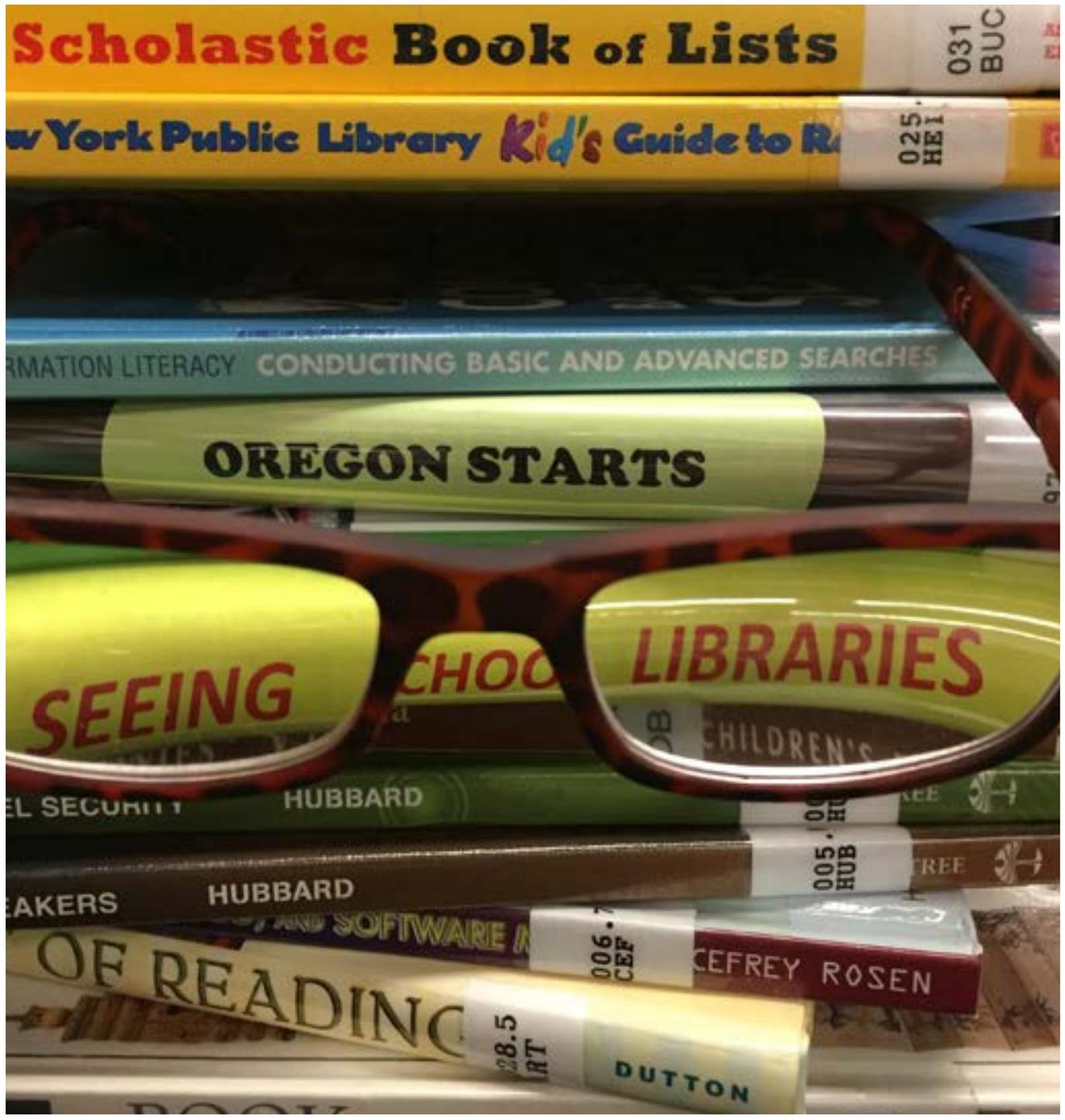


INTERCHANGE

Journal of the Oregon Association of School Libraries

Spring 2019

Start Seeing School Libraries: The Advocacy Issue



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Spring 2019

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OREGON ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES
dba Oregon Educational Media Association

MISSION STATEMENT OASL provides progressive leadership to pursue excellence in school library media programs by:

- advocating information literacy for all students;
- supporting the highest levels of library media services in schools;
- supporting reading instruction and enjoyment of literature;
- strengthening member professionalism through communication and educational opportunities;
- promoting visibility in education, government and the community

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Start Seeing School Libraries: The Advocacy Issue

by Tricia Snyder, Guest Editor



Ten years ago, I was cut from my position as an elementary library media specialist in the Reynolds School District. I never saw it coming. Year after year, as libraries around our state continued to be cut, these questions kept coming up in conversations:

Why does Oregon only have 158 school librarians? Why do we continue to get passed over for reinvestment? Why does PE get funded, but not us? Why is it ok for library assistants to be told to see classes all day, every day and at times deliver lessons without a certified teacher present (and why does this only happen in the library?) Why is it ok to take advantage of library assistants? Why was Ridgeview High School allowed to actually close their library? Don't schools have to provide a strong school library? Why do schools have paltry or zero library book budgets? Why do districts report compliance with the state regarding their library media programs when clearly K-12 instruction isn't happening by certified librarians on site? How is it ok that too many schools in our state have no one in the library? What about our union? What about all the research that shows school libraries matter in student achievement? Does anyone check compliance? Where is the compliance list? Does the Oregon Department of Education know about this? Who is holding districts accountable? Are school libraries going to disappear forever? Are we obsolete? Who is going to fix this?

Year after year, two things became clear: our school libraries were barely hanging on, and no one was coming to save us. If we were to survive, we had to take the lead to save our program. It was time to get activated, speak up, get organized and fight. There was nothing to lose.

Locally: In Reynolds SD, we contacted our state union. We contacted our local union. We spoke at budget meetings. We met with our new superintendent. We met with school board members. Still, how would we shift from the discussions to actually making real lasting change? After all, Oregon had a budget problem.

Organizing. Data. Doing our homework. Finding allies. Looking for any opportunity to raise awareness that Oregon had a school library problem. Speaking up. Taking action.

Regionally: East Multnomah County librarians also organized ourselves, and we realized three things: most decision makers had no idea what was really going on in our school libraries, nobody really knew the impact strong school libraries could bring, and stakeholders liked data to inform their choices and priorities. The beginning of our data collection journey started here as the pilot for the OASL School Library Survey was born.

Statewide: School librarians started organizing and testifying at the Joint Committee on Student Success Public Forums in order to amplify our voices, and we got the attention of the JCOSS. They were finally seeing school libraries and librarians. But we had to do more to keep the momentum going.

Professionally: The final element in organizing for strong school libraries statewide was the creation of the OASL Advocacy Committee. The timing couldn't have been better. Oregon had a major opportunity to finally fund education, and school librarians and support staff could not afford to miss making their voices heard. OASL voice as an organization with authority for our profession is vital to our movement's success. This year, our goals as a committee were about doing our homework, understanding what roadblocks were in our way, and making people see school libraries. Accomplishments since October:

continued...

From the Guest Editor *continued...*

- we launched the OASL survey and analyzed the results
- we researched Oregon Administrative Rules and Statutes
- we learned about Division 22 Compliance and Reporting
- we gathered more data about the QEM
- we offered feedback to the Joint Committee on Student Success recommendations and made it into the Student Success Act
- we worked with the Oregon Library Association and attended Library Legislative Day
- we organized librarians at the OEA President's Day Rally and at the OEA May 8th Walkout
- we met with the OEA President to discuss our situation and get advocacy ideas
- we challenged the state's new district report cards
- we made connections with legislators in Salem
- we learned how to create legislation (HB 3263) and organized an informational hearing
- we started connecting with the media
- we learned the language and got to know the system of advocating in Salem
- we are creating a toolkit to empower our members to advocate

The OASL Advocacy Committee helped to lay the groundwork for next steps, but we truly need you to help keep our momentum going! With the passage of the SSA, school librarians have a chance in the 2020-2021 school year to start seeing restoration--but we have to be ready for it with data, be organized, have knowledge of rules and laws, and have an awareness of the SSA process and deadlines so we have a seat at the table when districts make those important choices for funding. Also, if SSA isn't enough, we have to think of other ways to get strong school libraries back in our schools.

This issue of the *Interchange* is dedicated to Advocacy. We cannot wait for others to fight for our cause, advocacy is now part of our jobs. We are busy and often overwhelmed, but without advocacy, we risk losing strong school libraries forever. With your help, we look forward to seeing what this next year brings!

OASL Advocacy Committee (and Guest Editors for this issue)

Jean Gritter

Mark Hardin

Rita Ramstad

Tricia Snyder

Kate Weber

From the President's Google Drive *by Stuart Levy*



I feel very proud of what many of our members have done this school year to advocate for our profession. Yes, the number of teacher-librarians in Oregon has dwindled from over 550 in 2001 to under 160 in 2019, but I do see many of us making noise about the situation -- and people are actually listening.

The first way that many of us advocate for the importance of teacher-librarians is by simply doing our jobs well. Fortunately, that is happening around the state (in schools that actually have teacher-librarians) by collaborating with teachers, by keeping the shelves filled with quality books to hook those young readers, by working directly with the students to find them the “right” books, by having conversations with their building administrators about their goals and their needs. Too often people don’t realize what they have until they lose it, but these folks are constant reminders of what power we bring to the learning community.

There are others of us who are also working on a more district and regional scale. For example, there are some districts where the library staff is able to get together regularly (monthly, quarterly, etc.), which helps to promote what we do by having those professional conversations. There are also some regional teacher-librarians who gather regularly, like the Portland Metro Library PLC, since many of us are the only certified teacher-librarian working in the district. These gatherings are actually platforms for advocacy, since they create spaces for us to share ideas that we often bring to our building and district administrators.

