

**Speech for Candidate Forum, AASL Affiliate Assembly
February 1, 2015
ALA Midwinter Conference, Chicago, IL**

Good morning. It is an honor to stand here this morning as a candidate for the office of president-elect of AASL.

On your table you have buttons with my hashtag #Audrey4AASL and ink pens with the URL to my Web site. My biographical information, the qualifications that I bring to this office, and my position statement are posted there so I'd like to take this few minutes we have here together this morning to share some thoughts with you.

My first experience with AASL was in 2000 at Affiliate Assembly, ironically, in Chicago when I was president of VEMA, the Virginia Educational Media Association, now VAASL.

I have had the privilege to work in our wonderful field for 35 years-- 20 years as a school librarian and 15 years teaching teachers to be school librarians.

I would suggest that no job in the field of education has changed as much in the past 35 years as that of being a school librarian. What an exciting job we have:

--to ensure that students and staff are effective users of ideas and information

--on a daily basis--to empower learners to be critical thinkers, enthusiastic readers, skillful researchers, and ethical users of information.

And, as an organization—to empower leaders to transform teaching and learning!

Our new strategic plan, adopted by the AASL Board of Directors at annual conference in June in Las Vegas, focuses on three critical issues:

- 1—association relevance—as an association, becoming a stronger voice for school librarians and the profession
- 2—membership development—AASL growing and strengthening its community including relations with affiliates, and
- 3—association governance and leadership—improving the effectiveness and efficiency of our internal governance structures.

Advocacy begins with each of us!

We must continue to work

- toward having a qualified librarian in every school;
 - we foster reading and inquiry, we help children to develop a love of literature and authors and to become literate in multiple ways
 - we have correlation studies that show that when we have strong library programs with strong school librarians, student achievement is higher; it is time to explore causation, and the Community of Scholars Task Force has begun to address this.
 - Every child deserves the services of a qualified school librarian!

We must continue to work

- to insure that we have quality school librarian preparation programs; and
 - candidates well prepared to do this wonderful job
 - as we work as an association to revise and update the learner standards and school library program guidelines, our standards for librarian preparation programs will be coming up for revision as well.

Finally, we must continue to work

- to educate stakeholders regarding key contributions strong librarians and strong library programs make to instruction.
 - My research shows that 92% of principals in Virginia learn what librarians do from librarians with whom they work.
 - Gary Hartzell says administrators are typically not against us, they are just not for us
 - Recent research that Marcia Mardis and Nancy Everhart completed in PA indicates that stakeholders support us once they know and fully understand what we do as 21st century school librarians.
 - We have work to do with all of our stakeholders.
 - Advocacy begins with each of us!

Let me close by saying that I hope that you will vote in the election that begins in late March.

Please encourage members of your state organizations to vote.

If I am elected as your next president-elect, it will be an honor and a privilege to serve you and AASL.

Advocacy begins with each of us!