

MLA Legislative Committee
May 29 - Remote***
Agenda – 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Attendees:

Jennifer Harris
Will Adamczyk
Becky Plimpton
Catherine Halpin
Eileen Dyer
Jeanette Lundgren
Jennifer Jones
Mike Moran
Noreen O’Gara
Sarah Sogigian
Sharon Shaloo
Tressa Santillo
Greg Pronevitz, Recorder

Minutes

We’ll review April 17 meeting at our June meeting.
And we’ll include notes on virtual activities.

11:00 a.m. Virtual Library Legislative Day Wrap up.

Review – high points and discuss any issues – based on our agenda
Jennifer – Intro

Region Welcome – Mike and Becky

Mike felt that the WMLA portion that Nora covered went well. We dealt with Sen. Lessor’s arrival at 10:30. It moved well and timed out well. While the Sen. missed earlier comments, there wasn’t anything we could do. He was quite engaged and discussed the COVID crisis with attendees and heard from librarians.

Becky was pleased with the number of legislators and/or aides (14-15). Rep. Higgins was a briefer than other legislators.

MBLC - James

James reviewed the Library Legislative Agenda. Will displayed the Agenda during his talk.

MSLA – Greg

We, at MSLA, were pleased to be a part of VLLD to support the Legislative Agenda and say a few words about school library activities during the crisis
Many more school librarians participated in VLLD than normally do in-person.
It was useful that Deeth Ellis could provide the briefing for the Boston meeting

Legislator – name to be added.

Next year, let's try to involve some new legislators and continue to develop our relationships with members of the Library Caucus.

Commissioner - Roland – call to action

We feel this is Commissioner Ochsenbein's last year as chair.

Engage – extra session – Will A.

Because we kept the entire meeting to an hour, most attendees stayed on. Use was very simple.

Executive Notes from the sessions: Sarah and Greg

Sarah created a summary for stakeholders and will share with the group for comments (see below). The group discussed questions. Becky will send list of legislators from 5/13. Members may share with their own legislators. Jennifer is planning a news release too.

Laura Luker, MSLA President, followed up with a message to members to call for action. Apparently, it elicited about 10-15 messages (see below).

Numbers of registrants – final numbers (note – Celeste wants numbers)

393 attended. Last year 200 confirmed and 150 attended.

91 for western

87 for central

113 for Boston/North

102 for south of Boston

At the time we canceled in-person LLD, we had 175 folks registered.

Registration may be better by event, rather than all together for four events.

Will suggested gathering a bit more info to learn where attendees are from.

Zoom may be better than GoToMeeting for higher capacity.

Engage messages generated over 500 active users.

812 activities since May 13th.

411 total actions.

377 total advocates have used Engage in the past month.

231 new registrants to Engage

619 uses of Legislative Day follow up

45 chose to send a note to your Senator (a blank slate)

42 used the language from James

Last year's figures:

46 activities

44 actions

44 advocates

Mike added that WMLA attendance was greater than normal for in-person LLD.

Recorded – can we send out (see Sharon Shaloo's email after the fact)

Yes, all four were recorded and cleaned up a bit. Might we consider a canned version for distribution next year. The budget picture for next year is bleak.

Senator Rodrigues, Chair of Ways and Means, wrote a letter to Eileen, saying he will support libraries and that State Aid to PLs is local aid, which will be very important.

The entire event if captured between 40 and 55 minutes each.

New Engage message

What's next for Engage?

Sarah's Executive Summary and Jennifer's News release.

Related discussion:

Now is time to thank legislators for their support.

Ask them to make libraries a priority.

Legislature is considering a consensus figure to work with. Construction was part of a consolidated amendment Library Construction was raised to 115M. Now in Senate Bonding. Then to Ways & Means. Then to the full House for amendments. Then, possibly to the Conference Committee.

The House and Senate are considering 1/12th budgets and allowing cities and towns to use 1/12th budgets. They're also working on possible virtual town meetings and city council meetings.