Even more amazing are the individuals and groups who are working on a state level to improve the library experiences for all Oregon students. For example, we have our long-serving Standards Committee folks who have been toiling for a few years now to get the Oregon Department of Education to approve grade-level indicators for our previously adopted state library standards. There is also a newly formed Advocacy Committee who have been working directly with the leadership of OEA, the Legislative Committee of OLA, and Oregon state elected officials to get support for putting certified teacher-librarians back in all of our schools. Finally, there is a Strong Library Rubric Committee recently re-formed to help the state have an actual method for determining if districts have the legally required strong school library program.

In this issue, edited by Tricia Snyder, one of our hard-working Advocacy Committee members, you will learn more specifics about what these different groups have done for our organization, as well as Oregon students, and you will also learn ways that you yourself can add to this advocacy work yourself.

Again, thanks for all that you do. I continue to be both proud and amazed and what our members do on a daily basis for the students of Oregon.

Stuart Levy is the teacher-librarian at Parkrose High School in Portland, Oregon, and he is currently serving as the 2018-2019 OASL President. During his 31 years as an educator and his 12 years as a member of the OASL Board of Directors, he has served as the chair of the Oregon Reader’s Choice Award committee and he has been named Oregon Secondary School Librarian of the Year. He can be reached at president@oasl.olaweb.org and at levystu@parkrose.k12.or.us.

2018-19 Oregon School Library Survey *by Mark Hardin*



Inspired by the [2017 School Library Journal Budget and Spending Survey](#), librarians in East Multnomah County took the summer of 2018 to develop a similar tool. At the October OASL conference we collected our first surveys. By February, 143 people had submitted a response. Participants came from every corner of the state and represented schools in each of the state's legislative districts. A smashing success!

Data and commentaries shared in this survey paint a grim and gritty picture of the continuing 25-year decline of Oregon's school library programs. You can see a full, 20 page report on the survey [here](#). Our main takeaways: There is no regular pattern for school libraries across the state, and very few schools could claim a truly "strong library program" as defined in Oregon's Administrative Rules attached to mandated school district improvement and Division 22 requirements. The success of the OASL survey helped convince state representatives to sponsor legislation that would strengthen and clarify language around school libraries.

Furthermore, it's clear that the loss of school library programs is not unknown to educational leaders. Each year, school-by-school information is collected by the QEM (Quality Education Model) Committee. For every Oregon school, these data list: certified and classified library FTE staffing, district and local budgets for library materials, and a per-student spending calculation. Why the Oregon Department of Education chose to misreport library staffing on last year's school report cards remains a mystery. However, OASL has received assurances that the numbers will be corrected next year. You can read the libraries extract of the QEM report and other QEM staffing and funding information here: <https://www.oregon.gov/Library/libraries/Pages/School-Staffing.aspx>. The most recent QEM staffing and funding data from 2017-18 will be uploaded soon.

Please take a look at the data and contact me if you have questions.

"Big Fish, Small Budget: Insights from SLJ's Spending Survey." Linda Jacobsen. *School Library Journal*, March 1, 2018.

State Library Oregon School Libraries Staffing and Funding Page: https://www.oregon.gov/Library/libraries/Pages/School-Staffing.aspx?fbclid=IwAR0frsBCNEgoqIjuCqOzNBhi0KFZ9KFAq8nY0x9WPifv_eg3Nf8Xw3p4Y

Oregon School Library Survey Summary and Results: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1RkDeIOqf0ROATzslqhKG3L9JcipX8T012kEIRXIhpLI/edit?usp=sharing>

Mark Hardin is a licensed school librarian at HB Lee Middle School in the Reynolds School District. He is a member of the OASL Advocacy Committee, working to restore funds and teams of licensed and paraprofessional library staff throughout the state. You can reach him at selfphone@gmail.com.

“How is This Even Legal?”

by Rita Ramstad



“How is This Even Legal?” is a question I’ve asked and fielded numerous times in my 6 years as a district librarian. Like so many districts, mine absorbed deep budget cuts in the wake of the Great Recession, and the jobs of our certified teacher librarians were eliminated. It means that we, like many districts, have no one in any buildings with the appropriate licensure and endorsement to provide instruction in the [Oregon library standards](#) for our students, and that we have classified staff who are expected to do on their own much of what teacher-librarians used to do with their assistance.

Attempts to answer this question have taken me and other members of the OASL Advocacy Committee deep into Oregon’s statutes and administrative rules. While the answer to the question isn’t clear (because the language of OARs is purposely broad, so that districts have latitude to interpret them in ways that work best for their situations), we have learned a lot that all of us can use to advocate for stronger library programs in our districts. In the table below, we’ve shared what you need to know about the laws and rules that govern our school library programs, and how you might use them to advocate for stronger programs for your students.

Statutes and Rules	How You Can Use Them for Advocacy
<p>ORS 329.095 is the state’s law on district continuous improvement plans (CIPs).</p> <p>What’s important to know: The language of the statute says that district continuous improvement plans “shall” include goals to implement “a strong school library program.” In statutory language, “shall” = “must.” This means that your district’s CIP <i>must</i> include goals for strong school library programs.</p>	<p>Ask how you can support writing CIP goals to implement a strong library program for your district. If you’re told that your district won’t be addressing that, you can let your leadership know that addressing library programs is a requirement because “shall” means “must.”</p> <p>For support with figuring out what your district’s goals might be, see OAR 581-022-2250 (below).</p>
<p>OAR 581-022-2250 is the administrative rule that defines the “strong school library program” that CIPs must have goals for implementing. See section (l) of this OAR.</p> <p>What’s important to know: These are the components of a strong school library program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Instruction for students, staff, and the district’s learning community ● Instruction in library skills, information literacy, and educational technology ● A rich array of literacy experiences ● Collaborative lesson-planning and instruction ● Equitable access to resources ● Current, plentiful, and diverse collections that support curricula and student interests 	<p>First, do your own audit of your district’s library program to determine which components are strong and weak.</p> <p>Create a plan/proposal to strengthen program components that are missing or weak. Include the resources you need (money, staffing, time) and provide different options for improving existing services.</p> <p>If you are doing work to write goals/proposals, consult Oregon’s Quality Education Model (QEM) for recommendations on staffing and materials for school libraries.</p>

“How is This Even Legal?” *continued...*

<p>OAR 581-022-2340, aka “Division 22,” provides standards for media programs.</p> <p>What’s important to know: This is an important rule to read in its entirety, especially if you want to have a discussion about goals for implementing a strong school library program.</p> <p>This is an administrative rule, not a statute, which means that it does not carry as much weight as a law. Rules are purposely written broadly, so that districts have abilities to interpret them in ways that work best to meet their resources and needs.</p> <p>When it comes to determining the appropriateness of staffing, some districts have justified their level of staffing with language from section 3 (e), which says that districts can consider “(t)he extent to which staffing patterns vary from general state-wide practice” to determine if staffing is appropriate.</p>	<p>Each district must complete an annual Division 22 report, in which they let ODE know if they are in compliance with the requirements of Division 22 of the OARs. These are supposed to be posted on district web sites by Feb. 1st. Check to see if your district has reported compliance with 581-022-2340.</p> <p>If you feel that your district is not in compliance, open a dialogue with the most appropriate administrator using the language of this rule as a starting place. Your administrator might not be aware of all of the requirements for media programs.</p> <p>If your administration points to the language about staffing patterns, you might share that there really are no statewide staffing patterns. What districts provide varies greatly. You might also note that staffing is only one of several elements of a library program.</p>
<p>OAR 581-021-0200 defines the components of standard education for Oregon students, which includes Library Media Skills Instruction</p> <p>Important to know: This language is a little vague; as long as some kind of instruction in library media skills is happening, your district might argue that it is in compliance with this OAR.</p>	<p>If this is the OAR your district focuses on with respect to compliance, share the requirements of OAR 581-022-2340 and/or OAR 581-022-2250, which provide more detailed requirements for library media skills instruction. This particular OAR only says that library media skills instruction is required, but we have to look to other OARs to define what that instruction contains.</p>
<p>OAR 581-022-2030 describes district curriculum requirements, which includes a planned K-12 instructional program in areas identified in chapter 581, Division 22 of the OARs, which includes media programs.</p>	<p>This OAR doesn’t provide anything that the others don’t, but it is yet another piece of evidence to build the case that Oregon intends for its students to have instruction in library media.</p>

continued...

“How is This Even Legal?” *continued...*

<p>OAR 584-220-0145 establishes requirements for Library Media endorsements and the requirement that “an educator is not authorized to teach in the endorsed area unless and until the endorsement is officially added to the license.”</p> <p>OAR 584-420-0415 lists the competencies educators must demonstrate to be granted an endorsement in library media.</p>	<p>Between the CIP statute and the previously listed OARs, it is clear we are to be providing instruction in library media skills. These two OARs also make it clear that instruction in library media should be provided by a person with the appropriate licensure and endorsement.</p> <p>If your district has NO licensed teacher librarians to oversee instruction AND your students are receiving instruction in library media standards, that is likely a violation of this OAR, which you might want to bring to the attention of an appropriate administrator.</p> <p>If you do have a licensed librarian in some capacity, consider both these OARs and the one pertaining to education assistants (see below) to determine if the licensed librarian and the assistant’s job duties align with both OARs. You can use these OARs to advocate for resources and assignments that would allow your district to be in compliance with these OARs.</p>
<p>OAR 581-037-0015 describes the role of educational assistants, which can include providing “Media center or computer laboratory <i>support</i>,” (emphasis added) but is not to include planning the instructional activities or evaluating student achievement, duties which are assigned to the assigned teacher or administrator who provides a “supervision plan that includes regular monitoring of the educational assistant’s effectiveness and access to assistance and consultation.”</p>	<p>If library assistants are being asked to create lessons/materials and provide instruction and/or assessment, that goes beyond their role as defined in this OAR.</p> <p>In discussions with administrators, you might inform them of any activities classified staff are being asked to do that violate this OAR.</p> <p>If you are a licensed librarian tasked with supporting classified staff, you can bring this OAR into conversations about the parameters of your role and what resources you need to provide adequate “assistance and consultation.”</p> <p>Another possible action is to talk with your union reps and examine the language in both classified and certified staff contracts. OEA representatives have advised working to address these issues through contract language. Bringing possible violations of this OAR to your unions’ attention might be a good first step.</p>

Because the language of our OARs is not concrete/specific, our OASL Advocacy Committee has pursued legislation to strengthen our definitions of “strong school library program.” This is something we will continue to work toward. In the meantime, we hope everyone will use the avenues currently available to us to advocate for strong

continued...

