

VSLA Fights To Keep Libraries in Standards

Earlier this year, a review committee designated by Vermont’s Board of Education to overhaul its State Education Quality Standards quietly revised the documents to remove the words library and library program, despite recommendations from the Vermont School Library Association (VSLA). The VSLA and Vermont State Librarian Marty Reid have been working tirelessly ever since to get the language reinstated, VSLA president Denise Wentz told *Hotline*.

VSLA’s advocacy efforts on the issue date back to August, explained Wentz, librarian at the PreK–2 Allen Brook School in Williston, VT. It was then that Judith Kaplan, school library media studies coordinator at the University of Vermont, discovered a final draft of the revised standards online. Kaplan was “surprised to see that the language about school libraries and staffing was red-lined,” Kaplan said.

Though VSLA experts in June had submitted library-specific language to the committee—which began working on its rewrite of the standards in October 2012—none of that wording was incorporated into any of the

monthly working drafts or the final draft that the committee sent to the state board (which is now called the Agency of Education), Kaplan said. One of the reasons, she noted, is that “no one on the committee was there to represent school library programs.”

NO SEAT AT THE TABLE

Vermont’s state education board did have a school library media consultant at one time—starting in the 1970s—which had helped design and implement the school quality standards in the late 1990s, Kaplan said. “The school library media consultant was at the table, and staffing levels and program language were included in the original document. Unfortunately, the position was lost in 2003.”

Kaplan’s discovery of the disappointing final draft “led us into turbo mode,” said Heidi Huestis, librarian at the PreK–8 Charlotte Central School and VSLA representative for professional concerns. Though VSLA members were already set to discuss the standards at its summer retreat in August, their advocacy efforts were put on an accelerated time line in order to mobilize before public hearings on the standards took place in October. “We really needed to see if we could influence the process,” she said.

Interview

Jennifer Vinopal

As librarian for Digital Scholarship Initiatives at New York University (NYU), Jennifer Vinopal helps scholars bring their work to the web for purposes from preservation to collaboration.



How are schools making today’s humanities students more fluent in presenting their research digitally?

There are a lot of places that are integrating the use and study of technology into their curricula. There are all kinds of models there; it’s an interesting landscape.

How did you get involved in this field?

I was doing a PhD in French here at NYU when I realized I was working in the wrong field. When I first started, my first assignment was to work with a colleague and create the library’s first website, which was exciting, because I didn’t know what that was.

How is your work with scholars changing?

Rather than the “drop in at a certain point in the research” model, this is really a long-term partnership model. It’s very different, and it’s not easy just in one or several days to move from reference to partnership.

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Paralibrarian of the Year

Library Journal will honor one support staffer with the 15th annual Paralibrarian of the Year award, sponsored by DEMCO, in its March 1, 2014, issue.

Learn more to submit your nominations at ow.ly/qKztF.

Postmark deadline: January 13, 2014

A PLAN OF ACTION

The librarians then set about using every weapon in their arsenals to petition for school libraries. They created a committee to outline steps for immediate action and launched a letter-writing and postcard campaign to rally supporters in their communities.

By September, State Librarian Reid had arranged a meeting with Vermont's secretary of education, Armando Vilaseca, and Jill Remick, the project manager of the State Education Quality Standards, to whom the VSLA could state its case, Wentz said. They presented a resolution from the Vermont Consortium of Academic Librarians, signed by the library director of every college in Vermont, that said they "support the critical role of libraries and librarians in K-12 education in Vermont and strenuously oppose the proposal made by the Education Quality Standards Commission," Wentz told *Hotline*.

The VSLA also presented a letter from Eileen Kern, president of the Pennsylvania School Library Association, who shared that the removal of staffing requirements from Pennsylvania's state school code resulted in the reduction of school library positions there.

Said Wentz, "After the secretary and the project manager heard this, they agreed with us and told us that the language would be added to the standards." However, because the fi-

nal draft had already been sent to the board, this could not be done right away, Wentz said. That meant petitioning the board directly, so Wentz and Kaplan set out for Montpelier to make their public presentation.

