

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Annual Conference, Chicago
July 9-15, 2009**

Topic: Modernizing Selected List Portfolio

Background: After Midwinter 2009 the Board was charged with exploring three issues surrounding YALSA's current portfolio of selected lists, including: 1) Are YALSA's lists, as they are now, meeting the needs of our members? 2) Is the current level of member engagement in the development of the lists adequate and appropriate? 3) Is the current system of disseminating the finalized lists adequate? Based on Board feedback, YALSA's Executive Committee has developed the following proposal to partially address these concerns.

Action Required: Action

Proposal

Implement a phase-out of the Best Books for Young Adults Committee and list

Rationale

79 years ago when YALSA launched the Best Books for Young Adults list, it served as a one-of-a-kind resource for librarians serving teens. In the decades since the launch of the list:

- YALSA has added a number of other lists that focus on a variety of formats and genres, including lists devoted to adult titles, graphic novels and YA nonfiction. Increasingly in recent years there has been noticeable overlap between BBYA and other lists. The lists that have been established since BBYA therefore supplant the need for one generic list of best books selected by a small group of librarians.
- The number of adult and YA books published in a given year has grown dramatically since the 1930s when BBYA was established.
- The YALSA membership has indicated they want YALSA to find ways to allow for greater participation in the development of selected lists.
- There is concern among member leaders that the BBYA list, as it is now, is not useful to many members or the library community.
- Multiple BBYA Committees have raised a concern about the workload and other issues, but despite multiple attempts no viable solutions have been found.

Timeline

The phase-out of the BBYA Committee will take place over a two-year period. This will allow those whose first-year Committee appointments started in January 2009 and those who are finishing up a three-year commitment, to complete their term of service. The last BBYA list will be announced in January 2011. Pending Board approval of this proposal, the YALSA President will work with staff to develop and implement a communications strategy

to inform both BBYA Committee members and the YALSA membership, with the goal being to inform the Committee first, then the general membership.

Proposed Action

Approve the phase-out of the Best Books for Young Adults Committee and list so that as of the end of January 2011 the Best Books for Young Adults Committee will no longer be a standing Committee of YALSA.

Additional Recommendations from the Executive Committee:

To address the need that many members and librarians have for more information about the books &/or the lists:

- Have YALSA staff work with committees to make the voting less opaque members and librarians
- Have YALSA staff work with committees to do a better job of explaining the field nomination process and encouraging members & librarians to make field nominations
- Share the official nominees for the Alex Awards

To address the issue that some members & librarians aren't sure how to use the lists:

- Have YALSA staff work with committees to better articulate to members and the library community what the purpose of the lists are.
- Establish a member work group(s) to:
 - Find out more clearly what members' expectations are for the selection lists
 - Create resources to help librarians use the lists, such as book discussion guides, suggested activities, programming ideas and/or lesson plans

To address the problem that any people inside and outside the library community don't know about the lists:

- Direct staff to increase the level of marketing that is done for YALSA's lists, including the use of web 2.0 tools, and consider reallocating resources to accomplish this