“How is This Even Legal?” *continued...*

programs in their schools and districts, standing strong to hold administrators and districts accountable for the promises we’ve made to Oregon children and families through our existing laws and rules.

Referenced Links:

Oregon State Library Standards: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1RdFHMslZsmy7H5IJZMY8VWEoEJotKGV-OxHR1rsQqdU/edit#gid=4>

Oregon Administrative Rules and Statue Links:

OAR 581-22-2250 District Continuous Improvement Plans

<https://secure.sos.state.or.us/oard/viewSingleRule.action?ruleVrsnRsn=145276>

OAR 581-22-2340 Media Programs

<https://secure.sos.state.or.us/oard/viewSingleRule.action?ruleVrsnRsn=145320>

OAR 581-21-0200 Standard Education for Oregon Students <https://secure.sos.state.or.us/oard/viewSingleRule.action?ruleVrsnRsn=144699>

OAR 581-22-2030 District Curriculum

<https://secure.sos.state.or.us/oard/viewSingleRule.action?ruleVrsnRsn=246695>

OAR 581-220-0145 Endorsements (Library Media)

<https://secure.sos.state.or.us/oard/viewSingleRule.action?ruleVrsnRsn=152887>

OAR 584-420-0415 Library Media Program Standards

<https://secure.sos.state.or.us/oard/viewSingleRule.action?ruleVrsnRsn=152997>

OAR 581-037-0005 Educational Assistants

<https://secure.sos.state.or.us/oard/displayDivisionRules.action?selectedDivision=2575>

ORS 392.025 Law On Continuous Improvement Plans

<https://www.oregonlaws.org/ors/329.095>

Quality Education Model

<https://www.oregon.gov/Library/libraries/Pages/School-Staffing.aspx>

Rita Ramstad is a .5 district media coordinator for the Centennial school district, overseeing 10 libraries K-12. She is also a .5 literacy instructional coach. She earned her library-media endorsement after teaching secondary ELA for 19 years. She is also a member of the OASL Advocacy Committee. She can be reached at ritaottramstad@gmail.com.

The Salem Experience: The Story of HB 3263

by Tricia Snyder



After years of watching our state mandate that public education include other programs such as PE, all-day kindergarten, or Measure 98 CTE funding, one thought that came into our mind was, “perhaps we have to mandate libraries back into our public schools.”

To add to the problem of underfunded libraries, Oregon Administrative Rules were proving to not have any teeth that would ensure districts would prioritize funding their school libraries. ODE had no magic list of components for a strong school library for compliance. As far as ODE was concerned, anything went, so expect zero certified library staffing. Compliance could be a model anywhere between a contracted .10 FTE for the month in a district or the full meal deal of full staffing, resources, and services. Despite the strong OAR language, until districts were forced to fund strong school libraries, reinvestment seemed unlikely. Since strong school libraries tended to be overlooked for reinvestment, one new avenue of our multi-prong strategy was to look into possible legislation. Some states have student-to-certified librarian ratio legislation, and some have mandates for a certified librarian in every school. We heard that a mandate would likely not pass in the current legislative climate, so we decided to tighten up the current language to make it more clear what schools should provide with regards to strong school libraries.

I remembered the basics of how a bill becomes a law from Schoolhouse Rock, but how to get a bill created in the first place was a mystery. Fortunately, we librarians in East County had built a relationship with our [Oregon House Representative, Chris Gorsek D-49](#), around the need for reinvestment in school libraries. Because of this, his office was up-to-date on our situation and ready to help in any way they could. We also networked with the Multnomah County Democrats Education Study Group, which included a representative for [Senator Rob Wagner’s](#) office who was interested in talking to us about our concerns. We met with representatives from both legislators’ offices. Both found our story to be compelling and appreciated that we had data, knowledge, and anecdotal evidence.

Soon after this meeting, we discussed that perhaps we should pursue legislation. First of all, be aware of deadlines and processes. If you don’t know them, ask your legislator, as they are the experts! Second, we didn’t actually create a bill, but a Legislative Concept (LC). When we called Rep. Gorsek’s office about going forward with legislation, we learned that the deadline was that day! Our legislator’s office said we didn’t need to write legal language (whew!), but needed to draft a problem and a solution, and it could be simple. Rep. Gorsek’s office would file the Legislative Concept and send it to the Legislative Concept Committee. The timeline for completing our idea for an LC was short, but since we knew our talking points and did our homework, we were able to compile an excellent and detailed problem and solution document in about 45 minutes--especially with the help of Google Docs!

Then we waited.

For two weeks.

We heard nothing.

Then finally, Rep. Gorsek’s office let us know our LC was available---our draft became what looked like a real bill! It was technically still an LC. We received our LC and then needed to understand what the LC actually said--what did the committee create from our problem/solution document? We had excellent help from Hannah Lai at the LC Committee, and she explained her job was to look at our draft problem/solution, find how to best use all the current rules and statutes to advance our cause and then write legislative language for our LC. We also needed to get OEA’s approval for our bill as our legislator felt that without that, it would be hard to get support from legislators. After much communication with OEA, we moved forward with a bill that would strengthen CIP 581-22-2250 language by defining what a strong school library needed to include, such as staffing and instruction taught by an endorsed library media specialist, and including library media standards in a student’s comprehensive education.



continued...

The Salem Experience: The Story of HB 3263 *continued...*

Next steps were to get a sponsor, co-sponsor, and bill-backers to show support for the bill. We had a deadline..... and then the snow hit. Would be able to see this through? If we didn't get a sponsor or co-sponsor that day, we would be out of time and opportunities to get the LC filed to become a bill. Rita, Mark, and I went on a road trip after school one day and thankfully, we were able to get to Salem and shop around for a sponsor (Rep. Gorsek) and Co-Sponsor (Rep. Piluso), and bill backers (Rep. Hernandez and Rep. Doherty). So [HB 3263](#) was born.

We went back to teaching, and waited.

Then we found out that the silence was not a good thing and that there was another deadline looming: if a bill didn't receive a public hearing by Friday March 29th, the bill would be considered dead. This would be Spring Break for most, so we knew pulling together a public hearing, if we actually received one, would be hard due to this timing.

So Mark kicked off his Spring Break by making a special personal solo trip to Salem to meet with [Rep. Doherty](#), Chair of the [House Education Committee](#). Unfortunately, it seemed that there would not be a public hearing because it was determined to be an unfunded mandate, and with the JCROSS controlling much of the education funding, the bill was considered dead. However, Rep. Doherty did extend the olive branch, and offered us an informational hearing on the bill with the House Committee on Education in order to have it on the record and to help create an opening for next steps in upcoming legislative sessions.

We were told our informational hearing would not be until Mid-May, so we took a breather and were getting ready to focus on creating the *Interchange* Advocacy Edition, when we were told that our informational hearing would be in less than a week. Again, because of all of the networking, homework, data, and people willing to step up for the cause, we were able to pull off a library legislative miracle! We had a total of 20 pieces of testimony on record, and 10 people verbally testified. We had nearly every possible type of stakeholder provide testimony: school board members, parents, college librarians, the American Library Association Grassroots Advocacy Department, certified librarians, library assistants, a classroom teacher, speech pathologists, community volunteers, state representatives, and local authors. At one point in the hearing, Rep. Doherty had to remind the Committee that this was a "dead" bill and that it wasn't being voted on to move forward. We had fantastic testimony which can found here in [video](#) format (starts at about 10:30) and [here](#) in written testimony format. (See full links at the end of this article.)

Rep. Doherty said that we were planting seeds for future legislation. We plan to build our movement with your help to be ready for the next legislative session--whether it is the short or long session.

We want to thank everyone who helped provide testimony with such short notice! You made a difference! Rep. Gorsek's office said it was one of the best informational hearings he has been a part of.

Lessons learned:

- Start connecting with your local legislators about the current status of school libraries in your district, and note this is a statewide issue.
- Start connecting with your local political organizations as you may be able to connect to other legislators and politically active people.
- Start collecting data for your district: circulation stats, age of collection, staffing patterns, funding practices, etc.
- Get to know the OARs we mentioned, our survey results, and the QEM standard and use them to advocate.
- Pay attention to legislative trends across our country and see if you find any ideas that we could try here.
- Connect with your local parent and community groups as you may need testimony later.
- Understand deadlines and process so you have time to get bill backers (we wish we had more) as well as your sponsors and co-sponsors.
- Make appointments to meet with legislators to discuss your legislative concept rather than dropping in. It

continued...

The Salem Experience: The Story of HB 3263 *continued...*

was hard for us to make appointments since we taught all day, so we dropped in, but if given more time, we could have planned for appointments after school. Call or email legislator offices directly. Some of them even have an online calendar for booking appointments.

- Most legislators are not in Salem on Friday. Instead, they usually make time to meet constituents in district. We met with Rep. Gorsek initially on these days, as we had a hard time getting to Salem with our school day schedules.
- Follow up with a thank you to those who helped testify or who helped with legislation

Even though our HB 3263 did not advance to the next level in this legislative session, we will continue to pursue any legislation that will help bring strong school libraries to Oregon.

