

**Massachusetts School Library Association  
Policy Handbook  
as of June 2019**

**AFFILIATIONS**

In accordance with Article VIII of the Constitution, the Association may maintain affiliations with ALA/AASL, NESLA, MLA, MTA, AFT Massachusetts, MassCUE, MLS, MBLC, MRA, MA PTA, ACRL-NELIG, Digital Commonwealth *and other professional organizations that the board deems appropriate*. The Association will pay any membership dues required to establish and maintain these affiliations.

**AREA DIRECTORS**

Area Directors are members of the Executive Board. Each Area Director has one (1) vote on the Board. Co-Directors share one vote. Area Directors are expected to attend regularly scheduled Executive Board meetings. Co-Directors may split this responsibility.

Area Directors will be coordinated by the Past-President or President-Elect.

The local areas served by Area Directors may be redefined by the Executive Board as current situations warrant.

Area Directors will serve as a link between personnel in their local areas and the Association. Area Directors will organize and lead a minimum of two (2) meetings a year in their local areas.

Area Directors will encourage participation in MSLA activities, and promote membership in the organization.

Area Directors will submit written Action Plans each fall and End of Year Reports before the last Executive Board meeting each year.

**AWARDS**

Ellen Berne Pathfinder Award  
Joan C. Gallagher Legislator Award  
Audrey Friend Scholarship Award  
Administrator Advocate for Excellence  
Research Grant  
Parents as Library Supporters (PALS) Award  
Katherine Lowe School Library Champion Award  
Massachusetts Super-Librarian Accolade (MSLA)  
President's Award  
MSLA Service Award  
Web Seal of Excellence

With Executive Board approval, the Awards Committee Chair(s) will determine awards criteria and the deadline to submit awards applications each year and will vigorously promote to the membership and encourage submissions. Existing criteria can be found on the MSLA website and in the Executive Board Handbook

Awards will be presented at the Association's annual conference or other suitable occasion.

## **COMMERCIAL ENDORSEMENTS**

The Association is an independent, non-profit professional organization operated in the interest of school library programs throughout the state. To insure its credibility as a noncommercial organization, it must refrain from permitting use of its name or the names of its members in their official capacities for commercial purposes. The Association's policy, therefore, is not to endorse commercial vendors, products, programs or services. At the same time, the Association recognizes valid reasons for entering into some limited relationships with business enterprises. For example, Association members do need information about and access to legitimate professional resources which may be commercial in nature. To help satisfy this need, the Association, at its discretion, may enter into limited relationships with business enterprises that provide these resources. This does not necessarily imply endorsement by the Association of any commercial product, program, or service that may be involved. Committee chairs and officers of the organization should seek approval of the Board before entering into any agreement with vendors.

Examples of practices that do not violate the Association's noncommercial policy are given below:

1. Acceptance of paid advertisements in MSLA publications for legitimate commercial products, programs, or services which are in conformance with U.S. Post Office regulations for non-profit mailing.
2. Sale of space for display of commercial products at Association meetings or conferences (may require a written agreement) Provision of opportunities for presentation of the professional rather than commercial features of the products at Association meetings and conferences.

Opportunities to enter into limited relationships with the Association must be open to all vendors. As much as possible, however, the relationship should be reciprocal in that there are mutual needs and a sharing of purposes.

There are other situations in which the Association may appropriately acknowledge the assistance of commercial enterprises without violating its noncommercial policy, e.g., donations may be accepted to support the Association's programs on a "no strings attached, no obligation" basis. Often such donations are motivated by a desire for public service and not merely for business aggrandizement. Due acknowledgment of the source of the contribution should be made in simple and dignified terms in the publication, conference program, or other work receiving support.

Commendations honoring outstanding efforts to support the Association may be issued in the name of the Association by the Board through a formal resolution.

## **COMMITTEES**

The Standing Committees shall conduct the programs of the Association as determined by the Executive Board. Each Standing Committee shall have a single vote on the Executive Board.

Sub-committees are indicated where applicable, and have no vote unless otherwise noted.

Liaisons will have no vote.

Ad hoc Committees shall be established as needed to deal with topical issues of interest to the Association. Chairs of the ad hoc committees shall have no vote.

By its final meeting each year, the Executive Board will vote to approve standing committees recommended by the President for the following year. Liaisons from other organizations and ad hoc members may include those listed under Affiliations, as well as independent schools, vendors, Student SIG, AASL Region 1 Director/Director-Elect, or others recommended by the President and subsequently approved by the board. Committee chairpersons and liaisons are expected to attend regularly scheduled Executive Board meetings.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

The Association will use a single postal address for all of its incoming and return mail. The Association will have this address appear on all of its formal and legal communications.

On a reciprocal basis, the Association may share its Membership List (names, schools and school address only) with other nonprofit library and/or educational associations.

The MSLA Office Manager will maintain an electronic discussion list for members.

A list of attendees will be provided to conference exhibitors except for members who opt not to have this information shared.

