

Ann Arbor Learning Community

Annual Report

2008-2009

Annual Report

Each year, the Ann Arbor Learning Community creates an annual report summarizing information about the previous school year. This report has been prepared in compliance with both the Michigan state requirements and the federal No Child Left Behind laws.

AALC History

The Ann Arbor Learning Community was founded in 1998 under the leadership of John Dillon, interested parents, and staff members. AALC was chartered by Eastern Michigan University. The school has completed its eighth year of operation as a Michigan Public School Academy. The student body has grown from 70 to 268 students over a period of eleven years.

The Eastern Michigan University Regents renewed the AALC Charter in 2003, for its second five-year term. The school is located at 3980 Research Park Dr., Ann Arbor, Michigan. The Board of Directors reached an agreement for a ten year, long-term rental for the school in the fall of 2005. Members of the school community worked with architects and the building owner to design and renovate the current facility specifically for our use.

In the spring of 2008 AALC's charter was renewed for an additional five years. Developing the latest charter was an intensive endeavor completed through the leadership of staff members, specific board members, and community members.

AALC Mission Statement

- *The mission of Ann Arbor Learning Community is to nurture independent learners as they acquire the tools they need to shape an environmentally and socially responsible future.*
- *In a supportive, student-centered community that appreciates uniqueness, AALC helps students develop a strong sense of self and lifetime love of learning.*
- *The school fosters the development of essential life skills and core academic knowledge through small, multi-aged classrooms that honor the learning and creative strengths of each student.*

AALC Philosophy

Ann Arbor Learning Community is committed to the rigorous development of student intellect, curiosity, and cooperation with a focus on helping students value themselves, their peers, and their community. A safe and nurturing environment supports the social and emotional development of children, which is fundamental for effective student learning. Our learning community, made up of students, teachers, staff, and families working together affirms and supports a variety of learning styles and believes that students require multiple opportunities to demonstrate their mastery of concepts. Student's understanding of how they learn empowers them. In our pursuit we promote participatory learning that is experiential, student-centered, developmentally based and individualized to student's particular learning styles and strengths.

AALC Accolades

During the 2008-2009 school year Ann Arbor Learning Community went through many transitions. During these trying times the community sustained itself with the help of dedicated teachers and board members. Additionally, Ann Arbor Learning Community was the recipient of three distinctions.

- Received an “**A**” grade, Achieved Annual Yearly Progress with the State of Michigan.
- Selected as an ‘Exemplary School’ from Eastern Michigan University.
- Partnered with the Southeast Michigan Stewardship Coalition.
- School Participation in the Solo and Ensemble Festival receiving highest ratings.
- AALC’s 1st Art Show at a Gallery – Articulation

AALC Student Body

The student body consisted of 268 students ranging in ages from kindergarten to eighth grade. All students are residents of the State of Michigan and they came to the Ann Arbor Learning Community from seventeen different zip code areas.

AALC Class Size

The average class size for the school year was 19.1 students per classroom, with a maximum of 21 students per classroom.

AALC Staff

During the 2008-2009 school year the AALC Staff consisted of fourteen classroom teachers, three special area teachers, four special education teachers, one business manager, a dean, and part-time support for office assistance and lunch-hour. All the AALC teachers as well as the dean held Michigan state teacher certificates. One hundred percent of the salaried staff held Bachelor’s Degrees and approximately half held Master’s Degrees. They average more than eight years of teaching experience.

While multiage classrooms can present particular challenges when it comes to certification requirements, we rise to the challenge. This is especially true when the class assignments include both elementary and middle school age students, or require a middle school teacher to teach two subject areas. All staff are certified and meet the federal Highly Qualified Teacher requirements.