Rep. Gorsek's Legislative Webpage: <https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/gorsek>

Sen. Rob Wagner's Legislative Webpage: <https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/wagner>

House Bill 3263 2019 Regular Session: <https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2019R1/Measures/Overview/HB3263>

Rep. Margaret Doherty's Legislative Webpage: <https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/doherty>

2019 House Committee on Education: <https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2019R1/Committees/HED/Overview>

HB 3263 written testimony: <https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2019R1/Committees/HED/2019-04-24-15-00/HB3263/Details>

HB 3263 Video of Informational Hearing: http://oregon.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?clip_id=26676

Tricia Snyder is the library media specialist at Reynolds Middle School in Reynolds School District. She is a member of the Oregon Association of School Libraries Advocacy Committee determined to restore strong school libraries to every school in our state. She can be reached at triciasnyder1@gmail.com.

School Librarians Make the Airwaves: Jefferson Public Radio Interview

by Kate Weber



I had the delight to be asked to be on our local NPR station's daily interview show at the end of February: *The Jefferson Exchange* on Jefferson Public Radio (<https://www.ijpr.org/programs/jefferson-exchange>). Because I hear the show fairly regularly and had met the host, I knew I was in good hands, but it was still nerve-racking to say yes to something I hadn't done before. So I studied up the night before and braved the fresh snow on the roads - along with many nerves - to take advantage of the opportunity.

It's a short segment and there's lots I thought to say after the interview was over, but it still got the word out about the plight of school library staffing and funding in Oregon to an audience that wouldn't know about it otherwise.

Have a listen here: <https://www.ijpr.org/post/oregon-school-librarians-press-greater-numbers#stream/0> or check out the link from February 27th on the Jefferson Exchange's Facebook page.

At the very least, you'll come away knowing that you don't have to be perfect to spread the word.

Kate Weber is the President-Elect of OASL and the Grants Pass High School and District Librarian, where she gets to work with awesome teachers, library staff, students, and Dungeons & Dragons players. She can be reached at katejaneweber@gmail.com.



New State Report Cards: Good News and Bad News

by Tricia Snyder



This year, the Oregon Department of Education created a new and updated report card for every district and school in the state. Their goal was to have it be more meaningful to stakeholders and be easier to read and understand.

The good news is that the new state report cards put out by the Oregon Department of Education did value community input, and reported the number of librarians employed by the district. However, the bad news is that this number combined **both certified librarians and all library support staff into one number**. In addition, school report cards did not report the number of librarians at each individual school, which would be more telling of what actual staffing, services, and instruction provided would look like.



We were alerted to this discrepancy, and OASL President, Stuart Levy, crafted a response to the ODE Director, Colt Gill, about this misleading reporting of librarian staffing in Oregon. In addition, the Oregon Education Association President, John Larson, was also informed of this error, and he contacted Colt Gill as well. A remedy is in the works for next year. Read the letters in the link below.

We encourage you to check the report card for your own district as you may need to remind your district leaders and community that the current report card is not accurate. OASL will be checking to make sure that the information becomes updated and correct.

Link to official letters from OASL to ODE regarding the new state report cards:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1RkDeIOqf0ROATzslqhKG3L9JcipX8T012kEIRXIhpLI/edit?usp=sharing>

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How I became a School Library Advocate

by Mark Hardin



Several years ago, I walked into the capitol in Salem for my first Library Legislative Day. Long-time Follett representative Steve Baker had bullied me into attending. As we greeted each other under the rotunda, he leaned into me with gritted teeth. “They’re killing your libraries, and you people aren’t doing anything about it.”

“Well,” I said, “at least I’m here.” Steve gave me his trademark wry smile and said, “There should be a hundred more behind you. Where are they?” He had a point. At the time, licensed

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How I became a School Library Advocate *continued*...

librarians in Oregon had dwindled to just about that number. And our classified colleagues were being whittled away, with more duty and fewer hours. We had become truly endangered species.

In my 34 years of service as a school librarian, I have watched helplessly as colleagues were cut from the rolls. I often contemplated political action, but, beyond a few efforts at the local school board meetings, it never seemed the right time. After all, my 800 patrons kept me busy, especially after losing my assistant, district coordinator, and cataloger. And when restoration was discussed, the needs of other programs seemed to drown out any voices for libraries. Besides, I had a nagging fear that speaking up might just make things worse. No, better to keep my head down, work at my station, and hope for the best.

But that began to change when a group of remaining librarians in east Multnomah County districts began to meet together. Like huddled travelers gathered at the rail of a stricken ocean liner, we shared our observations and experiences. At our last meeting last spring, Deb Wheelbarger had a steaming melt down. She announced that she was done admiring the problem. Unless we worked for real change, she was finished. Deb was right. I knew it was time to get serious.

We worked together on several strategies: surveying school library staff about the real conditions in our schools; studying the existing legislation relating to school libraries; connecting with legislators, school board members, superintendents, union leaders, and political action groups - anyone who might become part of a network of support to restore our school library programs.

By the time the October 2018 OASL conference rolled around, we had enough to present some findings. "Start Seeing School Libraries!" was our call to action. OASL president Stuart Levy worked with other board members to constitute an official advocacy team. Jen Maurer, at the Oregon State Library, fed us valuable public data to inform our efforts. We testified, wrote emails, held zoom meetings, marched in rallies, and even wrote a bill for the Oregon House of Representatives. Our efforts spanned the state and reached out to others facing the same fight across the country.

As part of this expanding team, I am learning the language of legislation and refining my ability to explain and express the urgency of school libraries to lay people, administrators, and politicians. Perhaps the most important lesson in all of this is that of perseverance. At every turn, there have been setbacks. But, with each setback we gain more experience. I'm more convinced than ever that this is the right path. Our students and school communities have no one else to speak for their right to strong libraries. We can't back down, no matter what.

I hope that you will find a way to join this cause. Get your game on! There's a great community of library activists in Oregon, just waiting to add you to the team. Maybe, someday soon Steve Baker's vision of 100 or more fierce and fearless school library folks will storm the halls of Salem and bring lasting change for students in every zip code in Oregon.

Mark Hardin is a licensed school librarian at HB Lee Middle School in the Reynolds School District. He is a member of the OASL Advocacy Committee, working to restore funds and teams of licensed and paraprofessional library staff throughout the state. You can reach him at selfphone@gmail.com.

OASL Members Represent at the OEA Walkout Rally in Portland, OR

Why I Advocate

by Colette Cassinelli



Colette Cassinelli, Library and Instructional Technology Teacher at Sunset High School in Beaverton School District advocating for Oregon to reinvest in licensed librarians at the May 8th OEA Walkout Rally in Portland, OR.

In 2012, Beaverton School District eliminated all school librarians except for a District Librarian. There's a perception in the community that the librarians were hired back into the Library and Instructional Technology Teacher (LITT) position in 2015, but really the position is listed as TOSAs (Teacher on Special Assignment). While a certified license is encouraged for the position, it is not required. As a result, only a third of the secondary LITTs are certified librarians and there are no LITTs at the elementary schools (which are staffed with Library Media Assistants). Without the library background, many of the LITTs are more like technology coaches - and they do a great job - but they don't view their instruction through the lens of a librarian. I am fighting for school funding because I want the State of Oregon to fully fund schools and to hold school districts accountable for meeting the Quality Education Model with certified school librarians.

Colette Cassinelli is the Library and Instructional Technology Teacher at Sunset High School in Beaverton School District. She can be reached at colette_cassinelli@beaverton.k12.or.us.



Suzanne Peerenboom and Andee Zomeran met at the State Capitol Building in Salem on April 23, 2019 with other school library advocates to testify at the informational hearing for HB 3263. Suzanne is a Library Instructional Technology Teacher and Andee is a Library Media Assistant in the Beaverton School District.



Rita Ramstad, Centennial School District Library Media Coordinator, and member of the OASL Advocacy Committee fighting for reinvestment in certified librarians at the OEA President's Day Rally in Salem.



Certified librarians from OASL meet up at the Portland Art Museum prior to the scheduled OEA Walkout on May 8th. Members marched together to raise awareness that we need to fully fund more certified librarians across our state so that all schools can have the benefits of a certified librarian.

Kori Kunz, Teacher-Librarian at Sheldon High School and Debbie Levy, Teacher-Librarian from Churchill High School, both in Eugene, advocate for more certified librarians at the OEA Walkout event on May 8th, 2019 in Eugene, OR.



Certified librarians and library support staff gather together at the OEA Rally in Salem, February 2019. The OASL Advocacy Committee came up with the signs and banner design, and OEA had them made for the event. We continue to use them in our advocacy events.

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Why I Advocate *continued...*

Why I Advocate

by Miranda Doyle



Miranda Doyle and her husband Mark Li advocating for teacher-librarians at the May 8th OEA Walkout Rally in Portland, OR.

I thought it was important that teacher-librarians gather and march together to raise awareness about how few of us there are in Oregon -- just 158 in the latest count. Many people, including administrators and teachers, don't realize that our school libraries are mostly staffed by classified employees, who do amazing work but don't teach information literacy or promote reading in the same way that a credentialed teacher-librarian can. Even our colleagues may not be aware of research that proves teacher-librarians raise student achievement at schools that employ them.

By gathering on a day [May 8] when 25,000+ educators, families, and students marched together -- a beautiful and inspiring day of action - I hope we were able to get our message across. It was exciting to see a KATU news crew interview Beaverton librarian Rosa Rothenberger, and then to see Rosa on the news that night!

Miranda Doyle is the District Librarian for Lake Oswego School District and OASL's Intellectual Freedom Chair. She can be reached at: Doylem@loswego.k12.or

Planting Seeds of Awareness with Union Involvement

by Kori Kunz



In our recent era of disinvestment in schools and major cuts to school librarians, it has been pretty discouraging to try to advocate for the profession, but please don't give up.

With the passage of the Student Success Act, we may be looking at a turn-around, and it's more important now than ever to make sure the need for school librarians is heard.

