
How Does IFLA Promote School Libraries?

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THE use of school libraries is the foundation for the use of all other libraries. Literacy is nurtured in schools and is the prerequisite for all subsequent library and information use. School library work does naturally fall under the scope and philosophy of IFLA.

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) was established in 1927, and was one of the first non profit making, non government organizations to further the cause of librarianship. Its primary function is to encourage, sponsor and promote research and development in all aspects of library activity and to share its findings with the library society as a whole for the greater good of librarianship.

The organisation works through a worldwide network consisting of 33 professional sections and various round-tables and working groups specializing in different areas of library activity. These are grouped together in 8 Divisions. The Division for Libraries Serving the General Public is the largest division and groups together libraries serving the general public as well as special library services directed to specific groups of the general public, such as children, schools, linguistic minorities, people with disabilities, people in hospital or prison.

The Section of School Libraries is naturally a part of this division. The section was established in 1977 after the restructuring of IFLA section and committee works, as well as statutes.

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However, a considerable work had been done before the official recognition of the section, especially since the 1970's when there was also a pressure for the creation of the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL).

Coordination with IASL, created in 1971, has been a concern since the very first attempt to create an IFLA Section. IASL is a full member of IFLA since 1973, and it is agreed to coordinate work to avoid duplication and overlapping. There are also selected liaison persons to the boards of both organizations.

Within the IFLA-family it has been important to for the school librarians to establish their own identity, especially as «a different one from the children's librarians», as expressed by former section chair Anne Galler. Another chair, Frances Laverne Carroll, stressed the importance of considering school libraries as «representing a separate type of library which serves on various levels from pre-school to secondary (high school) interest levels and which also supports the curriculum of the school.

It is vital to all schools that the provision of library service is done by adequately-trained school-librarians, that an appropriate government policy is formulated and that effective links with the library information structure are created.

The objectives for the IFLA Section of School Libraries are

- to promote school library services to ensure that they meet the needs of all user groups
- to delineate the role of the school librarian
- to promote the role of school libraries
- to promote research in the field of school librarianship
- to assist school librarians in their professional development

Ongoing projects

In accordance with these objectives the Section initiates and carries out different projects. The two main projects at present are:

- «School Libraries in the World» — where the main goal is to identify, collect and describe existing actual guidelines, standards and policies about school libraries. The outcome of this project will be a bro-

chure to lobby governments and other concerned bodies for promoting the development of schools libraries.

- Principals and school librarians working within an information literate school community. This project was approved by IFLA Professional Board last month and will go on from 1996-98. The purpose is to make an international quantitative analysis of the forms of support for school librarians offered by principals, and the type of actions taken by school librarians to develop support. The supervisors of the project are lecturers at Charles Sturt University in Australia. A work-shop is planned at IFLA 97 in Copenhagen.

Publications

Many of IFLA's projects result in a professional report, guidelines or another sort of publication. The most recent ones from the School Sections are:

- *School Librarians, Guidelines for Competency Requirements.* By Sigrún Klara Hannesdóttir. IFLA Professional Reports no 41. 1995.

This is a brand new edition of the Guidelines first published in 1986. The main purpose of the document is to analyze the role of the school librarians and through that analysis draw attention to skills and knowledge needed to perform this role. The report gives a schematic presentation of the skills needed, outlining the basic factors: information studies, management and instruction, secondly there is an interpretation of each of the functions listed in the schematic presentation as well as a brief explanation of the tasks of the school librarian. The report also contains a checklist of skills which is included for a quick assessment of an existing programme or as an initial framework for a new one. Two major international policy statements on school libraries are included as an appendix.

- *Managing School Libraries.* By Anne M. Galler and Joan M. Coulter. 1989. (Also translated into French and Spanish)
- *Guidelines for School libraries.* By Frances L. Carroll. 1990.
- *Cultural Heritage through Literature.* Annotated bibliography of books from twenty-nine countries. Edited by Lucille C. Thomas. 1990.

