

Good morning, VALE Committee chairs.

As you know, every year the VALE Executive Committee invites Committee Chairs to meet with us to discuss each Committee's activities in the preceding year as well as its goals and objectives for the upcoming year. We began that activity a number of years ago, in response to one of the needs that was highlighted during VALE's 2007 strategic planning exercise, namely, to increase communication between the Executive and the rest of the Committees.

VALE held another large-scale strategic planning event last fall. You were all invited, and most of you participated. One of the most striking findings at that retreat was that the lion's share of the activities currently sponsored and supported by VALE, as worthwhile as they are, do not actually support the organization's mission. VALE is, after all, a consortium of libraries, not a professional association for librarians. At its meeting in December, the Executive Committee unanimously passed a motion to "refocus [VALE's] activities to support its mission of collaboration among member libraries." If you attended the annual conference in early January, you will have heard me address this issue in my remarks. As we search for ways to implement this redirection without marginalizing the work of the many librarians who have organized and participated in these activities over the years, we seek your input and guidance.

To that end, we will ask that this year, instead of meeting with the Executive Committee to "discuss progress, priorities and strategies," as outlined in the "Guidelines for Committee Chairs" document, you come prepared to discuss the following questions with us. As you will see, our intent is to reorganize so that the work of the current VALE committees meshes with the right organization, with the right purpose. In responding to these questions, think whether your committee's work directly supports librarians and their concerns, or whether it supports member libraries and their institutional needs.

- Is the principal work of your committee, as defined by your charge, in support of VALE's mission?
- If so, which actual services that VALE provides to its member libraries are supported by your committee?
- If not, is there any significant reason that your committee should remain affiliated with VALE?
- If not, which other library or librarian organization in New Jersey might serve as a better "home" for the work of your committee?

Thank you, and we look forward to seeing you on Thursday, March 5th. More details will be forthcoming under separate cover, but for now please continue to hold the date open.

Sincerely,

-- Taras

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