I have found involvement in the union to be an effective place to plant seeds that have helped sprout into awareness of our plight. Whereas a few years back it was rare to hear anyone not personally involved mention the loss of library professionals, leading up to May 8th, I heard and read a variety of mentions of who is missing from our schools, and librarians were being listed.



OEA has helped raise awareness by collecting statistics on our profession, and [publishing an article in their magazine](#). I was simultaneously pleased at the publicity and horrified at the reality when I saw an OEA Facebook post that Oregon only has 158 librarians in the state--less than one per district!

While we wait for the money from the Student Success Act to arrive, we and the union should be spreading the message of what our students are missing out on without librarians, and setting the stage to pressure districts to reinstate library professionals. Please consider getting more involved! You could attend the Representative Assembly, where action can be proposed that the union can help with. We librarians are few, but the union is large, and speaking together will amplify our message. Here's to our success in an honorable mission.

Kori is a certified librarian at Sheldon High School in Eugene, OR. She can be reached at kunz@4j.lane.edu.

Another Avenue for Advocacy: Our Union

by Tricia Snyder



An area that needs more certified librarian representation is in our local union.

For years, I served not only as a building representative, but also moved up to a larger leadership role by joining our Executive Board for two years. This position allowed me to advocate for strong school libraries more directly with my local union leadership. In addition, I was able to now attend the OEA-Representative Assembly.

The OEA-RA is an annual meeting where local union members from around the state provide input, ideas, and feedback to the OEA for the upcoming year. This is a great opportunity to help put libraries on the agenda for our state union.

About four years ago, I attended as a member of my local, the Reynolds Education Association. I introduced NBI 22 which created a 10-year study of staffing patterns for every school district in Oregon. OEA worked with local certified librarians to help finalize this staffing document. It was a good first step towards collecting data and having certified librarians work with OEA.

This year, Kori Kunz, a certified librarian from Sheldon High School in Eugene who represented the Eugene Education Association, introduced and got passed NBI 24, in which she stated, "I move that OEA will use existing communication channels--including OEA magazine, social media, press releases, lobbying efforts, etc.--to educate people on the loss of, importance of, and need to restore Teacher-Librarians to our schools." She also put forth a legislative goal that stated, "I move that OEA actively advocate for restoring Teacher-Librarians to our schools with the goal of reaching an appropriate professional to student ratio and a focus on high poverty schools first." We look forward to hearing more about how these two actions will play out in our advocacy mission.

Find out how you can get involved in your local union either as a local building representative or on your Executive Board. Start a caucus for librarians in your local union. Find out how you can attend next year's OEA-RA and support other certified librarians with new ideas for advocacy and support.

The more library voices we can bring to our union, the more likely we will gain better representation. In addition, we can help others to understand our perspective and support our issues so that we can again have strong school libraries in our state. Since there are only about 158 certified librarians left in our state, amplifying our collective voice is more important than ever.

Tricia Snyder is the library media specialist at Reynolds Middle School in Reynolds School District. She is a member of the Oregon Association of School Libraries Advocacy Committee determined to restore strong school libraries to every school in our state. She can be reached at triciasnyder1@gmail.com.

OASL Advocacy Toolkit

by Jean Gritter



The OASL Advocacy Toolkit is a collection of resources to help teacher-librarians advocate for their positions and the profession on a local level or a larger scale. Resources are grouped into the areas of:

- Strategy
- Numbers and Statistics
- Infographics
- Making Your Case
- Legislative Efforts

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- Research on the Impact of Licensed Librarians
- The School Library and School Librarians: A Bibliography

We hope you'll join us at the 2019 OASL Fall Conference in Lincoln City to talk more about the Toolkit and other advocacy efforts.

<https://sites.google.com/oasl.olaweb.org/oasladvocacytoolkit/>

Jean Gritter is a teacher-librarian in Greater Albany Public Schools, and the Region 2 Representative for OASL. She can be reached at jean.gritter@albany.k12.or.us.

A library advocacy infographic created by Courtney Peterson, Reynolds High School Library Media Specialist. Reynolds School District Library Media Specialists shared this visual with staff, parents and community members at local budget input meetings. Most parents we spoke with had no idea what their library was missing. Finding ways to communicate with parents will be a crucial piece to our organizing.



When They Say...You Say...

by Mark Hardin



For decades, school libraries have been whittled away, starved, redirected, ignored, shamed, marginalized, devalued. Often, this abuse is meted out by the same school leaders who claim they support and love libraries! Here are some reflections on common claims made against the library community.

When they say:

“We don’t need libraries anymore. Kids can get what they need online.”

The internet is a rich resource of information. But it is not a curated collection. Misinformation, disinformation, inaccurate and incomplete information are common on the world wide web. In light of recent privacy breaches, gaslighting, financial excess, and social disruption linked to the internet, Tim Berners-Lee has publicly called for a reconsideration of the World Wide Web’s basic code. Libraries and library folks have a long tradition of moderation and information ethics that exactly match Berners-Lee’s concerns. A curated collection of resources creates balance and security for young people and counters some of the corrosive tendencies of an unfettered World Wide Web. Students in a strong library program have a trusted source of information literacy, develop specific information skills, and develop a sense of confidence with which to face a new set of information norms and practices.

<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2019/mar/12/tim-berners-lee-on-30-years-of-the-web-if-we-dream-a-little-we-can-get-the-web-we-want>

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When They Say ... You Say ... *continued...*

When they say:

“If we add librarians, assistants will lose their jobs.”

Library staffing isn't a matter of either/or. It's and/too. Librarians and assistants work as a team. The American Library Association and the Quality Education Model each define a strong library media program as one with licensed **and** non-licensed employees working together. OASL is a long-established association of **both** certified and classified library folks. We are unusual in the education field in this way. Librarians and assistants work together as a team. That is best for students. And it is our proud professional tradition.

http://www.ala.org/aasl/sites/ala.org.aasl/files/content/aaslissues/positionstatements/AASL_Position%20Statement_Appropriate%20Staffing_2016-06-25.pdf

<https://www.oregon.gov/Library/libraries/Pages/School-Staffing.aspx>

When they say:

“Librarians aren't “real teachers” because they don't give grades to students.”

Librarians **are** real teachers. In fact, licensed librarians commonly hold more certificates and have more training than many of their peers. Librarians are teacher leaders. Long before instructional coaches and TOSAs became a theme, librarians provided many of the same services. Librarians collaborate with all teachers, teach specific skills to each grade level, regularly use data to inform practice, and gather resource materials of many kinds to support every school curriculum. As information coach to every child and every staff member, a librarian could give grades, but rarely does so, as grades rarely improve the life-long objectives of the library.

When they say:

“We have Chromebooks and iPads now - we don't need a lab of computers in the library.”

Portable devices are great for many uses, but the library media framework is rooted in students' ability to compare and contrast various sources. Combining and matching information requires students to work with multiple screens, active at the same time. The larger format and capacity of a wired computer is most appropriate for library work. Likewise, the library needs a powerful projection and sound system for large group presentations.

When they say:

“If we staff the library, it will make class sizes larger.”

Like all school staffing, library staffing affects class size. In simple math, a school with 350 students may see an addition of one or two students per class with the addition of a librarian. Librarians are well-worth the relative cost. Like the addition of full-time kindergarten, adding and restoring librarians increases student engagement and preparation. Library skills are particularly relevant for classroom activities that are reliant on literacy. The addition of a certified librarian typically doubles regular circulation of library materials. Librarians also provide rich resources, engaging programs, continuing teacher education, and co-teaching support for the classroom. And, if you choose to see it that way, those one or two “extra” students in classrooms? An effective library program will make sure that they are not the most disruptive kids. They are the most engaged, best-served ones. Crowded class loads are a serious problem in schools. But, they are made worse by the lack of library access. Overcrowding is not caused by teaching libraries.

When they say backhanded compliments like these:

a) *“Our school library assistant is really good. They are just like a licensed librarian.”*

Great. Let's get rid of all licensed teachers in every curricular area. Think of the money we'd save!

b) *“Our school librarian is really good. They train kids to do the work of an assistant, so we don't need one.”*

continued...

When They Say ... You Say ... *continued...*

Great. Let's get rid of all classified personnel in every school. Kids can do the work. Think of the money we'd save!

Actually, it's no surprise that classified and certified library staff are highly skilled and take pride in our work. But, just like our professional organization is a collaborative agency, libraries work best when we combine forces. To say that a person who is not licensed should do the job of a teacher is a disservice to all of us. To say that it is okay for licensed librarians to work at classified scale is unfair. To say that a teaching librarian should also do all the work of an assistant or that kids can do that highly skilled work is unrealistic. Plus, especially at our secondary schools, without a team of staff members, the library must close during the school day and supervision is stretched to unsafe levels. Like the school office, it's reasonable for the community to expect the library to be open before, during and after school. We need teams of people to do that. And those people need to be compensated fairly for their excellent work.

When they say:

"We need you to do bus duty after school. Everyone takes a turn, so it's fair."

In the library I do duty EVERY day after school. I'm not complaining. But, if I am called away to do duty, I must close the library and deny services to students and staff. Is that what you had in mind? Administrators don't always realize the conditions when assigning duty. While they might not think of assigning a school secretary to duty, they miss the idea that libraries have functions beyond the bells, too.

When they say:

"I need you to teach a reading class/run the front desk/help in the cafeteria. It's just one period every day."

If I do a duty during the day, every day, I will have to block out that period and deny services to the library. I can't do both. Which kids do you want to exclude from library access and instruction? We could write a letter explaining that to their parents... Libraries are not a miscellaneous fund of FTE that can be dipped into for anything on a whim. They are a foundational part of the literacy efforts in any building, and provide an essential service in that regard.

When they say:

"The district down the road doesn't support libraries, so why should we?"

"Well, SHE did it..." is not a compelling defense for classroom misbehavior. Neither is it responsible as a method of school district policy. One line in the OAR's refers to districts matching practice to statewide norms. But, after 20+ years of disinvestment, there is no normative practice. The guide we must use is the objective language of the Division 22 legislative language and the Quality Education Model's guidelines. Doing what you think someone else is getting away with is not ethical or responsible. This situation calls for leadership.