2021 – Both methods – at State House and Virtual?

Tabled to June 19th meeting at 11am-1pm.

Other Business

The LibraryLand.com guys are attempting to encourage WBUR to host some libraries about reopening, Greg reported. He felt that this is not a Legislative Committee endeavor as LibraryLand has taken the lead. They were on the radio recently, see: <https://www.wgbh.org/news/local-news/2020/05/20/local-libraries-stay-free-and-open-to-all-despite-closing-their-doors>

Can we use the essential nature of libraries as a call for funding well, Tressa suggested?

Mary Rose discussed conversations with Mayor Rivera (Lawrence) and the MMA. MMA is asking for guidance from MBLC for guidelines.

12:00 p.m. Continued Advocacy with Legislators

12:15 p.m. Adjourn

NOTE – Senators and Representatives in attendance:

May 12th – WMLA –
Senator Eric Lesser

May 13th – CMLA
Rep. Joe Mckenna
Rep. David Muradian
Rep Stephen Hay
Rep Todd Smola

Rep Carolyn Dykema
Rep Hannah Kane - represented by Anna Darrow
Rep Kim Ferguson - represented by Brianna Whelan
Rep Brian Murray
Rep Michael Soter
Rep Eric Eisner
Rep Natalie Higgins
Sen. Anne Gobi
Sen. Ryan Fattman
Sen. Michael Moore - represented by Julie del Sobral

May 14th 10 a.m – Boston and North

Rep. Brian Murray
Rep. Michelle Ciccolo's Aide
Sen. James B. Eldridge
Sen. Crictore (?) Aide
Sen. Brendon Crighton's Aide

May 14th 11:30 a.m. – Boston and South

Rep. Patrick Kearney and his Aide – Kathy Baxterr
Rep. Mathew Muratore and his Aide – Betty DeBenedictus
Rep. Kathy LaNatra
Senator Michael Rodriques – Aide – Caitlin Rowley
Rep. Haddad's Aide – Michael Rugenstein
Rep. Steven Howitt
Rep. Joan Meschine
Senator Patrick O'Connor and Aide – Anthony

Future Meetings: 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. Friday JUNE 19

Massachusetts Library Association and Massachusetts School Library Association

Virtual Library Legislative Legislative Town Halls 2020

The [Massachusetts Library Association \(MLA\)](#) and the [Massachusetts School Library Association \(MSLA\)](#) co-hosted four virtual opportunities in May, 2020 for members to connect with legislators to advocate for Library Funding.

Almost 400 library workers and supporters attended the sessions, held on GoTo Meeting. Each session, some planned with local advocacy groups like the [Western MA Library Advocates](#) and the [Central MA Library Advocates](#), presented the MA Board of Library Commissioners Legislative Agenda and advocacy points from MSLA.

MLA and MSLA support the [FY21 Library Legislative Agenda](#). Now, more than ever, libraries will rely on **State Aid to Public Libraries (Line item 7000-9501)** to lead their communities in their recovery efforts from the COVID-19 crisis. History shows that library use increases dramatically in periods of economic and social instability. Massachusetts libraries stand ready to support all the needs of their communities, but especially the educational and workforce development needs are so critical to many members of the public. Library funding suffered after the 2002 and 2009 recessions at the same time the need and use of libraries increased. It's critical that state funding for libraries is supported as we head into a time of tremendous recovery.

The Massachusetts School Library Association introduced the "[Virtual School Librarian](#)" to connect school librarians and students in nearly 1,000 school libraries across the Commonwealth, providing them access to vetted online resources, and the opportunity to pose questions to a licensed school library teacher who is well qualified to assist in intelligently sorting through masses of data. School library teachers are working with faculty to develop and support remote teaching with tools to instruct students in use of essential online resources, many of which are MBLC-funded. In some schools, the only virtual resources are those provided with state funding which supports equity of access to information.

