



<https://maslibraries.org/>

Spring 2022 NEWSLETTER

News from our MASL President

President's Message:

School Libraries Moving Forward Together



Spring is just around the corner and school librarians and staff all over the state are making plans for the final trimester of what has proven to be another challenging year. While the grip of the pandemic seems to be loosening, politically motivated attacks on intellectual freedom seem to be multiplying. Our profession remains committed to its duty of providing quality information about our world for our patrons, including children. Fulfillment of this duty requires that we provide safe welcoming spaces with collections that meet the interests and needs of the population we serve. In the best of times this is a daunting and nuanced task that requires us to continuously research, evaluate, and audit our collections. We sometimes have to put aside our own opinions and preferences to provide our patrons with the information they seek. Often, we must part with materials that we love, but are no longer relevant to our patrons. And occasionally we have to be prepared to defend our collection choices when they are questioned. School librarians quietly carry out this work despite heavy class and duty schedules, staffing challenges, rising book prices, and declining budgets without much fanfare or attention. But now our profession has been thrown into the spotlight and the basic tenets of our practices questioned.

Despite all of this, school librarians are rising to the occasion. We continue to purchase, display, and recommend challenged books to our readers. We are defending our collections and adhering to our selection policies, all while striving to provide safe and welcoming spaces where all people can find themselves and their experiences reflected in stories and their questions answered in well-researched informational texts.

More than ever it is vital that we work to support each other in our work. That is why you are a MASL member and why the MASL Board and committee members continue to volunteer their time and efforts to lift our profession through community, education, and advocacy. Your MASL Board has been representing our profession in the press, hosting webinars, providing information on social media and the MASL website, sharing policies, listening, counseling, and, most exciting -- [planning our first in-person gathering since the fall of 2020](#).

The next President's Message will be written by the amazing Heather Perkinson and I will move into the position of Past President. Keep a lookout for a ballot as you cast your vote for the incoming President-Elect. While this has not been what I imagined my term would be like, a great many goals and projects I had aspired to have been left untouched, I am wildly proud of the work MASL and Maine school librarians have done through an incredibly difficult time. We turned on a dime, persevered, and held together as a community. The caliber of talented professionals serving on the board right now only underscores my belief that school libraries are thriving and have a bright future ahead. Be sure that MASL will continue to [bring us together](#) in many ways as we move forward the rest of this year and into the next.

Previous NEWSLETTERS

Honoring Ashley Bryan

This February school librarians all over the state went to school with heavy hearts upon hearing of Ashley Bryan's passing. His books and poetry filled our shelves and our hearts as we saw so many children respond to his pioneering and gifted work. He presented at a number of Maine library conferences and his encouragement and affirmation of our work inspired us to bring the "spirit of the child" into our life and our work.

You can read more about Ashley's [publications](#) and [awards](#) in the myriad of obituaries and articles that have been popping up all over the country in publications ranging from the [New York Times](#) to [NPR](#). His impact on children's literature and the art world is beginning to be more widely recognized thanks to the tireless efforts of the [Ashley Bryan Center](#) and organizations like the Indigo Arts Alliance. But for many decades librarians have been celebrating his work and flocking to his readings just to share for a short while his energy and enthusiasm for poetry and art. Here is a lovely tribute by Maine librarian and book reviewer [Vicky Smith of Kirkus Reviews](#) that captures the experience so many of us have of his life and work.

We would love to collect images of any work you are doing in your schools to honor Ashley Bryan and then share it with the Ashley Bryan Center on behalf of our organization. If you have any pictures of student work, read alouds, or other ways you have celebrated this year, please send them to Jen Stanbro (stanbrje@spsdme.org).



Photo credit: Jennifer Stanbro April 2015

MASL Mentoring Matters



Growth Agents

Become involved as a MASL mentor and be an agent for growth by offering support and expanding professional vision. A mentor can provide support through a one time message or develop an ongoing relationship. Mentoring is a reflective practice for both the mentor and mentee. Expanding connections through mentoring helps strengthen our profession and Maine libraries.

Support

The MASL mentoring chair will help connect mentors and mentees. The mentoring chair, Debra Butterfield, can be contacted at dbutterfield@msad11.org for support.

Certificate Hours

A [reflection log](#) can be submitted by mentor and/or mentee to the certificate chair to earn up to five certificate hours per school year.