When they say:

"We just can't afford libraries in the budget."

Budgets don't make people do things. People make budgets do things. Funding strong libraries is a matter of priorities. But strong libraries are also expected in the Division 22 code. And, they are clearly defined in the attached OAR's. So, school boards need to choose between not complying with the law, or funding strong school libraries. Up until now, districts without strong library programs have claimed compliance. That's not right. The annual Division 22 Compliance Report, required on every district web page (usually in the January school board notes) every year, should reflect the actual status of library programs on line 581-22-2340.

When they say:

"We already have classes for reading writing and computing. So, we don't need a library."

continued...

When They Say ... You Say ... *continued...*

The purposes of regular classrooms and the purposes of a strong library program that serves them can complement each other. But they are not interchangeable. Students need a rich library laboratory in which to explore and put to use the reading, writing, and computing skills introduced in classrooms. Classrooms cannot possibly provide the wide array of materials and various reading and interest levels that a library program offers. Nor can classroom teachers be expected to teach the specialized content in the Oregon School Board-approved Library/media skills framework. Fully funded libraries actually save districts money, providing curated collections that are shared, evolving, and inventoried. Strong school libraries are a key wrap-around service in the schools they serve.

When they say:

“We have a great district librarian who writes plans for our non-licensed library assistants. They don’t ‘teach,’ but they ‘train’ kids using those excellent plans.”

Get real. Teaching is teaching. Assistants may help deliver instruction under supervision, but the assumption is that a properly licensed supervisor is physically present in the building, if not in the room, at the time. If the model of distant supervision is okay for library skills, then it must be okay for all subject areas. And that is obviously not the practice.

We continue to be called on to defend our professional responsibilities and our vision of a library’s support for student learning and development. Hopefully, these discussions will help move the conversation forward.

Mark Hardin is a licensed school librarian at HB Lee Middle School in the Reynolds School District. He is a member of the OASL Advocacy Committee, working to restore funds and teams of licensed and paraprofessional library staff throughout the state.

What You Can Do

by Tricia Snyder



Remember, even though we are few, we are mighty--especially as we get organized and active. Here are some ideas of strategies we have tried this year in East Multnomah County and with the OASL Advocacy Committee.

- Start to organize librarians regionally in order to support each other and not have districts play you off of one another. In East Multnomah County, we meet every few months to stay connected and update each other on what is going on. Start a Facebook page for your group or organize via email.
- Use data and keep it up-to-date with regards to staffing FTE (both with certified and classified staff), books and materials budgets (both district and building allocations), access/hours open, technology access for the library, circulation statistics, and anecdotal evidence. Have it ready in order to advocate.
- Meet with individual school board members to share with them the reality of your district library program – don’t forget to include data! – and to suggest what is needed to move towards being an effective and strong school library. Invite them into your library. Find your allies.
- Schedule a meeting with your superintendent in order to advocate for reinvestment and to explain your current situation as well as suggestions for reinvestment. Invite your superintendent into your libraries.
- Pay attention to your district’s budget meeting schedule and process. Usually, districts meet in the fall to start discussing priorities. Make sure libraries are brought up in these meetings. Organize and bring

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parents and other community allies in as well. Be the squeaky wheel. Many people don't realize there is a problem as they only see someone in the library and that it is open. By January, districts are making their priorities more concrete so they can present to the public in April. Speak up at these meetings as well. Get organized, and once again, bring in allies such as parents or local public libraries to help show support.

- By law, districts must publish on their website their Div. 22 [compliance report](#) to the public by February 1. Often, districts share this at their board meetings in January or February. Look for [581-22-2340](#) Media Programs and see if they have checked the box for compliance. Keep track of this for past and current years. Add this to your data collection of what has been reported vs. what actual staffing and materials investment has been. Look to see if your district ever reported compliance even with zero staffing of certified librarians. Look to see if they noted "not in compliance" with an explanation of recommended changes.
- Attend PTA meetings to help educate on what has been lost due to cuts of certified librarians and how this loss also overwhelms and puts the burden on classified library assistants.
- Remember to advocate for a team of both certified and classified staff at each library--ideally full-time at each if possible. Both roles are of value and a strong school library needs both.
- Contact your local legislators and set up a time to meet with them to discuss your concerns about reinvesting in strong school libraries.
- With the passage of the Student Success Act, make sure to be a voice at the table for when districts plan for their investment choices. Be ready to advocate with data, research, and OARs. If school libraries are funded in your district, funding won't kick in until the 2020-21 school year. So in this 19-20 school year, start speaking up, attending meetings, and getting organized.
- Get to know the OARs we have mentioned. Use them and your data to help advocate for your district to reinvest as required per [OAR 581-22-2250](#), regarding your district Continuous Improvement Plan expectations and process.
- Get involved in your local union and start bringing up libraries. If you are a building representative, bring your concerns to your regular representative meeting; if you can elevate your involvement to being part of your local executive board, you can bring libraries in more at the decision-making level and then attend the Oregon Education Association Representative Assembly in April. The OEA-RA is a collection of rank and file members creating ideas, priorities, and action items for the state union organization to do for the upcoming year. Certified librarians could even create a caucus and organize themselves within the state union to build a stronger voice.
- Look for any advocates you can find to help build allies and start talking about the status of our school libraries.
- Pay attention to local school board and legislative races. Make comments on their social media pages or talk to them at their forums about the need to reinvest in school libraries.
- Speak up at local political group organizations such as your county Democrats or Republican groups to help educate.
- Use our Advocacy Toolkit for more ideas.
- Stay in touch with the OASL Advocacy Committee and feel free to contact any of us with any questions or concerns at our personal contact address or at the OASL Advocacy email address: advocacy@oasl.olaweb.org

Tricia Snyder is the library media specialist at Reynolds Middle School in Reynolds School District. She is a member of the Oregon Association of School Libraries Advocacy Committee determined to restore strong school libraries to every school in our state. She can be reached at triciasnyder1@gmail.com.

First Timer Scholarship

Have you never attended OASL's Fall conference? OASL offers scholarships to Oregon school library staff who are members of OASL (certified or classified), to attend their first OASL conference. This year's event will be held October 11-12, 2019 in Lincoln City. The scholarship will cover your registration costs and a ticket to Saturday's luncheon, at which time scholarship recipients will be recognized. Applicants will be judged on the basis of how the conference will benefit them professionally, as evidenced by both the personal response and administrator's supporting statement.

The deadline for this year's scholarship application is September 13, 2019.

For more information and application form, go to:

<http://www.olaweb.org/oasl-first-timers-scholarships>

Questions? Please contact Lori Lieberman -- scholarship@oasl.olaweb.org



eVocacy: Electronic Resources as Advocacy Aids

by Jen Maurer



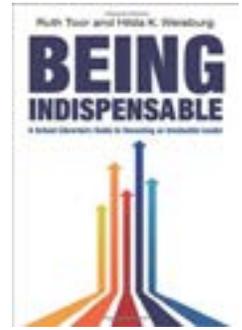
With the economic woes and school climates of late, school library staff and budgets are frequently on the chopping block. As a result, advocacy has resurged as a hot topic, specifically in terms of campaigning for strong school library programs led by licensed librarians. We hear much about the school library impact studies that correlate these programs with increased student achievement, including higher scores on statewide assessments. While stakeholders should definitely be informed about these studies, they will often respond more strongly to what they see happening in their schools, districts, and communities. As a result, school librarians

must step up to become leaders or to broaden their leadership efforts.

A key element of both advocacy and leadership is being proactive. However, sometimes we promote our library resources in a reactive manner. *Oh, it's time for the annual country report projects? Yes, Mrs. Hernandez, I'll be glad to work with your class again. How about if I teach the students how to create search strings with a country name and the subtopic about which they need more information? Great!* Yes, that is great. The librarian is teaching students how to target search results, an important skill given today's information-rich environment. But even if the librarian went to Mrs. Hernandez before she came to him, the efforts would still address just one area where librarians can be proactive – teaching information literacy skills. How often are we, as librarians, proactive in reaching out to a variety of school-related groups for a variety of purposes?

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Ruth Toor and Hilda K. Weisburg were school librarians, and while Ms. Toor recently passed away, Ms. Weisburg is still in the school library profession. Several years ago, the duo authored a book called *Being Indispensable: A School Librarian's Guide to Becoming an Invaluable Leader*, which is available to borrow from the State Library of Oregon's [LIS Collection](#). In this concise and practical guide, the authors call for librarians to know their mission and to know their stakeholders in order to know where and how to exert their influence. Toor and Weisburg divide stakeholders into four categories – administrators, community, teachers, and students. There are countless ways to proactively engage each of these groups. While librarians can use the full spectrum of their skills and the library's collections in this effort, an ideal starting point is to focus on electronic resources like subscription databases, eBooks, and websites, especially because they are easy to share with others.



Administrators

Like us, principals are very busy. In their role as instructional leaders, they must stay on top of the latest educational research but likely have limited time to do so. In your role as proactive librarian, you can talk to your principal about the journals she reads and set up a journal alert so her favorite is delivered straight to her inbox. To do that, access Gale PowerSearch on OSLIS, log in if necessary, click on Continue, click on Publication Search, and type in the name of the periodical. From the results page, click on the journal title, and then click on Create Journal Alert in the Tools box. Simply answer the three questions in the pop-up box, and click on Submit. As each new issue of the journal is added to the Gale databases, your principal will receive an email with a link to it. When she opens that email, she will remember your outreach.



