

### 5.5.3

At the 2009 ALA Annual Conference, upon recommendation by the Policy Monitoring Committee (PMC), 2008-2009 ALA CD#17.1, the ALA Council revised ALA Policy 5.5.3, Advance Distribution of Council Agenda and Other Documents, to read:

#### 5.5.3 Advance Distribution of Council Agenda and Other Documents.

The Executive Director, as Secretary of the Council, shall distribute the agenda for Council meetings, as well as such documentation as has been provided by members and units, to reach Council members not later than two weeks before such meetings.

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**NOTE TO READER:** The following was taken from the Policy Monitoring Committee Report, 2008-2009 ALA CD#17.1:

Current policy states: 5.5.3 Agenda (2008-2009 Handbook of Organization). The Executive Director, as Secretary of the Council, shall mail the agenda for a Council meeting, including such documentation as has been provided by members and units, to reach Council members not later than two weeks before such meetings. Minority reports shall be given to Council.

The heading for this policy is misleading, since it does not concern the agenda itself, but rather the advance distribution of the agenda and other documents. It was written when documents were distributed through physical mail, and the two weeks deadline was intended to provide time for accidents that might interfere with delivery of documents to some Councilors. Even though distribution through electronic means is essentially instantaneous, PMC believes that a two-week deadline remains reasonable and desirable.

The final sentence of 5.5.3 is somewhat mysterious and may reflect either a misunderstanding of what constitutes a minority report, or it may reflect some past practice when committees, task forces, etc. may not have recognized an obligation to represent minority opinion in their reports, either internally or as attachments. (Minority reports are covered in Sturgis, p.189) Because minority reports are technically a part of the committee report proper (whether attached, incorporated, or numbered separately), there is no need to mention them explicitly in the policy. Indeed, mentioning them separately contributes to confusion about their standing and may even suggest that any document expressing opposing viewpoints, promulgated from outside the committee report might be considered a "minority report." Deletion of this confusing sentence will not restrict the ability of Councilors to communicate personal or group opposing viewpoints through the Council List, ALA Connect, or other means.