MASL Mentors in Action:

- Supports goal setting, planning, learning, decision making, problem solving, and reflecting.
- Provides confidentiality, emotional support and encouragement.
- Offers resources or helps identify those related to identified needs.
- Models professional learning journey.
- Counsels, collaborates, and coaches.
- Draws upon MASL resources and standards in librarianship as a foundation for mentoring.
- Develops a mutually agreeable contact schedule and seeks support from the mentor chair as needed.
- Reminds mentee of the opportunity to submit the reflection log for certificate hours.

Resources

Lipton, Laura, and Bruce M. Wellman. *Mentoring Matters: A Practical Guide to Learning-Focused Relationships*. 2018.

[Mentorship Matters](#)

[Nine New Teacher Librarians: An Effective Onboarding Model](#)

[The Just-Right Mentoring Balance](#)

Intellectual Freedom News

Intellectual Freedom has been in the news and on our minds. This winter, Karen Silverman (Intellectual Freedom Chair) and Iris Eichenlaub collaborated with a team of education stakeholders from around the state to create a series of infographics tailored for all school stakeholders. The infographics are a proactive tool for school community members, providing resources and context on intellectual freedom in schools, relevant school board policies, talking points, and more. Check out the infographics [here](#).

Some examples of ways that school librarians are leading this work in Maine schools:

- District librarians worked with district leadership to create an info sheet on intellectual freedom.
- Shared district intellectual freedom information at a staff meeting.
- Created a webpage of books read at the different grade levels with reviews and other resources as a means of proactively avoiding challenges.
- Emailed my district and building admins. Offered to have a brief Zoom to go over some of the ways other districts are amending their policies.
- Collaborated with our union president on an email pushout to our association members, sharing the infographics and context of the project, national/local trends, as well as information about the relevant policies that are currently under review in our district. Including this statement: "Lastly, a note on self censorship, an unfortunate by-product of difficult times like these. We urge you to be both intentional in your choice of materials and also bold in your inclusiveness; you have the support of the [association] and the district to represent true history, all identities, and backgrounds."

Please reach out to MASL with any questions or concerns about Intellectual Freedom and bookmark the [Intellectual Freedom page](#) on the MASL website.

[MLTI Student Conference](#)

(5/26/2022 Virtual)

Sign up as a classroom, if possible

SAVE THE DATE

19TH ANNUAL MLTI STUDENT CONFERENCE

MAY 26TH

The MLTI team invites
all 7 & 8th grade students and
educators to join us for an
innovative virtual conference
experience like never before!

Special guests and
interactive sessions
to be announced!

Maine DOE

Check out the MLTI Student Conference Website for
upcoming details
<https://www.maine.gov/doe/learning/lit/conference>

MASL in the News

Let's hope the old adage, "There is no such thing as bad publicity" holds true for school libraries because even though in some cases we wish we were in the news under better circumstances, there is no denying that we are getting attention now.

Being interviewed and speaking to the press can be unnerving, especially in these fraught times. Intrepid MASL Board members, Heather Perkinson and Iris Eichenlaub have stepped up and spoken for school libraries in a number of instances recently in carefully selected venues with advice from more experienced colleagues in the education field to try and ensure that our profession is well represented. Here are a few links to check out in case you missed it. Congratulations and thank you to Heather and Iris!

If you are approached by a reporter asking for comment on a school library related topic, be sure to check with your administration and feel free to reach out to MASL for advice. We are not experts on media relations, but we have picked up a few tips that we can share.

Comment on intellectual freedom in school libraries from Iris Eichenlaub:

[Maine education groups call for intellectual freedom in the face of growing calls to ban books in class](#) - MPBN Arts and Culture Jan 27 2022

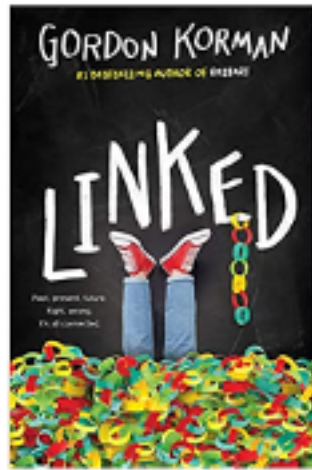
Comment on the OutMaine Inclusive Book Donations from President-Elect Heather Perkinson:

[Rockland LGBTQ organization helping school libraries to shelve more inclusive books](#) - Bangor Daily News Feb 7 2022