Another group that falls under the heading of administrators is school board members. They want to do the right thing for students, but often they do not have a background in education. As an informed librarian, you know that The National Academies Press (NAP) offers their publications for free in PDF format, but instead of generically notifying people, or in addition to doing this, you wait for a targeted opportunity. What if at the next school board meeting, members plan to discuss how to close the achievement gap for English language learners? In advance of that meeting, you can email members the free eBook, *English Learners in STEM Subjects: Transforming Classrooms, Schools, and Lives*, as a way to share current research on the topic. Recipients will likely appreciate a summary of the book, and conveniently, one is offered on the NAP webpage for the book. If you have not contacted board members in the past, be sure to include a bit of background about yourself and your library program.

Community

Many subgroups fall under the category of community, the most immediate being parents of students. Parents who understand the value of strong school library programs can be powerful advocates. [Oregon's English Language Arts Standards](#) align with the Common Core State Standards, and parents may not understand how this affects their children. You, as a conversant librarian, know that one emphasis of the standards is understanding increasingly complex informational text. At a parent association meeting, you can present on this topic, explain how informational text differs from narrative text, and encourage parents to start reading more than just traditional stories to their children. For parents with computer access, an easy way to find informational text appropriate for their children is via the Gale subscription databases. Repeat the steps described earlier for creating a journal alert, but end by clicking on Bookmark in the Tools box. Up will pop a persistent URL, or a stable link, that leads back to the specific publication page, like this one for *Cobblestone*, an American history magazine written for upper elementary students. Parents can use Gale Bookmarks to easily get back to quality nonfiction text, and they will remember the librarian for more than just overdue book notices.



Thinking of other community members, how often do you collaborate with staff at your public library? You are

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Resource Roundup *continued...*

busy. They are busy. However, you are working towards many of the same goals, so occasional collaboration makes sense. For example, you can work with the public library to teach homeschooling parents and older homeschooling students how to use [LearningExpress Library \(LEL\)](#). Maybe your focus for one session can be preparing for college-entrance exams. After demonstrating how to create an LEL account, you can open the learning center called College Admissions Test Preparation and explore the eBooks, eCourses, and eTests related to the reading, writing, math, and science portions of the SAT and ACT. Parents will be impressed with the resources, and you will make several valuable connections in the community.

Teachers

Ah, here is a group of stakeholders with whom you interact regularly! But as mentioned before, how many of those encounters are reactive instead of proactive? Let us say one of your goals is to adopt a consistent school-wide approach to the research process. One thing you want more teachers to emphasize is background reading as a pre-search step. You know that with a bit of background reading on a potential research topic, students are better able to zero in on a subtopic, define questions to guide their research, and choose keywords for searching. So, in the fall, you approach the science teachers who usually assign a spring research paper. Because you know that portal pages in [Opposing Viewpoints in Context \(OVIC\)](#) feature an overview article, you bookmark one, like this about [vaccines](#), and use it to help make your case during your meeting.

TEACHING WITH THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

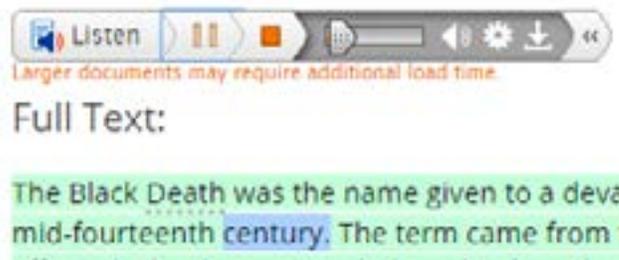
Or, maybe the social studies teachers are struggling to find resources that support the [new standards](#) in the areas of diversity and multiple perspectives. You offer to help curate resources, and because you follow the *Teaching with the Library of Congress*

blog, you know about a recent post that seems to offer an ideal primary source: “[Expanding Student Understanding of Slavery in America by Exploring an Arabic Muslim Slave Narrative](#).” With both the science and social studies scenarios, electronic resources can help you further your role as an instructional partner. But also, the more you help teachers and their students, the more likely they are to be in your corner if your job is on the line.

Students

The final group of stakeholders is the most obvious – students. A few years ago, when Dr. Salam Noor was still the Deputy Superintendent of Instruction for the Oregon Department of Education, he organized a tour of Oregon to get input from the community about education goals. Librarians had a strong presence at several of the meetings. At one point during a meeting in Salem, he stopped at my group’s table and said that he heard from librarians loud and clear, but he had not heard from students. His point was well taken, as there were students advocating for other programs like FFA, historically known as the Future Farmers of America. You assist students daily in the library, but would they fight to keep your job or program?

Trying to reach students on a new level, the next time a struggling reader is in the library doing research, take time to show him a couple of helpful features in the Gale databases – like the Listen, or ReadSpeaker, tool that will read aloud an entire article or just highlighted passages. Show the student how to change the pace of the reading, highlighting options, and more by clicking on the settings gear. Does the student need more time with the article? He can download the mp3 and listen to it later. Or, maybe it would be helpful for the student to know how to limit searches by content and Lexile levels. Gale offers a [guide](#) that you can share with the student or one of his parents to understand the steps to do that.



Much of this piece has focused on research or reading for learning, but what about another side of being a librarian – promoting the joy of reading? We all know it is important, and it is well represented in the Reading Engagement

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Resource Roundup *continued...*

strand of the [Oregon School Library Standards](#). Librarians pair students with books, teach them about authors, and more, but beyond instructing how to use the OPAC, how often do we provide students with specific tools to help them help themselves find the next book they want to read?

Once students read one book in a series, they often want to read more in that same series. Two thorough websites help readers find their way along the series highway. [Fantastic Fiction](#) comes out of the UK and includes bibliographies for over forty thousand authors. One cool extra is information about authors' recommended reads.

Juvenile Series and Sequels

More and more books for children are included, especially those for young adults. Missouri's Mid-Century Public Library

maintains a database called [Juvenile Series and Sequels](#), and reading enthusiasts can use it to search for their next book by author, book title, series title, or subject. Contributors even covered their bases and listed the [Chronicles of Narnia](#) series in chronological order and by date of publication. While you build students' independence as readers, you will also build advocates.

If you got this far, you may be thinking that you do not have time for all of this. Well, like any goal worth pursuing, you can start small and build gradually. Toor and Weisburg identified four stakeholder groups, and there are at least four grading periods in a school year. Try reaching out proactively to one group each grading period. With a little practice and persistence, this will become second nature, and before you know it, you will be amazed at the number and variety of people who understand what you bring to the table and value your strong school library program.

Resources

Being Indispensable: A School Librarian's Guide to Becoming an Invaluable Leader: <https://www.alastore.ala.org/content/being-indispensable-school-librarians-guide-becoming-invaluable-leader>

Chronicles of Narnia page in Juvenile Series and Sequels: <http://apps.mymcpl.org/juvser/author/authorID/679?id=679>

Cobblestone publication page in Gale PowerSearch: <http://link.galegroup.com/apps/pub/0BZH/GPS?u=oslis&sid=GPS>

English Learners in STEM Subjects: Transforming Classrooms, Schools, and Lives from NAP: <https://www.nap.edu/catalog/25182/english-learners-in-stem-subjects-transforming-classrooms-schools-and-lives>

Fantastic Fiction: <https://www.fantasticfiction.com/>

"Gale In Context Content and Lexile Levels" guide: <https://assets.cengage.com/gale/docs/training/In%20Context%20Content%20Levels%20Guide.pdf>

Juvenile Series and Sequels:
<https://www.mymcpl.org/books-movies-music/read/juvenile-series-and-sequels>

LearningExpress Library access on the OSLIS Find Information page: <https://secondary.oslis.org/find-information>

Library and Information Science (LIS) Collection from State Library of Oregon: <https://www.oregon.gov/Library/libraries/Pages/LIS-Collection.aspx>

Oregon English Language Arts Standards:
<https://www.oregon.gov/ode/educator-resources/standards/ELA/Pages/ELASStandards.aspx>

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Resource Roundup *continued...*

Oregon School Library Standards: <https://sites.google.com/site/oregonschoollibrarystandards/>

Oregon Social Sciences Standards:

<https://www.oregon.gov/ode/educator-resources/standards/socialsciences/Pages/Standards.aspx>

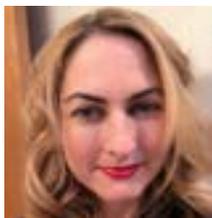
Teaching with the Library of Congress blog post about a Muslim slave in America: <https://blogs.loc.gov/teachers/2019/03/expanding-student-understanding-of-slavery-in-america-by-exploring-a-arabic-muslim-slave-narrative/>

“Vaccines” article in *Opposing Viewpoints*: <http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/PC3010999291/OVIC?u=oslis&sid=OVIC&xid=b7ae2acb>

Jen Maurer is the School Library Consultant at the State Library of Oregon, and her duties include working with OSLIS and the K-12 aspect of the statewide databases. Previously, Jen worked with the bookmobile program at the Salem Public Library and was a teacher and a school librarian for a dozen years, split between Texas and Oregon. You can reach her at jennifer.maurer@state.or.us.

Intellectual Freedom as an Advocacy Issue

by *Miranda Doyle*



The librarian’s role as a defender of intellectual freedom is clear -- it’s part of the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights, and a core value of our profession. But what does it have to do with advocacy? How can we make it clear that our mission to fight for intellectual freedom is also a key reason that schools need credentialed teacher-librarians?

First, we are the ones who understand collection development -- policies, the importance of diversity, the dangers of labeling or restricting books, and much more. Without at least a district-level librarian, book selection may be left to classified staff. Classified staff may or may not be aware of the collection development policy, and are less likely to write one if needed. They may not initially understand, for example, the importance of professional reviews, or where to find them. Credentialed librarians select books with a wide view of what students and staff need and want, and then take quality and diversity into consideration.

Librarians are also critical in the case of a book or materials challenge. This applies whether it’s a book selected for the library or a part of the school’s curriculum. We develop or share the district’s “materials reconsideration” policy with staff and parents/community members. We help to ensure that district policies are followed, whether a challenge comes from a teacher, administrator, parent, or someone else. We also [report challenges](#) to the Oregon State Library or to ALA’s Office of Intellectual Freedom.

