



To: Kaukauna Public Library Board of Trustees  
From: Library Director Ashley Thiem-Menning  
Date: 11/20/2023  
Re: WLA

Sarah, James and I were able to attend WLA in Middleton this year.

Opening Keynote:

Nolan Finley and Stephen Henderson from the Civility Project.

<https://greatlakescivilityproject.com/>

Believe in Vision: Creating Strong Teams

This was one of my favorite sessions, presented by a library trustee who works in insurance! This presenter taught the STAR method, Situation, Task, Action, **and Result**. He also really pushed the idea of having more 1:1 touch points with staff versus just one annual review. We currently have a mid-year review and then a year-end, which is already more than City requires, however this presenter encouraged weekly and monthly check in's. While I **do not** know if that is feasible, I am going to **attempt quarterly check in's** to start.

YSS Luncheon Keynote with Ebony LaDelle, Author of *Love, Radio*

Building Library Staff's Capacity for Discussing Inclusive, Diversity, Equity and Access

This was a session presented by UW-GB staff about an internal IDEA program they conducted. While this was an excellent presentation, we do not have the funds, time, software, or staff to enact this type of program. I do however appreciate the handouts and have some takeaways from the program.

What Do the Numbers Say? Trends and Reflections from the Annual Report

This was a program with DPI on our own annual report. DPI had pulled some hypotheses out of our state report data sets and wanted a listening session with librarians on whether or not the trends they identified were correct. Most notable and distressing was the major increase in Director turnover; over 20%.

Lunch Keynote with Speaker Laura Greco Author of *Respond, Don't React*

Government Relations Discussion with WLA Lobbyist Steve Conway

I am extremely glad that I attended this session. Right before coming to WLA some information about a bill that could affect public libraries was sent to us and it seemed a bit panicked. Mr. Conway taught us how to recognize which bills would pass and which would not. All the bills introduced that had anything to do with public libraries he anticipated not moving forward.

### All Aboard! Developing High-Impact Onboarding Practices

This was the best session I attended and I am glad that James and I attended together since we do most of the onboarding here. James is writing about it in his report, but we both agreed that we need to make it a priority to revamp our onboarding practices. This is good timing because Paycor offers us some onboarding options that are superior to that of Ascentis.

### DRA Numbers and Decodables: What is This and Why Does it Matter

This session explored some of the different reading programs that districts use across the state and what it all means. When asked what reading program our school district uses, very few librarians in the room could answer the question. It would pointed out to us that we need to know more about school reading programs to be able to support readers. We dived briefly into supporting readers with dyslexia, but more research is needed here. We have had some requests over the years for decodables, but it took me until this program to realize what that actually means. Since WLA, I have ordered one set of decodable texts for K-3 and am working on finding a publisher with decodables for older grade levels.

Closing Keynote:

Dr. Darrell Williams, Assistant Superintendent, Wisconsin DPI

This was one of the best closing keynotes I have been in attendance for.