## **CONFERENCES**

The designated Conference chairperson will recommend dates to the Board for the Annual Conference. Upon approval the designated Conference chairperson will reserve accommodations.

The Association may employ, from temporary help services, up to two persons to handle all their regular and routine functions at the Association's Annual Conference, such as: registration, membership, exhibitor information assistance, etc., thereby freeing professional registrants from these duties and allowing them to partake of the conference sessions.

A Conference Coordinator may be hired whose function will include attending the Conference meetings, sending out vendor contracts, etc.

Association members who are speaking at meetings will receive no honorarium but will receive a reduced conference registration fee for the day of the presentation.

Featured speakers will receive meals and an honorarium for travel and related expenses. Featured speakers participating for two days will receive a hotel room, travel and related expenses where not covered by speaker's employer.

The conference fee may be differentiated for support staff, students, retirees, and unemployed. The fee(s) will be determined by the conference Committee and presented to the Executive Board for approval.

Individuals who cannot prove membership will pay the non-member conference fee, the difference to be refunded upon proof of membership.

A person who attends one or more concurrent sessions will pay the full day's registration.

The cut-off date for refunds for conferences and meetings is to be 14 calendar days prior to all conferences, after which no refunds will be made to attendees who wish to withdraw from the conference or meeting. The Executive Board is to be empowered to rule on any request due to exceptional circumstance.

The MSLA President will offer one day's free Annual Conference registration to the President of any of the other five New England State school library associations interested in reciprocating and the NESLA President, the AASL Region One Director. Invitees will respond to the MSLA Office Manager.

Free Conference registration, meals and two nights lodging at the conference site, double occupancy (unless conditions warrant otherwise) will be provided to the Conference Chair/Co-Chairs, President, Office Manager and Conference Coordinator.

Exhibits shall be as balanced and representative as possible, including books, equipment, and technology.

Exhibitors must give notification of cancellation at least ten days prior to the conference to be eligible to have the exhibit fee refunded except under extraordinary circumstances.

## **EXECUTIVE BOARD**

All members of the Executive Board must be members of the Association. The Executive Board may conduct business through virtual or face-to-face meetings or conference calls. Members of the Executive Board may only have 1 (one) vote, notwithstanding the number of voting positions they may hold.

Under extenuating circumstances the President may request a vote of the Executive Board by telephone. The issue under consideration must have been previously discussed by the entire Executive Board at a meeting called to order by the President.

In the event that the issue pending has not been discussed by the Executive Board, the Administrative Council, as described under Article V of the Constitution, may be convened to make the decision. Any decisions made by a telephone vote or by the Administrative Council will be reported at the next Executive Board meeting and will be entered into the minutes.

All members of the Executive Board will submit written Action Plans each fall and End of Year Reports before the last Executive Board meeting each year.

The Executive Board will make annual reports to the membership before the close of each membership year in a format to be determined by the Board.

The Office Manager will keep and maintain backup copies of all data pertaining to the Association.

## **INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS**

The Executive Board may appoint independent contractors as needed, whose term of office is subject to termination according to the contract by the appointed person or by the Executive Board.

The Executive Board shall establish and at its discretion revise independent contractors' duties, obligations and compensation.

The Executive Board shall establish and at its discretion revise a process for an annual review of independent contractors' job performance.

## **FINANCES**

Financial Reserves:

1. MSLA should maintain 10% of operating costs (approximately \$10,000) in a reserve account. Spending this reserve requires Board approval.
2. MSLA should maintain a minimum \$10,000 combined balance in cash accounts (checking and money market). Any spending that would lower the balance below \$10,000 requires Board approval.
3. The association credit or debit card will be held by the President and Treasurer, and they will also be signers on the bank account. The credit card will not be used for expenditures greater than \$300 without Board approval.

Budget:

Each committee requiring financial assistance shall submit a budget for approval by the Executive Board. The time frame for budget submission is to be determined by the President and Treasurer.

Receipt of funds:

All funds for MSLA are to be received in the form of a check, purchase order, etc. made payable to MSLA and sent directly to the Office Manager for posting. Any funds in cash will be given directly to the MSLA Treasurer who will issue a receipt and keep a copy for the Treasurer's records.

Purchase approval:

Any single item exceeding \$300.00 in cost must be approved by the Executive Board. Failure to get approval can result in personal liability for the officer of committee chair who authorizes the expenditure.

Invoices/receipts:

Invoices/receipts must be submitted with expense vouchers when requesting payment or reimbursement.

Treasurer reimbursement:

Reimbursement checks made out to the Treasurer will be signed by the President.

Reimbursement:

All expenses by officers and committee chairpersons shall be presented to the Treasurer on the approved expense voucher.

Expense voucher deadline:

All Board members expense vouchers must be submitted to the Treasurer by the end of the fiscal year that they hold office.

Mileage Allowance:

Executive Board members in their service to MLSA can be reimbursed for mileage for traveling to board meetings or to events and committee meetings where they are representing MLSA.

Non-executive board members who are serving on Executive-Board-approved committees that provide direct benefits to members (e.g., conference committee, bookmark committee) can also be reimbursed for mileage.