[Campaign helps Maine school libraries shelve more inclusive books](#) - NewsCenter Maine Feb 18 2022

Comment from Iris Eichenlaub on how K-12 School Libraries promote literacy:

[How programs across the state are helping people build literacy skills—for all ages and backgrounds](#) - MPBN Maine Calling Feb 18 2022



Book Review by Beth Andersen "LINKED"

Gordon Korman's *Linked* is a novel that addresses issues of intolerance through a story of a small-town high school that must confront a hate symbol drawn at their school. As the community attempts to heal, members try to figure out who drew the swastika and why divisions and tension arise. To make matters even worse, a social media influencer comes to the town to cover the story of the hate symbol. His coverage of the story has both negative and positive effects on the community. This is could be an opportunity to work with the school's library and technology staff on digital citizenship lessons.

[Common Sense Media's New and Media Literacy Center](#) has lessons and curated resources for educators on the topics of "Digital Dilemmas" and "Talking About Shocking News."

At the end of *Linked In*, the community develops an idea to create a Tolerance Museum. This could be an excellent collaborative project for a district's middle and high school Civil Rights Teams. Civil Rights Teams could partner with local Jewish Community Centers and take part in the virtual field trips and educator resources offered by [The Museum of Tolerance: A Simon Wiesenthal Center Museum](#) for this culminating project.

Meg Blakemore Book Review "DRESS CODED"



Dress Coded by Carry Firestone For Molly, everything starts when she sees her friend Olivia get dress coded for wearing a tank top--a dress coding that leads the principal to cancel the 8th grade camping trip and makes everyone hate Olivia. Enough is enough. Molly is sick of girls getting in trouble for what they wear, for being told they are distractions to the boys, for being made to feel uncomfortable when life is uncomfortable enough. So, she starts a podcast interviewing girls about their experiences being dress coded. As she digs deeper into the stories, she realizes just how much hurt the policy causes and bands together with a diverse group of girls to try to change it. (Grades 5-9)

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### 2022 International Association of School Librarianship conference



The 2022 International Association of School Librarianship conference will be hybrid in-person and virtual this year, and the in-person component will be held in North Carolina this summer. While it may be a hot time of year to travel to North Carolina, it might be a good opportunity to attend an international conference. If you are interested in attending, and need help, remember that MASL offers scholarships to members.

[International Association of School Librarianship \(IASL\)](https://www.iasl.org/)

## 2022 Spring Symposium News

MASL seeks presenters to teach and inform about issues related to school libraries at the 2022 Spring Symposium, which will take place on May 14 from 8:30-4 at Bangor High School. We plan to hold this conference in person but may have to switch to virtual, in which case we would ask that you record your presentation to be posted on a website for conference attendees. The theme of our Symposium is "Moving Forward Together" and will feature two keynote speakers: Nancy Jo Lambert and Maia Kobabe. We are especially interested in presentations that celebrate the accomplishments and best practices of Maine school libraries and librarians. Presentations should be no more than 45 minutes long, including time for questions and discussion. Presenters will be compensated with free registration for the Symposium. Interested presenters should complete this google form by March 15, 2022.

<https://forms.gle/zcqhvPCekr8YV74F9>

**Everyone who submits a proposal will be entered in a raffle to win a MASL mug and Dunkin gift card!**

**Visit this page to learn more about Spring Symposium and to register**

**<https://maslibraries.org/event-4688454>**



## MASL Social Media Round-Up

Follow MASL on Twitter (@MASLibraries), Instagram (@maslibraries) to stay connected! We also have two Facebook accounts, our public MASL page, as well as the private MASL Facebook Community group. What's the difference? You can think of our public page as the Facebook equivalent of a website - we use this space to promote our organization and anyone can look at any of the content, whether or not they follow the page. Occasionally we might promote a great resource or an opportunity for school library folks on our public page. Our private MASL community group requires you to answer a couple of questions to gain "entry." This virtual, "closed," space is available for you to engage with peers by sharing best practices or ideas, to ask questions or get input -- it's basically a virtual school library professional community. Iris Eichenlaub, Social Media and Engagement MASL Board Chair, pushes out our MASL news, resources, events, and school library-related content across these platforms. Have something that should be shared? Reach out to Iris - [iris.eichenlaub@fivetowns.net](mailto:iris.eichenlaub@fivetowns.net)