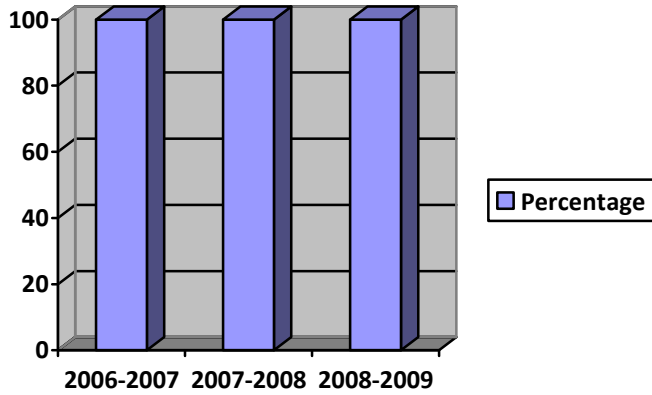
AALC Parent Involvement

Ann Arbor Learning Community warmly welcomes parent involvement at a variety of levels. Some of them include serving on the Board of Directors, the School Improvement Team, the Parent-Teacher-Student Organization, and in classrooms in many different ways. Parental involvement is a key element in creating a successful learning community. The more participating hands, the more we can do for our students. We hope and expect parents will be involved in the academic planning of their children with the Individual Learning Plan.

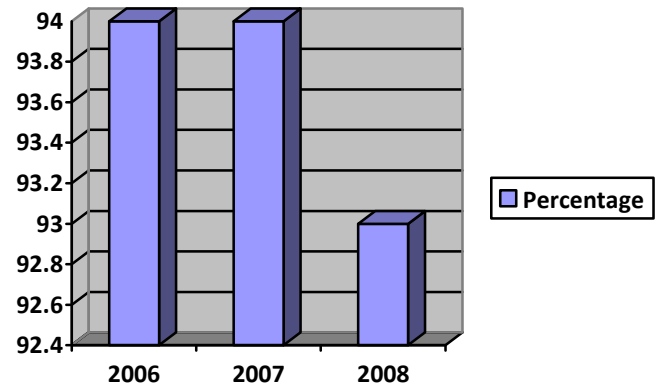
Parent-Student-teacher Conferences

Each year the school schedules two formal parent-student-teacher conferences for families and teachers to discuss student goals, progress, and academic and social skills. These conferences took place in the fall and in the spring. In addition, there are many informal opportunities for parents and staff to share timely information. When significant concerns arose, either party was free to initiate a more formal meeting.

