

## ABA Ends Policies

### **A. Members will have the necessary business skills to professionally operate profitable independent bookstores.**

- Members will attend multilevel informational and educational programs presented around the country.
- Members will have multiple networking opportunities that foster a constructive exchange of ideas.
- Members will have access to financial and/or consulting services, and access to relevant operating financial models to use as tools in the operation of their businesses.
- Members will have access to programs specifically aimed at growing and expanding the reach of children's books to a wide audience of both consumers and booksellers.
- Members will have access to technology services and/or consulting on technological issues.
- Members will use multiple vehicles, made available by technological advances, to access educational and informational material.
- Members will be aware of and have access to new, and alternative, business models, systems, technologies, and services.

### **B. Member bookstores will be vital and valued partners to publishers, wholesalers, authors, agents, and vendors and will constitute a vital portion of the U.S. book market.**

- The general bookselling/book publishing community, including authors, will be aware of matters of concern to independent booksellers.
- Authors, publishers, and other industry partners will respond favorably to advocacy regarding matters of concern to independent booksellers.
- Members will have the opportunity to test and develop new business models among booksellers and their vendors.
- The wider bookselling and publishing communities and the media will use and view the American Booksellers Association as a source of relevant and timely statistical research and marketing information.

### **C. Member bookstores will be effectively promoted as the preferred marketplace for the public**

- The public will recognize the value of independent bookstores to their communities and their local economies.
- The public will recognize the vital role that independent bookstores play in promoting and maintaining the diversity of authors, books, and ideas.
- Independent bookstores will be part of a community of local independent businesses nationwide.

### **D. Member bookstores will be heard on advocacy issues pertinent to the bookselling trade.**

- Member stores will be represented within groups of appropriate allies dealing with issues of literacy, culture, diversity, and the development of new readers.
- Member stores will be heard on legal and regulatory issues, including the First Amendment, free expression, fair trade practices, and related issues.

### **E. Professional and prospective independent booksellers who plan to open new stores, purchase existing stores, or expand existing stores will be provided with programs that facilitate participation in the complex world of bookselling.**

- Prospective member stores and booksellers will be offered programs and information that encourage participation by and for a diverse population of booksellers.
- Programs and information emphasizing retention and advancement of booksellers to professional levels will be available.

The ABA Ends Policies are formulated by the ABA Board and are reviewed annually. The above policies were updated in July 2017.

## Key Issues Raised at Previous Town Halls and Action Steps Taken Include:

### Diversity - Actions included:

- Following Wi12, the ABA Board constituted a 10-person Diversity Task Force, which by Wi13 will have met twice in person and several times via teleconference.
- Also following Wi12, the Board increased the number of booksellers on the Booksellers Advisory Council with the express aim of creating a more diverse council.
- Since Wi12, ABA has created and presented a range of diversity-related programming, including the session “Bookstores—An Inclusive Place for Dialogue and Discovery” at 10 Spring Forums; a session on “Hiring for Diversity” at BookExpo; a full-day specialty workshop on “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Addressing Stereotypes and Creating a Welcoming Environment” two times in fall 2017, in conjunction with the fall regional trade shows; and here at Wi13, sessions on hiring for diversity, selling diverse titles, and the issue of sensitivity readers.
- At the Children’s Institute, in April, diversity-related programming included sessions on “Fostering an Inclusive Environment for Staff and Customers With Disabilities” and the roundtable discussion “Working With We Need Diverse Books to Successfully Plan and Execute In-School Author Visits.” The event’s keynote was on “Hiring and Retaining a Diverse Workforce.”
- Among the books chosen as Indies Introduce selections, 17 of 40 titles reflect diversity in either content or authorship.

### Board Nomination Process

In the months following Wi12, ABA expanded its efforts to encourage more diverse nominees, including increased outreach to members and such allied organizations as the regional trade associations, with the help of the Diversity Task Force, to ensure that there is a broader range of Board candidates to consider this year and in the years to come.

### Batch

ABA has continued to work with the Booksellers Association of the UK and Ireland regarding implementation for ABA member stores of BATCH, a centralized online invoice payment and data system. BATCH has provided great value to UK bookstores and publishers for many years. A test of the system in the U.S. has been taking place involving a small number of bookstores and publishers. Representatives from BATCH are attending Wi13 to meet with booksellers. (They will be in the Consultation Station.) Immediately following Wi13, senior leadership from BATCH will meet with publishers. ABA will be reporting updates as BATCH development proceeds.

### ABACUS

ABA retained a new ABACUS data analysis service for ABACUS, and this year’s survey saw an increase in the number of participants. The new report features an expanded range of data; new presentation formats, making it easier to evaluate a bookstore’s ABACUS results; and a new set of online tools. The new online dashboard offers participating bookstores sophisticated analytical tools and access to dynamic reports that allow booksellers to explore trends across a number of criteria.

### Advocacy/Sales Tax Fairness

ABA has continued to work as part of a broad coalition of retailers to ensure that sales tax on internet sales is equitably collected nationwide. As part of this effort, ABA filed an amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in support of a case that, if heard, has the potential to significantly level the playing field for bricks-and-mortar retailers regarding equitable sales tax collection. And ABA is working with Civic Economics on an expanded update of the “Empty Storefronts” report.

### Health Insurance

ABA recognizes the importance of this issue and continues to actively explore health insurance options for member stores. This month, rules for association health plans were published in the federal register and ABA is currently reviewing these rules to see what impact it might have on members’ healthcare options.

### Publisher Relations

ABA has aggressively continued its dialogue with publishers and distributor partners to develop new business models and to help facilitate the opening of new bookstores. These discussions have focussed on innovative backlist promotions and B2B possibilities, improved terms for Indies First, new store offerings, as well as the BATCH initiative.

### Support of Binc

Ongoing financial, logistical, and messaging support of Binc’s efforts for booksellers, as well as a special fund raising effort at this year’s Winter Institute.