"It was really pretty intense and pretty crazy," Kaplan said of their appearance. "We knew that, really, they didn't understand what a school library program was. So we had to show them."

Fortunately, stakeholders across the state—including students—stepped up to contribute to the testimony, Huestis said, "which was amazing to hear about."

A PARTIAL VICTORY, AT LAST

The librarians' efforts paid off—at least in part. On Tuesday evening, November 19, the board met for the final time to discuss revisions. Although its revised final draft does not include the entirety of library-specific language regarding access to instructional resources that the VSLA had requested, it does reinstate a key provision: that of the staffing requirements, Wentz told *Hotline*.

"I am thrilled," Wentz said, noting that the next step in the process is the board members' vote in December, after which they will send the standards to Vermont's Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules for final enactment.

"So that's where we are, just waiting and hoping," Wentz said. "Hopefully we won't be fighting forever."

LibraryAware Community Award

The LibraryAware Community Award emphasizes the library's engagement with the community and will recognize a library or library system that has demonstrated its ability to make its community "aware" of what the library can do for it—and has delivered on that promise. The award will be given by *Library Journal* and funded by LibraryAware, a product of EBSCO Publishing's NoveList Division.

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Connecticut's School Librarians Seek Support

When more than 4,000 school library professionals from around the country flocked to Hartford, CT, on November 15 for the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) National Conference, Connecticut's own media specialists stood at a crossroads. They faced one of the highest achievement—and budget—gaps in the United States between their state's poor and wealthy school districts. However, the potential for successful advocacy efforts is very high, according to Mary Ellen Minichiello, president of the Connecticut Association of School Librarians (CASL), and Gail Dickinson, president of AASL.

Several recent developments in Connecticut—including the State Department of Education's efforts to revamp its teacher evaluation process and the continued rollout of the Common Core State Standards—have created a receptive environment to educate stakeholders about the role of library media specialists in the schools, Minichiello told *Hotline*.

"I'm excited because I think that the standards are going to give us so many more opportunities to define and describe and substantiate who we are, because they need us," said Minichiello, a library media specialist at Calf Pen Meadow Elementary School in Milford, CT. "If they're truly going to do the Common Core throughout all curricula, they need their library media specialists there in an academic role, not circulating books."

NEW STANDARDS, NEW STAKES

Minichiello used extensive resources from AASL's database, as well as lesson plans that she gathered from school librarian colleagues throughout the state, to create the rubric, a "white paper," which debuted in

September on the state's website for superintendents and principals.

Perhaps surprisingly, Minichiello said she was actually more inspired than distressed to learn how little superintendents know about school li-

brarianship and that will inform CASL's advocacy plans for 2014.

"What it's made me understand is that the challenge is not that people out there don't care or they're indifferent or they just want to eliminate

Ohio State Opens New Home for Comics Collection

For years, Ohio State University (OSU), Columbus, has had a collection of graphic novels, editorial cartoons, and comic strips that could go toe to toe with archives the world over. What it didn't have was a space that did that collection justice. For decades, OSU's cartoon collection, which includes more than 2.5 million comic strips spanning decades of American newspapers, was housed in a pair of disused rooms in the school's journalism building. A recent move to renovated space in the University's Sullivant Hall, though, means that the decades of pop culture history housed at OSU's newly minted Billy Ireland Cartoon Library and Museum (BICLM) finally has a new home.

The new space measures 30,000 square feet, a significant upgrade from the 6,800 square foot space previously available to the cartoon and comics collection. That means the new BICLM space has a larger, more comfortable reading room for scholars studying the history of cartoon and comic art, as well as two exhibition spaces where the gems of the collection can come out to shine.

In the collection's former home, access was an issue for curators. Many items had to be stored off-site, and the small space didn't provide an inviting atmosphere for researchers, much less casual comics fans. Also, the material that was on-site wasn't necessarily easy to explore. "People know how to look for a book in

a library," head curator Jenny Robb told *Hotline*. "Our collection can be harder to navigate." With more room to display the works and a larger reading room, Robb told *Hotline* that being more inviting to the general public is a priority for the BICLM.