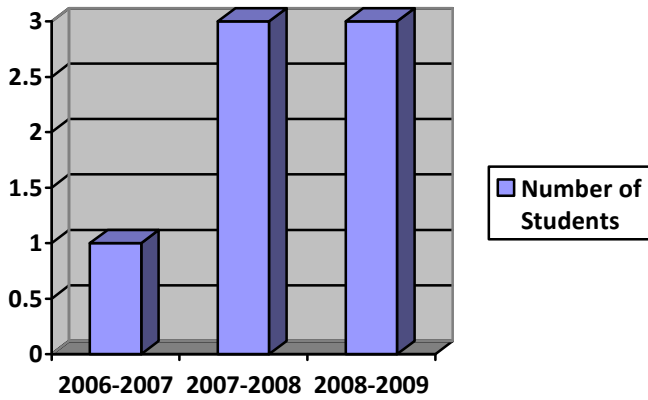
Parent Teacher Conferences



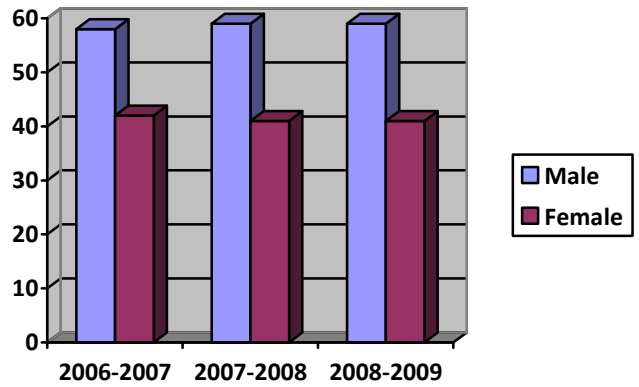
Student Attendance



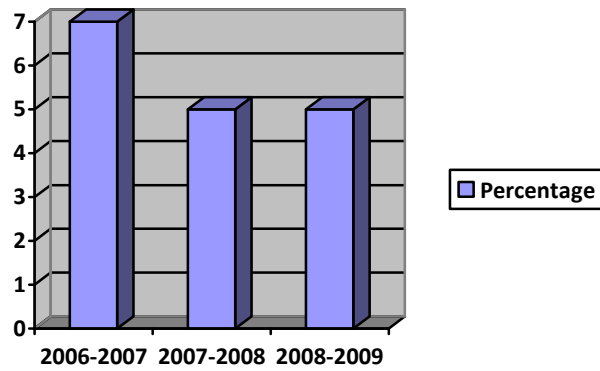
Retention Rates



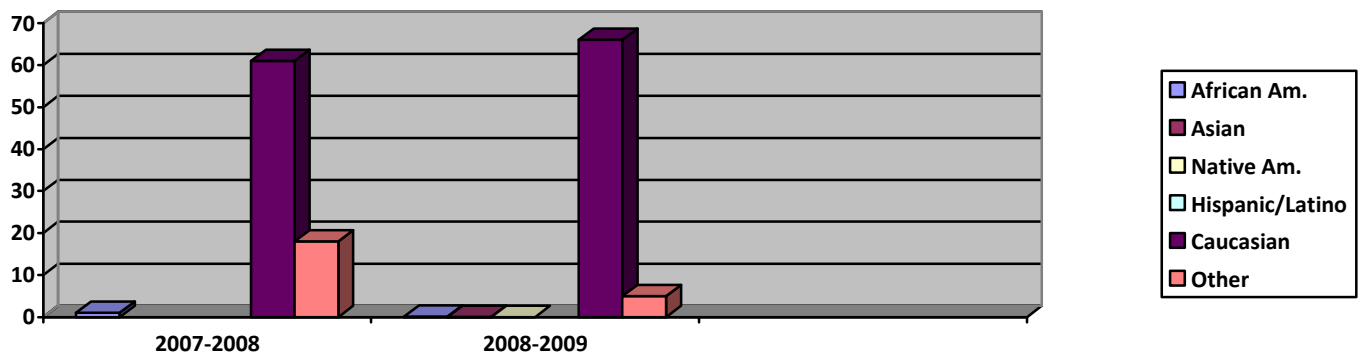
Gender



Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility



Ethnicity (percentages)



Accreditation

The Ann Arbor Learning Community is accredited through North Central Association – Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement and under the YES! Program.

Core Curriculum

Ann Arbor Learning Community's Core Curriculum consists of Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Fine Arts. Students' progress along the curriculum continues at their own individual pace.

AALC School Improvement Goals

One of the continual goals of the Ann Arbor Learning Community is to see each students gain at least one month of growth on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills for each month of instruction.

The AALC School Improvement Team made developed two long range goals developed with input from parents and staff needs assessments and in conjunction with student achievement data and educational research. The tow goals were to improve skills and application of mathematical concepts and to improve skills and application of the writing process.

The staff implemented more comprehensive direct instruction strategies in reading instruction. Staff attended various professional development activities through the year focusing on specific strategies for teaching in a multiage classroom, meeting the needs of special education students and developing a more thoroughly connected community. Student post assessment indicates an increase in student skills in reading, language, and math this year.

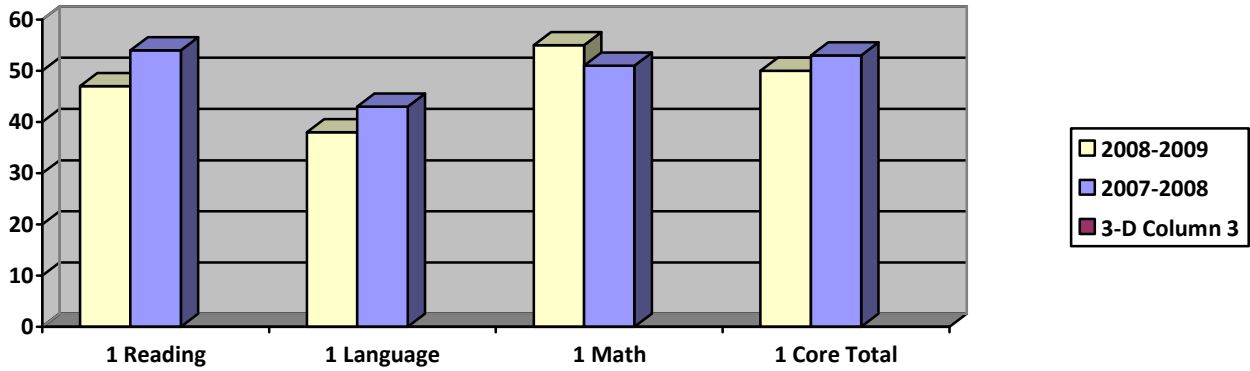
Multiple Measures of Student Progress

Ann Arbor Learning Community assesses student progress in many different ways. We use objective-based standardized assessments: Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), IOWA Test of Basic Skills and the Brigance Test of Basic Skills. In addition to these, we use collections of student work, portfolios, and a variety of other authentic assessments (science projects, Michigan History Day competition, performances, etc.) to monitor student achievement.