- Library lessons. Suggestions from around the world. Compiled by Blanche Woolls. 1993.

The Standing Committee of the IFLA Section of School libraries is a very active body and co-operates with the other committees within the division. In that way they are also able to influence other guidelines and reports that are produced by the other sections. The most recent examples are the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto and the Guidelines for Library Service to Young Adults which are under preparation. During the last IFLA Conference in Istanbul we had very interesting discussion about the latter.

I do hope many of you will be able to join us in the IFLA work both to gain experiences that you can transfer and use to promote both school libraries as well as other type of library service in your own country Portugal and so share your experiences with other colleagues from all parts of the world.

Some recent documents about guidelines or policies at different levels, with addresses

International

CARROLL, Frances Laverne. *Guidelines for school libraries*. The Hague: IFLA, 1990 (IFLA professional reports: n.º 20).

HANNESDOTTIR, Sigrun Klara. *School librarians: guidelines for competency requirements*. The Hague: IFLA. 1995 (IFLA professional reports: n.º 41).

(Updates document n.º 9 issued in 1986 under the title: Guidelines for the education and training of school librarians.)

Address: IFLA Headquarters, Secretary, POB 95312, 2509 CH THE HAGUE, Netherlands.

Australia

Australian Library and Information Association. School Libraries Section. *Information technology in schools: implications for teacher Librarians*. Perth: ALIA, 1990, 92 p.

Address: School Libraries Section Australian Library and Information Association, Technology Park, 2 Brodie Hall Drive, Bentley, WA 6102 Australia.

Canada

Alberta Education. *Policies, guidelines, procedures and standards for school libraries*. Edmonton: Alberta Education, 1984, 8 p.

Address: Alberta Education, Language Services Branch, Devonian Building, 11 160 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton (Alberta) T5K 0L2 Canada.

British Columbia. Ministry of Education. Learning Resources Branch. *Developing independant learners. The role of the school library resource centre*. Victoria: The ministry, 1991. 101 p.

Available from: Association for Teacher-Librarianship in Canada (ATLC), 2561 Western Avenua, North Vancouver (British Columbia) V7N3J2 Canada.

Manitoba Education and Training. Instructional Resources Branch. *School library policy statement*. Winnipeg: The ministry, 1991. 8 p.

Manitoba Education and Training. Instructional Resources Branch. *Resources-based learning: an educational model*. Winnipeg (Manitoba): The Ministry, 1994. VI-63 p.

Address: Manitoba Education and Training. Instructional Resources Branch. (1RB) 1181, Avenue Portage, Winnipeg (Manitoba) R3G 0T3 Canada.

Newfoundland and Labrador. Department of Education. Division of program development. *Learning to learn. Policies and guidelines for the implementation of resource-based learning in Newfoundland and Labrador schools*. St-John, NF: Department of Education, 1991. IV-60 p.

Address: Department of Education of Newfoundland and Labrador. St-John (Newfoundland) Canada.

Saskatchewan Education. *Resource-based learning. Policy, guidelines and responsibilities for Saskatchewan learning resource centres*. Regina: Saskatchewan Education, November 1987.

Address: Saskatchewan Education. 2220, College Avenue, Regina (Saskatchewan) S4P 3V7 Canada.

United Kingdom

Library Association. *Learning resources in schools: Library Association guidelines for school libraries*. London: The Library Association, 1992. 81 p.

Address: Library Association Publishing, 7, Ridgmount Street, London WC1E 7AE UK.

United States of America

American Association of School librarians: Association for Educational communications and technology. *Information power: guidelines for school library media programs*. Chicago: American Library Association, 1988. XI-171 p.

Address: American Library Association. 50 East Huron Street, Chicago (Illinois) 60611 USA.

ABSTRACT: This paper gives a brief introduction to the aims of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), and then outlines the work of the IFLA Section of School Libraries, its objectives, present projects and publications.

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