Creating a space that's welcoming to comics fans of all stripes, said Robb, is important because of the nature of comics and cartoons. The mass appeal of the medium means that almost everyone has a favorite character. While it's not as high-brow as other art collections, that appeal makes it just as important to preserve. "Cartoon and comics are art and literature and entertainment and commerce that millions of people consume," Robb pointed out. "OSU is positioned to be a leader in preserving those materials."

Creating a new space for that preservation presented significant demands for Robb and her staff. From single strips to comic books to full-size Sunday funnies, there are a lot of different shapes and sizes to deal with at the BICLM. "One of the challenges of our collections is the wide variety of formats we work with," said Robb. "We have works on paper, 3-D merchandise like sculptures, and now we're starting to look at digital collections as well." Working with OSU on the renovation from start to finish meant not only that Robb and her staff got to double the space they were working with for storage, they also got to help determine what that space looks like and customize it to fit their needs.



Courtesy of OSU Libraries.

library media specialists, [it's that] they do not know," she said. "But I really believe that if more superintendents understood what a good library media specialist can do, they would be advocating for them."

CASL is also working with the Connecticut Library Association to help public librarians get up to speed on the Common Core in order to serve better their children and teen patrons—thereby making its school librarians even more visible across the state. "And hopefully through AASL's conference, we're going to get some good inspirational ideas for going forward," Minichiello said.

EYES ON INEQUITY

David Bilmes, a library media specialist and former CASL president, added, "We have some of the best schools in the country, and we have...librarians whose programs have been recognized as a national program of the year. And, yet, we have some of the worst school districts in the country, too."

Poverty is the prevailing issue in Connecticut and across the nation, said Bilmes. "You could have the best schools in the world, but if the kids come in there hungry and with troubled home lives, they can't achieve academically." Closer to home, district segregation also plays a big role, he told *Hotline*.

In Connecticut, said Bilmes, "Our inner-city schools are almost all Hispanic or African American, and many of the districts in the suburbs outside those cities have one or two percent minority students in them. [We need to] address that racial disparity in Hartford and the surrounding areas."

Though nearly all the high schools in Connecticut do have certified librarians—thanks to the New England Association of Schools and Colleges's (NEASC) accreditation requirement—there is a great imbalance when it comes to the elementary and middle school level, Bilmes said, especially since there is no

state mandate for minimum library staffing tiers.

RALLYING THE TROOPS

That's why one of the sessions that Dickinson thought was most key at AASL was the presentation by Project Connect, a Follett-sponsored initiative that brings together the leaders of nationally recognized school districts with the heads of strong library programs. The panel featured Mark Edwards of the Mooresville Graded School District, NC, National Superintendent of the Year, "talking to school librarians about the kinds of stories that they should be talking about to their superintendents, showcasing what they do to support student learning."

"Sometimes that can be missing, that link between the school librarians and administrators," Dickinson said. "There needs to be more of an overt message on how school librarians work with students and teachers in learning."

People

Josh Berk was appointed Executive Director at the Bethlehem Area Public Library, PA. He was previously Director of the Memorial Library, Nazareth, PA.

Janey Davis retired as Children's Programmer at the East Canton Branch of the Stark County District Libraries, OH. She had been with the library system for 14 years.

Brandie Doyle was promoted to Circulation Services Department Head at the Russell Library, Middletown, CT. She was previously the Business and Career Resources Librarian at Russell.

Cynthia Landrum was named Assistant Director for Public Services at Oak Park Public Library, IL. She was previously Assistant Director, Mt. Lebanon Public Library, Pittsburgh.

Tuki Sathaye has been named Director, Itasca Community Library, IL. She was previously Head of Adult Services.

Kristen Sorth is now Director of the St. Louis County Library. She had been serving as Interim Director since July 2013.

The South Carolina State Library, Columbia, made three new hires: **Jessica Dame**, previously Metadata Librarian at the Georgetown University Lauinger Library, Washington, DC, was named Metadata Librarian in the Information Services Department; **Rachel Driggers**, previously an Associate at the Richland Library Blythewood, SC, was named Reader Advisor for Talking Book Services; and **Kristi Sligh**, previously Youth Services Librarian at Richland Library Sandhills, SC, was named Continuing Education Consultant.