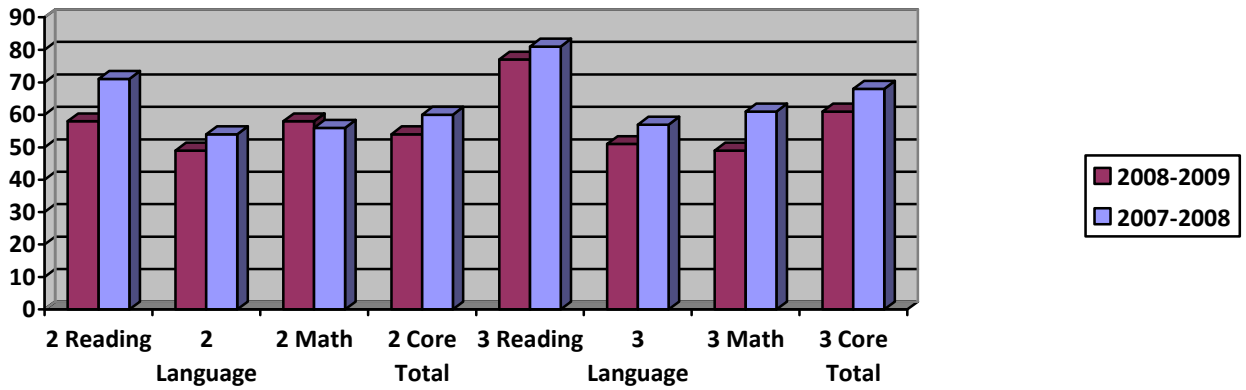
IOWA Test of Basic Skills Assessments

AALC uses a nationally normed test called the IOWA Test of Basic Skills to determine what students know and can achieve each spring. We use the results to determine student achievement levels from year to year. Our students made gains in reading, language, and math this past year. This year shows student achievement growth for one year's instruction between nine months and one year and two months.

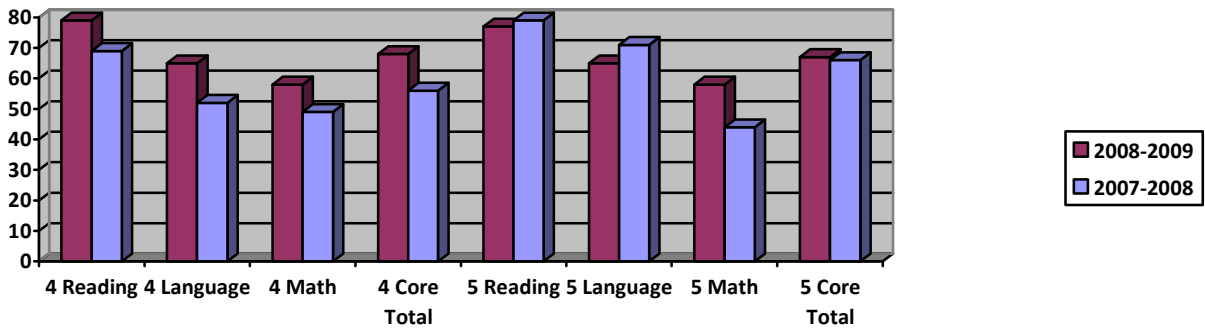
1st Grade (Early Primary)



