

AALL Executive Board discussion of Professional Development Committee Report and Recommendations, November 2002

November 2, 2002

To: Tim Coggins, Professional Development Committee Chair

CC: Carol Avery Nicholson, President

Cathy Lemann, Secretary

Ruth Hill, 2003 Annual Meeting Program Committee Chair

Sally Holterhoff, Executive Board Strategic Planning Committee Chair

Anne Matthewman, Executive Board Finance & Budget Committee Chair

Mary Jawgiel, AALL Education Manager

From: Roger H. Parent, Executive Director, AALL

I'm pleased to transmit the following summary of the board's discussion and action on the item that you submitted for the November board meeting.

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Professional Development Committee Preliminary Report and Recommendations

Discussion Summary

President Carol Avery Nicholson welcomed PDC Chair Tim Coggins and thanked him for attending the Executive Board meeting on November 2nd. On behalf of the Board she also expressed their appreciation for the high quality of the committee's thoughtful report and for their extraordinary work in 2002.

Carol also reported that the Executive Board had discussed the PDC report at some length during their retreat that immediately preceded the November 2nd meeting. At that retreat the Board expressed a need for more precise and up-to-date information from members themselves about their continuing education needs, and their preferred formats for participating in AALL sponsored CE activities. Based on their own deliberations the PDC suggested a variety of formats from regional workshops to moderated listserv discussions, but there is no clear direction or consensus from members themselves.

The Board asked new Executive Director Susan Fox to explore the possibility of BNA funding for a formal member needs assessment survey in 2003. Susan agreed to raise this possibility with BNA at a forthcoming meeting with them.

The Board expressed considerable hesitation about making decisions about the future of the PDC program without the benefit of such a study.

The Board did agree that the environment is changing in law libraries, although this seems to be occurring at a slower pace than a few years ago when technological changes were incessant. As change is indeed constant, the Board agreed that AALL must provide CE to members, and that the Association is the best organization to do so for law librarians.

During the retreat much emphasis was placed on association "nimbleness". This refers to the importance of streamlining bureaucracies and making timely decisions for the benefit of members. The Board agreed that nimbleness is important, and that this must be the characteristic of the PDC program in the future. AALL might look closely and focus its limited resources on those efforts that have been successful in the recent past, like the AALL Spectrum desktop learning series and the moderated listserv discussions.

Based on a recommendation from the Finance & Budget Committee, the Board did not extend the position of the Education Manager that is scheduled to terminate on December 31, 2002. In this light, it will be essential for the PDC itself to determine and select those activities that will require only minimal staff support in the near future - until the Board is able to make fact-based decisions for the long-term future of the program.

The Board did not make a decision on the role of vendor contributions for funding the PDC program in the future. They recognized that AALL itself must assume primary responsibility for funding CE programs for members, although vendor support would continue to be desirable.

The Board agreed that it is time now to "focus down", namely to suspend the full PDC program - especially regional workshops - and to gather more data directly from members and Chapters. Tim Coggins reported that discussions and recommendations from Chapters have been inconclusive. Some Chapters want AALL to provide CE but regional workshops are not the answer. They are too expensive and the choice of topics is far too limited. Many Chapters believe they can provide these workshops - at significantly lower registrations fees - for their members without assistance from AALL.

During this interim period, until the PDC completes its work in 2003, the Board suggested that the PDC might select a few activities that it can continue on its own with minimal staff support after December 31st. It is important to sustain some visibility for the PDC program during the assessment period.

Approved Actions:

#1. On motion by Barbara Bintliff, seconded by Karl Gruben, the Executive Board agreed to discontinue, effective December 31, 2002, all regional programming; asked the PDC to

continue other educational activities that can be handled by the Committee itself without resources; these steps will be taken until the Board determines which of the alternatives for a professional development program - among those developed by the PDC - will be pursued by AALL in the future.

Resolution: Passed, with one vote opposed.

#2. On motion by the PDC, no second needed, the Board agreed to refer all activities associated with the Annual Meeting workshops (solicitation, review, selection, monitoring, working with coordinators and speakers, and other issues) to the Annual Meeting Program Committee; and that the budgets for Annual Meeting workshops will be a part of the Annual Meeting budget.

Resolution: Passed, unanimous.

#3. On motion by the PDC, no second needed, the Board agreed to refer the PDC's five alternatives for an Association professional development program to the Treasurer, the President, and both the Strategic Planning and Finance & Budget Committees for their recommendations at the November 2003 Board meeting. These recommendations must consider the financial feasibility of the preferred alternative.

Resolution: Tabled until the conclusion of the needs assessment survey and the results are available to the Board. Passed, unanimous.

#4. On motion by Janis Johnston, seconded by Anne Matthewman, the Board agreed to refer the following four PDC recommendations to both the Strategic Planning and Finance & Budget Committees for consideration at their next meetings:

- * That the Executive Board direct the Strategic Planning Committee to make certain that education and professional development are emphasized in the next version of the Strategic Plan that will be submitted to the Board for approval.

- * That the Executive Board direct the AALL Treasurer and Finance & Budget Committee to prepare a budget for Board approval that allocates 3% of each member's dues payment to an education line in the FY 2004 budget to support partially the professional development program. (This recommendation may vary depending upon which alternative in recommendation three that the Board elects to support.)

- * That the Executive Board direct the AALL Treasurer and Finance & Budget Committee to prepare a budget for Board approval that funds the Education Manager position as part of the operating budget of the Association.

- * That the Executive Board approves the six budget "principles" governing educational programs.

Resolution: Passed, unanimous

#5. On motion by Barbara Bintliff, seconded by Ann Fessenden, the Board asked the President and Executive Director to seek outside funding to conduct a formal needs assessment survey of all AALL members and to defer choosing among the PDC program alternatives until the survey is finished and the results available to the Board. The Board expressed its hope that this could be finished prior to the November 2003 meeting.

Resolution: Passed, unanimous.

Follow-up:

Transmit the Board's actions to the PDC Chair Tim Coggins - Executive Director

Transmit the Board's actions to the AMPC Chair Ruth Hill - Executive Director

Suspend all regional workshops immediately - Executive Director

Add the PDC Report and Recommendations to the Strategic Planning and Finance & Budget Committee Agenda for consideration at their next scheduled meetings - Sally Holterhoff, and Anne Matthewman

Gather data about the costs and methodology for a member needs assessment survey in 2003 - Executive Director

Solicit vendor support for a member's needs assessment survey - President Carol Avery Nicholson and Executive Director