The 369 public libraries in Massachusetts - located in virtually every city and town – offer tremendous resources. They level the playing field for access to information, resources, and services. Recognized and trusted as a source for vetted and unbiased information, they support education, employment, enrichment, literacy, and so much more. They provide space for communities to come together, work together, create together, and learn together. Especially in these deeply challenging times.

We are incredibly grateful to the Library Legislative Caucus, and the co-chairs, Rep. Natalie Higgins, Rep. Brian Murray, and Senator Eric Lesser for their work in advocating on behalf of libraries and library users across the Commonwealth. We also thank the legislators who took time from their busy schedules to talk with us on our calls:

May 12th – co-hosted with the Western MA Library Advocates (WMLA) –
Senator Eric Lesser, Library Legislative Caucus Co-Chair

May 13th – co-hosted with the Central MA Library Advocates (CMLA)
Rep. Natalie Higgins, Library Legislative Caucus Co-Chair
Rep. Brian Murray, Library Legislative Caucus Co-Chair

May 14th 10 a.m – Boston and North
Rep. Brian Murray
Rep. Michelle Ciccolo's Aide
Sen. James B. Eldridge
Sen. Brendan Crighton

May 14th 11:30 a.m. – Boston and South
Rep. Patrick Kearney and his Aide – Katie Baxter
Rep. Mathew Muratore and his Aide – Betty DeBenedictus
Rep. Kathy LaNatra
Senator Michael Rodrigues – Aide – Caitlin Rowley
Rep. Patricia Haddad's Aide – Michael Rugenstein
Rep. Steven Howitt
Rep. Joan Meschino
Senator Patrick O'Connor and Aide – Anthony^[MOU2]

Contact^[MOU3] :
Jennifer Harris, MLA Legislative Committee cCo-Chair
JHarris@townhall.plymouth.ma.us

William Adamczyk, MLA Legislative Committee Co-Chair
wadamczyk@ocln.org

Gregory Pronevitz, MSLA Director of Outreach
greg@pronevitzconsulting.com

Dear MSLA Members,

I hope that you are doing well and finding success in your work, despite the current situation.

Last week nearly 400 Massachusetts library workers and supporters gathered virtually to urge state legislators to support the [Library Legislative Agenda](#) the Commonwealth's libraries at Virtual Library Legislative Day. There was a strong sense of urgency because school and public libraries - vital and essential institutions - need support. State support for libraries more important than ever, especially to school libraries with support for online databases and ebooks.

The Massachusetts School Library Association introduced the "[Virtual School Librarian](#)" to connect school librarians and students in nearly 1,000 school libraries across the Commonwealth, providing them access to vetted online resources, and the opportunity to pose questions to a licensed school library teacher who is well qualified to assist in intelligently sorting through masses of data. School library teachers are working with faculty to develop and support remote teaching with tools to instruct students in use of essential online resources, many of which are MBLC-funded. In some schools, the only virtual resources are those provided with state funding which supports equity of access to information.

The 369 public libraries in Massachusetts - located in virtually every city and town – offer tremendous resources. They level the playing field for access to information, resources, and services. Recognized and trusted as a source for vetted and unbiased information, they support education, employment, enrichment, literacy, and so much more. They provide space for communities to come together, work together, create together, and learn together. Especially in these deeply challenging times.

Ask your State Representatives and Senators for your home and school's location to support all of the lines in the Library Legislative Agenda to the best of their ability. Library funding suffered after the 2002 and 2009 recessions at the same time the need and use of libraries increased. Let's make sure state funding for libraries is supported as use increases during the current economic crisis.

Now, we're urging you to call upon your elected officials to support libraries! We suggest including information about why you believe that libraries are important in your message.

You can find contact information for your State Legislators at [LINK](#) to call their office or send them an email, or

You can visit the Massachusetts Library Association's Engage site to send a prepared message that you can customize with a sentence about your library. It only takes a minute! at [LINK](#).

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Take care,
Laura Luker, President
MSLA