OverDrive Rolls Out Streaming Video Pilot

OverDrive announced a new streaming video lending service first made available at the Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL) and rolled out at more pilot libraries in November. Over time, the service will be available to all libraries and schools that use OverDrive products.

Using the "Netflix-like" service, borrowers will be able to watch videos and movies on any tablet, computer, or device with an Internet connection, according to an OverDrive statement. Streaming content can be sent to any device via email, QR code, or text message if the user is browsing on the OverDrive Media Station, a shared library kiosk where all OverDrive digital content, including ebooks and audio, can be viewed. If using their own comput-

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ers, smartphones, or tablets, users can instantly borrow and watch on their device without having to email, text, or snap a code. Patrons can browse and sample videos on the OverDrive Media Station as well.

“OverDrive’s Streaming Video service allows us to expand the library’s e-media offerings while dramatically improving convenience and our users’ experience,” said LAPL city librarian John F. Szabo in the release. “There are no apps to install, no software to download—they can just click on a title and instantly enjoy it!”

Offerings at LAPL range from how-to videos to Hollywood features. According to the statement, the company’s chief strategy officer Lee Milstein said OverDrive is talking with major motion picture studios, and big announcements are coming soon.” Thousands of additional titles in all genres will be added on a continual basis.

Columbia University Press, New York, announced it will distribute titles from three new publishing companies, effective January 1, 2014: *ibidem Press*, Harrington Park Press, and Dalkey Archive.

Princeton University, NJ, donated \$100,000 to the Princeton Public Library’s stewardship fund toward upgrades to the library.

Academic Pub, the technology platform for higher education from SharedBook Inc., has added 12 publishers: Goodfellow Publishers, Kellogg School of Management, Plunkett Research, Pluto Journals, S. Karger AG, Temple University, History Press Ltd., MIT, University of Arkansas, University of Notre Dame, University of Tennessee, and University of Texas.

Publisher **Adam Matthew** has provided the **Texas State Libraries and Archives Com-**

mission with access to its online collections on the American West and American Indian Histories and Cultures.

The **New York Public Library** has acquired the archive of American author and journalist **Tom Wolfe**, including Wolfe’s interviews, drawings, research, and correspondence.

The **Colorado Library Consortium** has partnered with **Innovative Interfaces** to make the latter’s SkyRiver bibliographic services available to libraries within the consortium.

EBSCO Information Services launched **RIPM e-Library of Music Periodicals**, a collection of primary source documents for music researchers. Initially, it included 150,000 pages from 25 music journals.

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Serials Solutions Debuts Intota Assessment Tool

ProQuest subsidiary Serials Solutions has launched Intota Assessment, a collection analytics service designed to give libraries a holistic view of their serial and monograph holdings in both print and electronic formats, facilitating a comprehen-

sive, data-driven approach to collection management. Intota Assessment is the first launch of the Intota cloud-library services platform (LSP).

“Intota Assessment addresses a number of aspects of our collection. One of the things it lets us do, with respect to print and electronic books...[is] view our collection as an entirety,” said Kathryn Silberger,

senior librarian, digital content services, for Marist College, Poughkeepsie, NY, one of six Intota Development partners that have been beta testing the service since June.

Combining a library’s historical circulation data with qualitative information from sources such as Books in Print, Resources for College Libraries (RCL), Ulrich’s, and the Serials Solutions Knowledgebase, the service simplifies the process of calling up and viewing dozens of reports, such as cost per use, cost by subject, and peer analysis. Silberger pointed to the cost per use function as an example of Intota’s usefulness.

“Now, in five minutes, we can run a report and see the cost per use—what each article, essentially, is costing us,” she told *Hotline*.

Silberger was surprised to find that many relatively inexpensive journals had a very high cost per use.

“We figured we ought to check the really expensive journals, because if they weren’t getting used, that was a way of freeing up money,” she said. “But I was surprised when we would [discovered] that a journal that might be in the \$200–\$250 range was getting used once per year, year after year.”

