

**Final Proposal, 12/14/10**  
**OASL-OLA Merger**

This is a proposal to merge the Oregon Association of School Libraries (OASL) with the Oregon Library Association (OLA) as a semi-autonomous division similar in structure to the Academic Division (ACRL-Oregon).

**Rationale:**

As OASL continues to expand with such programs and activities as the Oregon Battle of the Books, Oregon School Library Information System, Beverly Cleary Children's Choice Award, and Oregon Readers' Choice Award, and as it continues to seek grant funding for these and other programs, the need for management support, particularly financial management and bookkeeping, exceeds that which can be provided by its current volunteers members. Furthermore, political activities such as the recently passed Oregon House Bill 2586 require professional lobbying services.

At a recent AASL Division meeting in Washington DC, other states were shocked at the amount of projects that fall under the OASL umbrella.

In short, OASL has become large enough to require consistency in operational management beyond a team of revolving volunteer officers; additionally, we are large enough to now benefit from and contribute to collective activities.

Moreover, promoting reading and providing information literacy instruction is not simply a K-12 pursuit. Early childhood literacy, college and university instruction, and lifelong adult learning are integrally tied to K-12 education and point to the need for all librarians to work collaboratively in order to effectively serve the needs of all.

We are faced with options, all of which require some change in the status quo:

We may elect to curtail our activities to those which a volunteer organization of our size can reasonably accomplish (i.e., yearly statewide and regional conferences and bi-yearly summer institutes, as well as annual awards and scholarships).

We may elect to hire further financial and other needed management support.

We may elect to merge with another like organization in order to pool needed management resources.

We have no desire to abandon the highly successful and educationally important programs that have been developed in recent years, thus we must eliminate the first option.

The second option is viable, but the cost and complexity involved (especially for hiring a lobbyist without jeopardizing our not-for-profit status) provides no particular advantage.

Moreover, it does not address the need to collaborate in providing services.

A merger with a like organization that already has the infrastructure in place that we need can potentially afford mutual advantages to both organizations, as well as to the clients we serve.

OLA is not the only potential organization with which to merge. Since we represent an educational profession, a merger with the Oregon Education Association has also been suggested. However, OEA and the Oregon Federation of Teachers represent education professionals in general, and avoid advocating for one category of teachers over others.

**Significant Reasons for an OLA-OASL Merger:**

To create an organization that promotes information literacy and reading motivation for all Oregonians, from birth through adulthood, resulting in:

Cost-sharing of association management and organization infrastructure (i.e., bookkeeping, web and membership management, lobbying activities, etc.)

Seamless advocacy, coordinating all library efforts and maximizing our strength in numbers

Joint membership on committees like Oregon Authors, Intellectual Freedom, and Legislative committees, expanding the pool of knowledgeable staff contributing

Joint support of reading awards like the Oregon Readers Choice Award, the Beverly Cleary Readers Choice Award, and programs like the Oregon Battle of the Books and The Oregon Summer Reading Program

Cross-library input into information literacy guidelines and standards for students from pre-kindergarten through their college years and beyond, enhancing opportunities for collaborative skills development

Shared experiential knowledge between types of libraries such as managing volunteer programs, teaching information skills, and managing collections

A global perspective about all types of libraries and the continuum of service fostering a richer library experience for all stakeholders

Future collaborative projects between divisions

**Organizational Structure:**

OASL would retain the following:

The name Oregon Association of School Libraries, as a division of OLA

OASL Board

Budget

By-laws (except where they might be in conflict with OLA by-laws)

Annual and regional conferences and conference profits  
Committees, awards, and projects (OBOB, OSLIS, etc. )  
Connie Hull funds, Norma Zabel, and Petrie scholarships  
Grants, and the ability to apply for future grants  
Journal  
Website content  
Ability to contract w/ additional personnel, such as conference coordinator, grant writer, etc.

OLA would provide the following:

Professional lobbyist  
Financial management (bookkeeping, accounts payable and receivable, grant monies, etc.)  
Conference or other event registration  
Member services (i.e., MemberClicks member registration, database, etc.)  
Website hosting, website maintenance training and consultation (e.g. forms)  
Liaison to continuing education collaborative Northwest Central  
Official chapter of American Library Association including representation on the governing board of ALA, National Library Legislative Day participation, and Freedom to Read Foundation support.

Joint OLA/OASL responsibilities and opportunities would be:

OLA Board (with rotating presidency among candidates from different types of libraries including school libraries)  
Joint committee membership: Intellectual Freedom; Library Development and Legislation; Oregon Authors  
Joint membership or separate Round Tables (special interests) as needed, and Task Forces such as Archives  
Public and political advocacy  
Direct involvement in strategic planning efforts such as Vision 2020  
Curriculum and ad hoc committees  
Expanded conference opportunities for all members

OASL membership on OLA Board would provide:

Presidential rotation opportunities as with other types of libraries  
Division representative (1) with Board voting privileges  
Eligibility for other elected and appointed offices (secretary, treasurer, ALA representative, and member-at-large)

### **Financial Overview:**

With a broad brushstroke (and some unanswered questions) the financial aspects of the proposed merger look like they will work. That is, OASL can still afford to do the programs they have committed to; OLA can afford to add a division and support a larger organization; and merging the two organizations ideally looks financially equitable to the members of both organizations (no one organization benefits or is disadvantaged to any great degree.)

**Dues:**

A reorganization of OASL dues structure to more closely align to OLA's dues structure will occur over time (a two or three year phase in). OLA's dues structure is a sliding scale based on salary. The following represents OLA's current dues structure:

Library Personnel

Salary up to \$20,000: \$30.00  
Salary \$20,001-\$25,000: \$45.00  
Salary \$25,001-\$30,000: \$50.00  
Salary \$30,001-\$35,000: \$60.00  
Salary \$35,001-\$40,000: \$70.00  
Salary \$40,001-\$45,000: \$75.00  
Salary \$45,001-\$50,000: \$85.00  
Salary \$50,001-\$60,000: \$90.00  
Salary \$60,001-\$70,000: \$100.00  
Salary \$70,001 and over: \$120.00

While some members will see an increase in dues, others may not. OASL dues have been stable at the current level (\$25/\$50) for many years. Simple inflation of expenses will soon necessitate an increase in dues, regardless of a merge with OLA.

Dues submitted to OLA to support the entire organization including OASL infrastructure costs such as Memberclicks, web services, tax prep, bookkeeping and insurance.

OASL will retain profits from their fall and regional conferences to support programs and activities. These programs and activities are also supplemented by grants.

As a division of OLA, OASL will not initially institute additional division membership dues, as some OLA divisions do, although this could potentially be added in the future.

**Tentative Time Line:**

October, 2010- Proposal presented to the OASL Board for discussion via email.  
October, 2010- Proposal to OASL Business meeting for Discussion  
December, 2010- Proposal to OLA Board for discussion  
March-April, 2011- Proposal shared and information sessions scheduled at each of four OASL regional spring conferences  
April, 2011- Information session presented at OLA conference in Salem  
May-August, 2011 - Review bylaws documents regarding potential changes  
October, 2011- OASL members vote at Business meeting at Fall Conference  
April, 2012- If OASL vote is affirmative then OLA members vote at Spring Conference Business meeting

Merger effective date and dues structure transition would be September 1, 2012 if the membership from OASL and OLA vote to accept the proposal.

Developed by the Merger Subcommittee of the OLA-OASL Joint Committee on School-Public Library Cooperation: Carol Dinges, Mary Ginnane, Ruth Murray, Shirley Roberts,

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