

Resolution to Promote Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Efforts in AASL While Addressing Historical Effects of Racism

Whereas the American Library Association (ALA) Council adopted resolution CD#41-7618 “Resolution to Honor African Americans Who Fought Library Segregation” stating that the American Library Association participated both passively and actively, in the disenfranchisement of African American librarians, depriving them of the resources of a professional association;

Whereas between 1954 with the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision through 1968, the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) took no action to publicly support *Brown* or to oppose segregated public school libraries;

Whereas Koch wrote in 1975 “from their late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century origins, southern state library and education associations to which school librarians belonged had been segregated. AASL not only said nothing and took no public position against these racist practices, it continued to accept delegates from segregated school library associations as AASL representatives until the mid-1960s. In 1951, AASL quietly decided that in its state-member Assembly, segregated black and white state library associations could each appoint one representative, but those representatives would each get only half a vote” ;

Whereas AASL acknowledges the racist experiences suffered by Black school librarians including Ernestine Denham Talbert, Jurl Portee Watkins, Carrie Coleman Robinson, and many others who did not have the voice of the association advocating on their behalf;

Whereas the inactions of AASL also caused harm to Black and Indigenous People Of Color (BIPOC) members of the school library profession;

Whereas AASL acknowledges harm done to fellow BIPOC colleagues and offers a sincere apology as an important and necessary first step in the process of reconciliation;

Whereas AASL must communicate how the association has worked to create documents and initiatives to support equity, diversity and inclusion such as “Developing Inclusive Learners and Citizens Activity Guide”, “Defending Intellectual Freedom: LGBTQ+ Material in School Libraries” Toolkit, Mary Keeling’s 2019-2020 Presidential Initiative, Office Hours, and Increasing Representation Mentoring Program (IRMP), and the *Knowledge Quest* March/April 2021 issue *Black School Librarianship: Navigating Race and Creating Change*;

Whereas, AASL has and continues to be a sponsor of the Spectrum Scholars program since its inception;

Whereas AASL affirms the importance of equity, diversity & inclusion as core values of our profession;

Whereas equity, diversity and inclusion are at the forefront of AASL policies, our strategic, and our operational plans;

Whereas equity, diversity and inclusion are within every area of school librarian practice including collection development, professional development, recruiting, mentoring, and

instruction through our National School Library Standards and opens opportunities for future members to see themselves as an integral part of AASL; and

Whereas the inclusion of all perspectives enriches and builds understanding which in turn impacts our school library profession, our learners, and our community; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members

1. Acknowledges the American Association of School Librarians' past actions and inactions that have harmed members of the profession;
2. Apologizes to Black school librarians for wrongs committed against them and for AASL's inactions on behalf of segregated school libraries and school library state associations;
3. Apologizes to all Black and Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) school librarians for AASL's part in historical racism and segregation in the school librarian profession;
4. Commits to promoting diversity in school librarianship in undergraduate and graduate programs and at school recruitment fairs;
5. Commits to ensuring a diverse and inclusive membership by recruiting, welcoming and encouraging BIPOC school librarians to consider leadership opportunities within ALA and AASL;
6. Commits to applying and prioritizing an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) lens in all aspects of the greater work of AASL and ALA;
7. Commits to sustaining a more diverse and inclusive leadership within ALA and AASL in terms of ethnicity, gender, and ability representation;
8. Communicates all EDI initiatives throughout AASL, ALA and the profession;
9. Creates opportunities and resources for collaboration with ALA divisions, ALA chapters, AASL chapters, ALA Roundtables and Ethnic Caucuses to create a stronger voice for our profession.

Mover: Diane R. Chen, AASL Division Councilor
Seconder: Erika Long, Chapter Councilor
Kathy Carroll, Councilor-at-Large

Kathy Lester, Councilor-at-Large
Brenda Pruitt-Annisette, MLS, Ed.D., Chair, Coretta Scott King Book Awards Committee
Dorcas Hand, Councilor-at-Large
Joyce Kasman Valenza, PhD, Councilor-at-Large
Dr. Daniella Smith, Councilor-at-Large
Sara Dallas, Councilor at Large
Amy Lappin, Councilor-at-Large
Sara Kelly Johns, Councilor-at-Large

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