There are those who might say, “Wait, as librarians you’re actually troublemakers -- wouldn’t it be easier to just remove books without a fuss? Isn’t going through the book challenge process bad publicity for a district?” I would argue that it’s the opposite. Following district policy is always going to look better than secretly removing book. If the community or the media finds out what’s happening, and the district is

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Intellectual Freedom *continued...*

violating its own policy (or doesn't have one), that will be far worse.

How do we make sure that our administrators know that we wear this intellectual freedom "hat", along with our many others?

- Include information on the collection development/reconsideration policy as part of your annual report.
- Celebrate Banned Books Week and talk to your students and staff about the role of librarians.
- Share news articles about challenged materials in other districts, along with your own district's policies, to raise awareness.
- Help teachers understand that you will be their ally should questions arise about independent reading materials or books assigned to classes. Teachers are concerned about intellectual freedom as well; make sure your English teachers are aware of the [National Council of the Teachers of English Statement on the Student's Right to Read](#). Science teachers, health teachers, and really teachers in every subject also have a stake in this issue.
- Point out that a solid collection development policy and purchases reviewed by a professional librarian will help prevent trouble; non-librarians may accidentally buy inappropriate material or add donated books that aren't grade-level appropriate.
- If there is a challenge, gather reviews, forms, policies, and resources for your administrator. Reach out to Oregon's Intellectual Freedom Committee -- I'm a member -- or ALA's Office of Intellectual Freedom for help.

When our administrators understand that teacher-librarians are essential for building collections that districts can defend, they are more likely to advocate for more librarians. It's important that we share our role in protecting our schools and districts in case of a challenge, and our role in building a diverse, age-appropriate, professionally reviewed, well-weeded collection that can better withstand challenges. Once teachers and administrators understand that librarians are allies for intellectual freedom, and can assist with both preventing and handling complaints, they will have yet another reason to value us.

Miranda Doyle is OASL's Intellectual Freedom Chair. She is district librarian for Lake Oswego School District and a member of the Oregon Intellectual Freedom Committee. After 23 years as a librarian (in both public and school libraries), she dealt with her first formal book challenge this school year. Fortunately, the challenge was dropped after the first meeting. She can be reached at doylem@loswego.k12.or.us.

From the Paraprofessional

by Laura Stewart



Library paraprofessionals managing collection development? For many of us around the state, yes, we select and purchase the books for our library. I think most of us feel the urgency to purchase diverse books for our increasingly diverse student populations. We are always on the lookout for titles that feature protagonists of color and other underrepresented groups. In our excitement/relief to find these titles, pausing to consider who authored the book and from what vantage point is good practice. For example, does the author come *from* that underrepresented community and write authentically, or is the author writing from a position of “the majority” telling an underrepresented group’s story? This has been an ongoing collection development conversation in our district, particularly in terms of seeking out counter-narratives in the books we purchase that feature protagonists from minority communities.

What exactly does counter-narrative mean? Educator Raul Alberto Mora explains,

A counter-narrative goes beyond the notion that those in relative positions of power can just tell stories of those in the margins. Instead, these must come *from the margins*, from the perspectives and voices of those individuals. A counter-narrative thus goes beyond the telling of stories that take place in the margins. The effect of a counter-narrative is to empower and give agency to those communities. By choosing their own words and telling their own stories, members of marginalized communities provide alternate points of view, helping to create complex narratives truly presenting their realities.

A little research to seek out minority authors—black authors, Muslim authors, LGBTQ authors, Native American authors, authors with disabilities, etc. can really point us in the right direction when we’re considering diverse books to purchase for our libraries. Does that mean we need to weed out all those books written by white authors featuring minority characters? No, but seeking out counter-narrative books will help balance our collections. When author Mitali Perkins spoke at the OASL conference last fall, she reminded us that children receive story with fewer defenses, and those stories shape what’s “below the waterline” of their psyches. This is at the heart of why our students need access to a diverse collection—for some students to see themselves mirrored and validated in the books they read, and for other students to learn understanding of those who are different from themselves.

While the publishing world is responding to the growing demand for diverse books written by minority authors, for some of us, what’s available still doesn’t represent the full spectrum of diversity in our student populations. I’m optimistic that the more books by minority authors are purchased, the more diverse books will be published. Those of us who work in libraries are a crucial part of that cycle.

Mora, Raul Alberto. “Counter-Narrative.” *Key Concepts for Intercultural Dialogue*, no. 36, 2014.

Adichi, Chimamandra Ngozi. “The Danger of the Single Story.” *Ted Talks*, Ted , 7 Oct. 2009. *YouTube*, www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9Ihs241zeg.

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BEVERLY CLEARY CHILDREN'S CHOICE AWARD

by Libby Hamler-Dupras

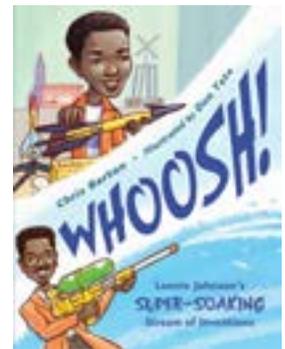
Happy 103rd Birthday Beverly Cleary!!

17th Year of the BCCCA!

Oregon born author, Beverly Cleary's birthday is on April 12th, and the Beverly Cleary Children's Choice Award (BCCCA) Committee is proud to announce that over 1,635 children from Oregon and other states participated in voting for their favorite 2018-2019 BCCCA nominee, and the winner is.....

***Whoosh! Lonnie Johnson's Super-Soaking Stream of Inventions* by Chris Barton!**

Thank you to all the school libraries, public libraries and classroom teachers for promoting and encouraging your children to participate in this delightful children's choice award.



For more information on the BCCCA program, please go to the BCCCA homepage <https://ola.memberclicks.net/bccca-home> and also go to <https://ola.memberclicks.net/bccca-nominees> to start reading the 2019-2020 BCCCA Nominees! The Powerpoint, Animoto, bookmarks, fliers and spine labels, and student online ballot are being updated.

Announcing the 2019-2020 BCCCA Nominations

Citro, Asia. ***Dragons and Marshmallows*** (Zoey and Sassafras #1)

Eggers, Dave. ***Her Right Foot***.

Florence, Debbi Michiko. ***Jasmine Toguchi, Mochi Queen***.

Johannes, Shelley. ***Beatrice Zinker, Upside Down Thinker***.

Keating, Jess. ***Shark Lady: The True Story of How Eugenie Clark Became the Ocean's Most Fearless Scientist***.

Miedoso, Andres. ***The Haunted House Next Door***. (Desmond Cole Ghost Patrol, #1)

Schlitz, Laura Amy. ***Princess Cora and the Crocodile***.

Please email Libby Hamler-Dupras, BCCCA Chair, at elfgirl@Q.com if you have any questions or concerns about the BCCCA program.





Hello! The OLA-WLA Conference is over and the Oregon Reader's Choice Awards [website](#) is updated, which means we can announce the 2019 ORCA winners and 2020 nominees!

ORCA is pleased to announce the following 2019 winners:

- Upper Elementary (grades 3-5): *The Wild Robot* by Peter Brown
- Middle School (grades 6-8): *Ghost* by Jason Reynolds
- High School: (grades 9-12): *Scythe* by Neal Shusterman

ORCA is also excited to announce the following 2020 nominees:

Upper Elementary:

- *Amina's Voice* by Kena Khan
- *Her Right Foot* by Dave Eggers and Shawn Harris
- *I'm Just No Good at Rhyming* by Charis Harris and Lane Smith
- *The Losers Club* by Andrew Clements
- *Spirit Hunters* by Ellen Oh
- *Stef Soto, Taco Queen* by Jennifer Torres
- *The Vanderbeekers of 141st Street* by Karina Glaser
- *Wishtree* by Katherine Applegate

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Oregon Reader's Choice Awards *continued*...

Middle School:

- *All's Faire in Middle School* by Victoria Jamieson
- *Beyond the Bright Sea* by Lauren Wolk
- *Frogkisser!* by Garth Nix
- *One Trick Pony* by Nathan Hale
- *Podkin One-Ear* by Kieran Larwood
- *Refugee* by Alan Gratz
- *Restart* by Gordon Korman
- *Scar Island* by Dan Gemeinhart

High School:

- *The 57 Bus* by Dashka Slater
- *The Epic Crush of Genie Lo* by F.C. Yee
- *Far From the Tree* by Robin Benway
- *The Gentleman's Guide to Vice and Virtue* by Mackenzi Lee
- *Goodbye Days* by Jeff Zentner
- *Long Way Down* by Jason Reynolds
- *Moxie* by Jennifer Mathieu
- *They Both Die at the End* by Adam Silvera

On our website, you will find bookmarks and the slides from the OLA-WLA Conference on the [Resources tab](#). A more comprehensive resource guide for the 2019-2020 lists will be made available this summer. 2020 is the 10th anniversary of the Oregon Reader's Choice Awards, so we're looking forward to celebrating these new lists.

If you have any questions about the Oregon Reader's Choice Awards, please don't hesitate to contact Chairperson MacKenzie Ross: orca@olaweb.org



**Congratulations to the following 2019
OBOB State Tournament Championship
Winners by Division:**



*Elementary winners ---
James John Elementary School
(Portland Public Schools)*



*Middle School winners ---
West Sylvan Middle School
(Portland Public Schools)*



*High School winners ----
Creswell High School
(Creswell Public Schools)*



Oregon Association of School Libraries

(OREGON EDUCATIONAL MEDIA ASSOCIATION)

PO Box 3067, La Grande, OR 97850

OASL/OEMA INTERCHANGE welcomes submissions of interest to OASL members. Successful activities, project ideas, and news from the field are all welcome. Share information and ideas by sending a contribution today. If you have questions, contact the people listed below and we will be happy to help you.

INTERCHANGE

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Fall 2019 Guest Editor: Sudi Stodola.
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