, ALTAFF and appropriate divisions. For the most current information, visit *American Libraries* at www.americanlibrariesmagazine.org.