Intota Assessment is designed to be interoperable with a library’s existing ILS and other systems and can be used as a stand-alone collection analytics solution. Assessment, however, is just the first component of the Intota LSP, which will ultimately become a new competitor in the emerging field of cloud-based Software as a Service (SaaS) suites designed to supplant the traditional ILS.

Currently, Serials Solutions has four development teams working in parallel on Intota. By the end of next year, they hope to have a full beta of Intota LSP ready for testing, including print fulfillment and financial management tools needed to transition to Intota from a traditional ILS.

Branching Out



Big news in Holyoke, MA, with the completion of the nearly two-year renovation and addition to the **Holyoke Public Library** (pictured; see *Hotline*, 6/27/11), which had its official opening on November 22. The 1902 neoclassical building, originally 25,000 square feet, gained a 15,000 square foot addition in the \$14.5 million project. The expansive renovation of the four-story facility, designed by Finegold Alexander + Associates Inc., with construction by Fontaine Brothers, Inc., incorporated new mechanical systems and up-to-date technology within the “green” building scheme. The historic interiors were “revitalized” while “marrying” with the modern addition. The entrance was moved and a huge staircase installed, as were a number of

skylights. The second floor of the new structure will encompass the 4,000 square foot children’s room, targeting infants up to sixth graders. The project also included a designated teen zone. The new Holyoke has expanded community rooms and study spaces and a larger area earmarked for the historical collection and the archive.

Lots going on in the Razorback State, too. The Central Arkansas Library System’s (CAL) **Adolphine Fletcher Terry Library**, Little Rock, closed on November 18 for a two-month makeover. The 19,030 square foot facility will get upgrades to carpeting and computer furniture, updates to the meeting room, and a refurbishment of the AV area, in addition to a new young adult space. The remodel comes as a result of a satisfaction survey instituted in early 2013; the responses from library users and nonusers alike will inform the design and focus of the \$325,000 project, funded through refinanced bonds approved by voters in 2012. Meanwhile, the **University of Arkansas at Little Rock** will see exterior improvements to its **Ottenheimer Library** spurred by a \$70,000 donation from the Ottenheimer Brothers Foundation. The 1976 structure completed other improvements this summer, such as upgraded landscaping and the inclusion of lighted signs, owing to a 2010 contribution of \$250,000 from the foundation. The newest round of entrance work will complete the library’s exterior “modernization.”

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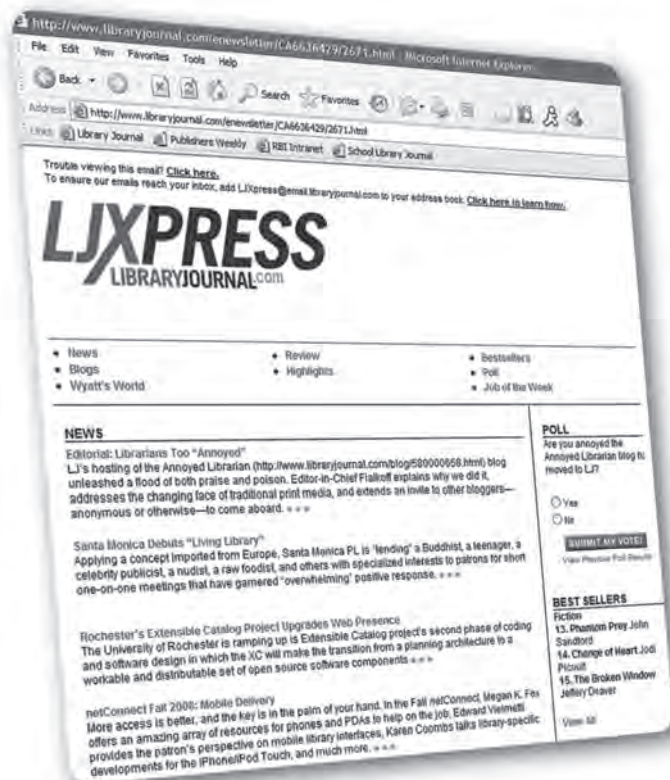
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