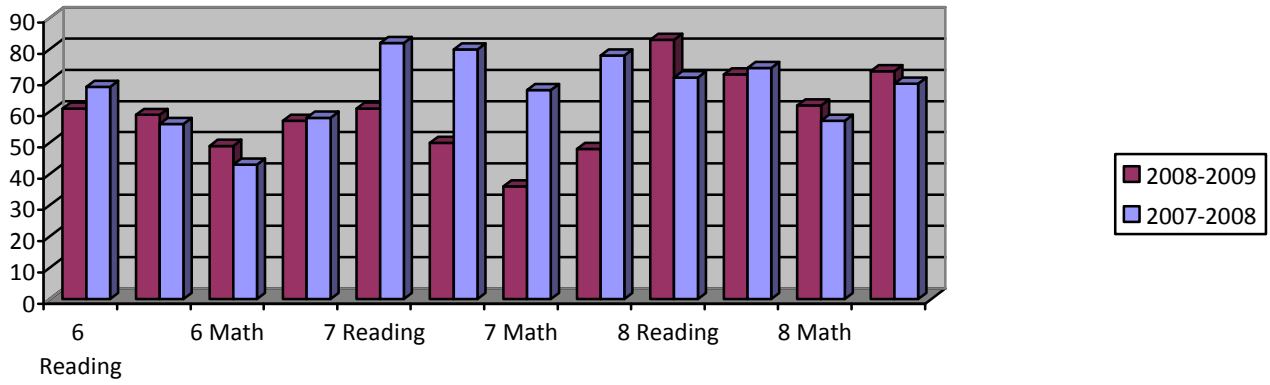
2nd and 3rd Grades (Primary)



4th and 5th Grades (Intermediate)



6th – 8th Grades (Middle School)



Michigan Educational Assessment Program 2008-2009

The Michigan Department of Education requires that students who attend public schools participate in the statewide mandated Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) every school year. The state uses the results from the assessment to monitor the academic progress and achievement of the school's students and to determine if a school makes Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

2007-2008 Overall MEAP

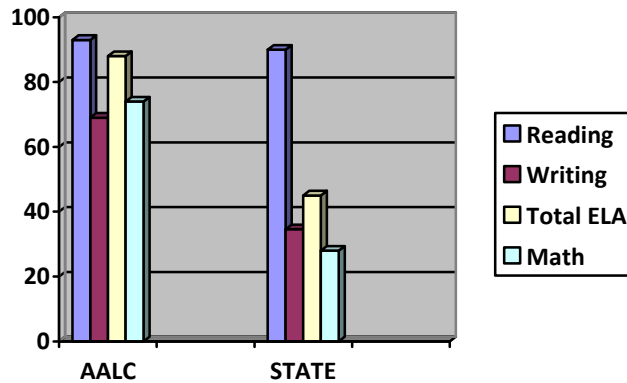


Table 1: Snapshot of AALC Fall 2008 MEAP Scores (% Proficient or Above)

Subject	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
ELA	85.7	95.2	87.5	90.0	76.9	100.0
Math	88.6	81.8	75.0	61.9	76.9	75.0
Reading	85.7	95.5	87.5	90.0	84.6	100.0
Writing	62.9	52.4	71.9	85.7	76.9	94.1
Science	N/A	N/A	87.5	N/A	N/A	81.3
Social Studies	N/A	N/A	N/A	81.0	N/A	N/A