MSLA will reimburse mileage expenses at the current federal standard rate per mile.

MSLA will reimburse contractual help (e.g., independent contractors, guest presenters) at the current federal standard rate per mile.

National Conference Reimbursement:

1. MLSA should spend no more than \$1000 per person for no more than 2 people, (generally president and past/elect president) to attend AASL National Conference, ALA Annual Conference, and ALA Midwinter Conference.
2. The president and past/elect president will serve as Affiliate Assembly representatives to AASL.
3. Reimbursable expenses include conference registration fees, airfare, and hotel at the double occupancy rate
4. The Board should evaluate travel spending in FY19 and revisit travel policy in one year.

Members will reimburse MLSA if they must cancel registrations and/or reservations that are not 100% refundable and previously paid by the organization.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Dues rates effective July 1, 2018 shall be:

1. \$50 for Professional members and Vendors"
2. \$25 for Retired / Paraprofessional / Unemployed
3. \$0 full-time Students.\*\*

The Board should revisit the dues structure every 3 years.

Membership categories shall be:

1. Professional
2. Vendor\*
3. Library Support Staff
4. Student\*\*
5. Retiree
6. Unemployed
7. Complimentary

## 8. Lifetime

\*Vendor members have the same privileges as Professional members. They will be listed, with links to their web sites, on the MSLA web site.

\*\*"Student" shall be defined as anyone enrolled in a college or university school library program. Members employed full time in a school library as a professional can not claim student membership.

Membership Directory, non-renewing member:

Members to be included shall be determined by:

1. Payment of dues
2. Only members will be listed.
3. Only members and reciprocating non-profit organizations will have access to the directory.
4. The Office Manager will maintain a file of lapsed members so that they can be contacted with renewal reminders and incentives.
5. Upon payment of dues, individuals will be reinstated to the Membership Directory and E-Mail list.

Honorarium for death of a MSLA Member:

When a member of the Association dies, the Association will make an appropriate donation to the library of the Association's choice.

## **NEWSLETTERS**

The MSLA Forum will be published online. A variety of feature stories and news items will be included.

Editorial Control:

The Executive Board gives full editorial control to the MSLA Forum Editor(s) who will uphold the philosophy and stated objectives of the Association as outlined in the Constitution.

## **NOMINATIONS**

President-Elect:

The President-Elect shall be a Massachusetts Licensed Library Teacher.

Any individual nominated for the position of President-Elect shall have served on the Association Executive Board during the year immediately preceding that in which he or she is nominated for the position of President-Elect in order to have familiarity with the workings of the Executive Board and to have demonstrated a commitment to Association activities.

The Nominating Committee members for the President-Elect cannot be themselves nominated for office.

The official slate of candidates recommended by the Nominating Committee of the Association shall be presented to the Executive Board prior to being submitted to the general membership for election.

If no member of the Executive Board is willing to accept the position of President-Elect, the Nominating Committee Chairperson will so notify the Executive Board and select a candidate from the membership at-large.

## **POLICY STATEMENTS**

### **Policy Handbook:**

Policy statements will be codified into a policy handbook. This handbook will be made available to each Executive Board member at the beginning of his or her term. The Policy Handbook will be updated annually. The MSLA Policy Handbook and Constitution will be available on the MSLA WebPages.

### **Policy proposals/changes:**

New policy proposals or suggested changes to established policies will be placed on the agenda for Executive Board discussion and initial approval. The second reading and vote will take place at the following scheduled Board meeting.

## **PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

### **Proactive support:**

MSLA will vigorously protect the professional standing of its members.

### **Downgrading of the profession:**

Guidelines affecting the Association's response to the downgrading of the profession are:

1. Upon notification of a situation affecting the downgrading of professional level positions, the MSLA Executive Committee will appoint one or more ad hoc members to form an ad hoc committee to investigate the circumstances surrounding the alleged downgrading. Members of the committee may be appointed based on special knowledge and/or insights into the case. The ad hoc committee will include a tenured/professional status school library teacher(s) if the situation involves a school or school system.
2. The ad hoc committee will interview all concerned parties and read available documents.
3. The ad hoc committee will make its report, along with its recommendations, to the Executive Board.
4. After reviewing the report, the Executive Board will determine whether or not the findings and recommendations be published or distributed.
5. If the recommendation to publish or distribute the findings is affirmed by the Executive Board, the findings and conclusions may be published in the next issue of MSLA Forum. The report may also be sent to:
  - Massachusetts Department of Education
  - M.T.A. with the recommendation that it be published in MTA Today and/or Massachusetts Teacher
  - Other appropriate associations.
  - If the situation involves a secondary school, the Board may notify the New England Association of Schools and Colleges of the downgrading.

Reaction should focus on any attempt by a school administration to diminish its support of the American Association of School Library Standards or of the Massachusetts School Librarian rubrics endorsed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The Association will continue to reiterate its philosophy that the school library program is implemented by a full-time licensed library teacher and that professional duties should be carried out only by personnel as defined by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.