

TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: AASL 2025 Conference Site Recommendation – St. Louis, MO

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:

During the ALA 2015 Annual Conference in San Francisco, the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) staff presented three options for the AASL 2021 National Conference – Kansas City, MO; St. Louis, MO; and Salt Lake City, MO. The Board voted unanimously in favor of Salt Lake City, UT as the site of the 20th AASL conference. The main reason was the \$20,000 signing bonus AASL would receive as a result of signing the contract with Salt Lake City.

Following the decision, the AASL meetings manager was contacted by St. Louis to discuss future options for hosting an AASL conference, specifically 2025 or 2027. St. Louis offered to waive rental, grant a \$10,000 signing bonus, and host the planning committee if AASL signed a contract on or before November 30, 2015.

During the September Executive Committee meeting, the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) Executive Committee agreed to recommend to the AASL Board of Directors, St. Louis as the site of the AASL 2025 National Conference & Exhibition. The Board voted in favor of the recommendation.

Per the ALA Policy Manual section A.4.3.4.9 Policies of the American Library Association in Relation to its Membership Divisions the AASL Executive Director and President are submitting these decisions to the ALA Executive Board.

Policy A.4.3.4.9 Division National Conferences, Pre-conferences, and Related Activities [VIII]

Proposals for Division National Conferences should be made to the ALA Executive Board at least two years in advance of the anticipated meeting date following a prescribed proposal outline. ALA state and regional chapters in the geographical area of a proposed conference shall be notified in writing of a desired conference prior to submitting the request to the Executive Board. Such notice shall seek the cooperation of the chapters with respect to scheduling and programming to the extent feasible. The Division shall contact the host Chapter prior to determining date availability with the host city. The Division shall contact the chapters in the geographical area immediately after determining date availability with the host city. In the event of a conflict with the ALA state or regional chapters and the proposed divisional conference, the ALA Executive Board shall make the decision in consultation with the chapters.

ACTION REQUESTED BY:

Leslie Preddy, AASL President
Sylvia K. Norton, AASL Executive Director

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DRAFT OF MOTION:

The ALA Executive Board approves St. Louis, MO as the official location for the AASL 2025 National Conference & Exhibition on the dates of October 15-19, 2025.

DATE: December 28, 2015

BACKGROUND:

The AASL National Conference & Exhibition is the primary continuing education activity of the division. Starting in 1980 in Louisville, Kentucky, the AASL National Conference has provided quality professional development and networking opportunities for school librarian professionals. When asked the reasons for attending AASL Conference, the top 3 reasons given were Programming, Networking Opportunities, and Exhibits.

It is the recommendation of the AASL Board of Directors that the ALA Executive Committee vote to approve St. Louis for a future year conference – 2025.

Rental of a convention center is a considerable cost to AASL when planning a National Conference. It is a major factor in the decision to recommend or not recommend a city. It is clear that these rates will continue to increase as cities like St. Louis undergo major developments similar to the ones currently taking place. With the rental cost waived, and a \$10,000 bonus, AASL is set to earn a considerable sum of money on its conference.

Furthermore, St. Louis has shown its commitment to building a relationship with AASL by offering to add a clause to the contract in case AASL decides it must choose to wait to return to the region due to issues with affiliate support. Therefore, if we sign for 2025 and for any reason need to change, we are able to switch to 2027 with no penalty.

Locations of ALA and Division Conference, 2023-2027:

YEAR	ALA	AASL	ACRL	PLA
2023	Midwinter: New Orleans Annual: Chicago	TBD (East)	TBD	
2024	Midwinter: Denver Annual: San Diego			TBD
2025	Midwinter: TBD Annual: Philadelphia	St. Louis	TBD	
2026	Midwinter: TBD Annual: Chicago			TBD
2027	Midwinter: Philadelphia Annual: New Orleans	TBD (West)	TBD	

In accordance with the ALA’s “Organizational and Operational Practices,” Policy A.4.3.4.9, AASL will contact in writing ALA state and regional chapters, as well as AASL affiliate organizations, in

the geographical areas of the proposed conference and seek the cooperation of these chapters in respect to programming and scheduling.

However, AASL asks the Board to approve the location without these letters due to a considerable sum of money AASL will receive as a signing bonus from St. Louis. Because of the quick turnaround for a signature on the contract, we do not want to lose the opportunity to receive the signing bonus.

AASL agrees to turn in all letters of support or concern as soon as they are received.