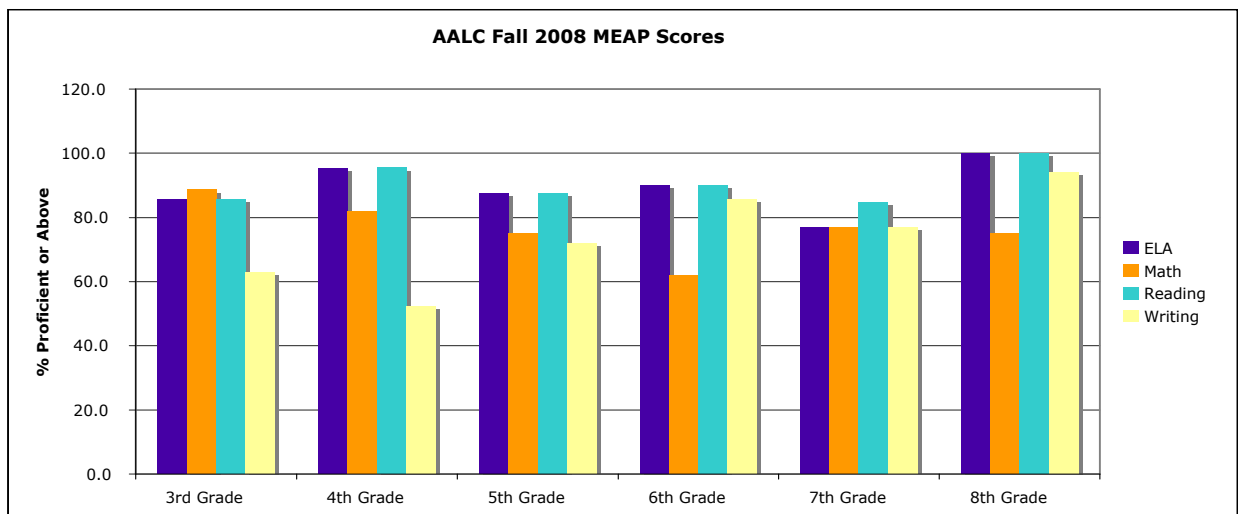


Table 2. AALC MEAP Trend Analysis: Fall 2006, 2007 & 2008 MEAP Proficiency Score (color coded by cohort)

Grade	Subject	2008 MEAP	1-yr diff score	2007 MEAP	2-yr diff score	2006 MEAP
3	ELA	85.7	-10.0	95.7	6.8	78.9
	Math	88.6	-2.7	91.3	-6.1	94.7
	Reading	85.7	-14.3	100.0	1.5	84.2
	Writing	62.9	2.0	60.9	10.3	52.6
4	ELA	95.2	22.5	72.7	12.8	82.4
	Math	81.8	7.9	73.9	5.3	76.5
	Reading	95.5	17.2	78.3	13.1	82.4
	Writing	52.4	20.6	31.8	34.8	17.6
5	ELA	87.5	6.2	81.3	11.0	76.5
	Math	75.0	12.5	62.5	33.8	41.2
	Reading	87.5	-6.3	93.8	9.7	77.8
	Writing	71.9	-3.1	75.0	30.7	41.2
	Science	87.5	0.0	87.5	15.3	72.2
6	ELA	90.0	-2.3	92.3	-10.0	100.0
	Math	61.9	8.1	53.8	-15.0	76.9
	Reading	90.0	-2.3	92.3	-10.0	100.0
	Writing	85.7	1.1	84.6	-6.6	92.3
	Social Studies	81.0	-3.6	84.6	-3.6	84.6
7	ELA	76.9	-23.1	100.0	N/A	N/A
	Math	76.9	-10.6	87.5	N/A	N/A
	Reading	84.6	-15.4	100.0	N/A	N/A
	Writing	76.9	-16.9	93.8	N/A	N/A
8	ELA	100.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Math	75.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Reading	100.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Writing	94.1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Science	81.3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

N/A=Not Applicable (fewer than 10 students included)

State Report Card Grades

The scores AALC received this year are the result of all students at the exiting grade for the elementary and middle school levels for the last three years.

	2009	2008	2007
Elementary Grade	A	B	B
Middle School Grade	A	B	B

Annual Yearly Progress (AYP)

Both the elementary and middle schools were awarded Annual Yearly Progress this year and last year. "Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is one of the cornerstones of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). In Michigan, it's a measure of year-to-year student achievement on the Michigan Education assessment Program (MEAP) test. According to NCLB, Michigan and other states must develop target starting goals for AYP and the state are proficient on state assessments by the 2013-14 school year." (Taken from <http://www.michigan.gov/mde>). We strive to increase our percentage annually.

Eastern Michigan University

Eastern Michigan University through their Office of Charter Schools authorized the development of the Ann Arbor Learning Community under the Michigan State Public School Academy Act. The authorization and oversight responsibilities are under the able direction of Dr. Joseph Pollack who heads the EMU Office of Charter Schools. The Office provides legal, educational, and financial oversight services to the schools that they authorize. They also screen applicants for positions on the Charter Board of Directors. Successful applicants are then sent to the EMU Board of Regents for approval.

AALC Board of Directors

The AALC Board of Directors is responsible for setting policies, overseeing financial decisions, to approve hiring of staff and the evaluation of the Dean. The Board meets on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm. The meeting agenda will always be posted and anyone is welcome to attend Board meetings.

2008-2009

Jason Johnson, President
Mary Packard, Vice President
Karen Tyree, Treasurer
Carol Morton, Secretary
Janet Adelman
Joe Capuano
Valerie Mates

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Simon Whitelocke, Treasurer
Carol Morton, Secretary
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