



GLOBAL VISION DISCUSSION

Report of the School Libraries Section meeting

How a united library field can tackle the challenges of the future

April 6-7, 2017



Contributors

This report is created by:

Lesley Farmer: Chair (USA), Lisa Åström (Sweden), Karen Gavigan (USA), Valérie Glass (France), Joanne Plante (Canada), Dianne Oberg (Canada), Albert Boekhorst (Netherlands), Barbara Schultz-Jones (USA) (prior member), Sofia Malmberg (observer from Sweden) and Annike Selmer: Secretary (Norway)

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Introduction

On April 6-7, 2017, in Stockholm, ten librarians participated in a conversation about how a united library field can tackle the challenges of the future. Together we represent almost 200 years of library experience.

The participants comprise library educators, site-based school librarians, regional school librarian administrators, and a public library administrator. Participants came from Sweden, Norway, France, Netherlands, Canada, and the USA.

The mid-year meeting included section activities (e.g., conferences, school library guidelines implementation, potential book creation, relationships with other IFLA sections and professional organizations). The section also hosted a one-day symposium, which focused on the school library guidelines implementation, and a visit to the Swedish National Library to discuss school library statistics. In terms of discussing IFLA vision, the group emphasized leveraging their existing publications via training, communication, and collaboration.

A vision for libraries

Libraries enable literate, informed and participative societies. When we look at the future, according to the debates in Stockholm, this means that school libraries provide the conditions for optimum learning: positive learning environments, access to strong collections and other resources, instruction, and professional relationships.

The core values of libraries (Q4):

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1. *access*
 2. *information and media literacies*
 3. *intellectual freedom*
 4. *equity*
 5. *Leadership and collaboration*

Comments:

The conversation was somewhat focused on political climate.

Libraries are exceptionally good at (Q5):

-
1. *relationships*
 2. *access*
 3. *collection development*
 4. *space/ learning environment*
 5. *instruction*
-

Comments:

The group stated that school librarians seem to prioritize their work according to their values.

Libraries should do more of (Q6):

-
1. *continue their good work (see above); prioritize carefully*
 2. *provide equitable and inclusive access*
 3. *do outreach and other relation building / collaborating*
 4. *improve instructional practices*
 5. *develop great collections*
-

Comments:

The group stated that school librarians seem to prioritize their work according to their values.

Libraries should do less of (Q7):

-
1. *being negative*
 2. *doing extraneous tasks*
 3. *navel-gazing (being too insular)*
 4. *bad instructional practices*
 5. *bad collection development practices*
-

Comments:

The group was dismayed with the uneven quality of school librarians

Challenges and solutions

The main challenges to society (Q8):

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1. *information overload – and disinformation*
 2. *inequity*
 3. *changing demographics*
 4. *governmental actions*
 5. *educational issues*
-

Comments:

The main challenges to libraries (Q9):

1. *role definition*
2. *convincing others of library/librarian's value*
3. *lack of support*
4. *inconsistent/ uneven library/ librarian quality*
5. *collaboration*

Comments:

The main professional challenges (Q10):

1. *training and accountability: addressing inconsistent/ uneven library/ librarian quality*
2. *getting support*
3. *advocating for libraries/ librarians*
4. *collaboration*
5. *providing strong collections*

Comments:

How a united library field can make a difference

How should a united library field help meet the challenges identified (Q11)?

1. *Training/PD*
2. *Partner/ collaborate with like-minded entities*
3. *Create position statements/papers; Continue work on guidelines and their implementation*
4. *Conduct/ collate/ curate/ disseminate research/best practices on libraries and their impact/value*
5. *Be more visible*

Comments:

The characteristics of a united library field (Q12):

1. *Highly visible*
2. *Highly regarded/respected*

3. *effective*

4. *efficient*

5. *collaborative*

Comments:

The focus of a united library field (Q13):

1. *training/ PD*

2. *partnerships/ collaboration within and without the field*

3. *guidelines/ standards and their implementation*

4. *position statements and other advocacy documents/toolkits*

5. *research and its dissemination and application*

Comments:

A global conversation

This report is created in an interactive process, in Stockholm on April 6-7. It is part of a global conversation initiated by IFLA on how a united library field can tackle the challenges of the future.

Over the course of two years (2017-2018), IFLA will involve as many librarians and others as possible in this global conversation. Participants are encouraged to continue the conversation in their own networks and organization and share the results with IFLA. At the end of 2017, the first results of all the workshops and online discussions will be turned into a *Global Vision Report*, which in turn will be adapted into concrete strategies, processes and work programmes in 2018.

To learn more about the global conversation, and download supporting materials to support your own activities, visit globalvision.ifla.org.

Stay tuned for news about the IFLA Global Vision discussion following [#iflaGlobalVision](https://twitter.com/iflaGlobalVision) and make sure to cast your vote in August when the online voting platform is available on <https://globalvision.ifla.org/>.