

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting  
ALA Annual Conference, Chicago  
June 23 – 27, 2017**

**Topic:**                   **Creating a YALSA Liaison to ALA Groups**

**Background:**       **During the latest round of strategic planning, the Board was in general agreement that YALSA would benefit from cultivating stronger ties with ALA. One strategy for achieving that is refocusing the work of the Executive Committee to allow for this group to devote more of its time to relationship building within ALA. Another possible strategy for YALSA to pursue is better leveraging YALSA’s representative role on 18 specific ALA committees, assemblies, and other groups. Sarah Hill and Gretchen Kolderup brought this original document to the board at 2017 ALA Midwinter, but after discussion, the Board agreed that it needed more work. Sarah Hill, on behalf of the Board Standing Committee on Advocacy, presents this revised document to the board for action.**

**Action Required:**   **Action**

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Every year, one of the first tasks for the YALSA President to complete is to identify YALSA members to serve as representatives to 18 ALA groups. The YALSA representatives to ALA groups are selected by one of two means: those automatically determined by another position the person holds in YALSA, or by selection by the YALSA President. This process can be time consuming, and takes away from the YALSA President’s ability to settle into their new roles of board chair and chief elected officer of the organization.

Besides taking away from the President’s time at a critical period in their year, the current system of YALSA Reps lacks processes and supports to ensure success. In August 2016, YALSA staff sent an email to staff liaisons to ALA groups with an attached document of YALSA Representatives to the groups. However, when YALSA staff checked in February 2017 to see if the Representatives’ names had been added to the appropriate ALA rosters, 5 of the 18 weren’t added. Currently the feedback and directives to the multiple representatives is spotty and conference attendance is not required, which presents a challenge because most of the 18 ALA groups in question still meet in person. When the YALSA President emailed all representatives before Midwinter asking for reports on the activities of their group, only 4 responded with reports to share with the board.

After discussion this topic at the 2016 Fall Executive Committee Meeting, it was suggested that the Board Standing Committee on Advocacy bring a proposal to the board creating a new position to simplify and improve YALSA’s representation to these ALA groups. The Board discussed the proposal at Midwinter, and requested more information to determine whether or

not it was feasible within the ALA conference schedule for a single representative to attend multiple committee meetings.

These ALA Groups traditionally have YALSA representatives automatically determined by position:

<b>ALA Group</b>	<b>Corresponding YALSA Member Leader/Group</b>
Appointment Committee	President-Elect
Planning & Budget Assembly	Fiscal Officer
Recruitment Assembly	DMP Committee
New Members' Round Table	DMP Committee
Research & Statistics Committee	Research Committee

These ALA Groups have YALSA representatives selected by the YALSA President, as there is no closely corresponding group or member leader in YALSA:

- Advocacy Coordinating Group
- ASCLA Accessibility Assembly
- Conference Program Coordinating Team
- Freedom to Read Foundation
- Intellectual Freedom Committee
- Legislation Assembly
- Literacy Assembly
- Professional Ethics
- Schneider Family Book Award
- Website Advisory Committee

### **Proposal**

Create a new member position in YALSA that serves as liaison to ALA groups that do not have a corresponding group in YALSA. Funds will be provided to the liaison to defray the cost of attending Midwinter and Annual.

### **Rationale**

- Creating this new liaison position helps YALSA achieve its goal of building stronger ties with ALA, because an individual will be solely devoted to working with key ALA committees and groups
- Having an individual serve as YALSA's liaison creates efficiency, and frees up the YALSA President's time to focus on board and governance matters, instead of appointments
- The liaison can serve as the contact for the ALA groups--collecting reports and distributing information from the other YALSA Reps and serving as the connector between all ALA groups and the YALSA Executive Committee.

**YALSA Board of Directors – Annual 2017**  
**Topic: Creating a YALSA Liaison to ALA Groups**

- Providing funds for this role creates accountability that is currently lacking. As part of a letter of agreement that is created, the official YALSA liaison will be expected to complete certain tasks, such as providing regular reports to the YALSA Board and reporting to members via the YALSAblog and/or eNews.
- A liaison position will complement the Executive Committee’s work on building and maintaining ALA relationships, because the Liaison will focus on specific ALA committees while the Executive Committee will focus on governance level ALA relations.
- Creating this new position provides a new type of member engagement activity for YALSA members, especially for those who have participated in other leadership activities and are ready for a new level of engagement, as well as those who have already attended conferences in the past

**Sample Conference Schedule for YALSA Liaison to ALA:**

<b>ALA Group</b>	<b>2016 Meetings at Annual Conference</b>	<b>2017 Meetings at Midwinter</b>
Freedom to Read Foundation	all day Thursday	Friday, 8:30 am - noon, 2-4pm
Intellectual Freedom Committee	Friday, 8:30 – 12:30	N/A
Literacy Assembly	Friday, 3:00-4:00pm	Friday, 11:30am -12:30pm
Professional Ethics Committee	Friday, 1:30-3 pm	Saturday, 4:30-5:30pm
Intellectual Freedom Committee	N/A	Saturday, 8:00an – 12:00pm
Education Assembly	Saturday, 10:30-11:30am	Saturday, 10:30-11:30 am
Conference Program Coordinating Team	Saturday, 10:30-11:30am	Saturday, 10:30-11:30 am
Intellectual Freedom Committee	Sunday, 12:30 – 4:30	Sunday, 1:00 – 4:00pm
Website Advisory Committee	Sunday, 3:00-5:00pm	Sunday, 3:00-5:00pm
ASCLA Accessibility Assembly	Sunday 4:00-5:50pm	Saturday 3:00-5:50 pm
Professional Ethics Committee	Monday, 8:30 – 10:00am	Monday, 10:30-11:30 am
Intellectual Freedom Committee	Monday, 3:00 – 4:00pm	Monday, 1:00 – 4:00pm

While there are a couple of instances of overlap, the YALSA liaison would still be able to attend about 80% of the meetings.

**Broad Logistics and Start-up Timeline:**

- July 2017 – staff work out details, create application, letter of agreement, etc. ED adds the expense to the FY18 budget. Call for applicants opens for 2017 – 2018 YALSA Liaison.
- August 2017 – YALSA board reviews applications and selects Liaison for the 8 ALA groups. Liaison reviews, signs and returns letter of agreement. President appoints YALSA Reps to remaining ALA Groups.
- September 2017 – President hosts virtual orientation session for Reps and Liaison
- November 2017 - Liaison reports to Executive Committee
- February 2018 - Liaison reports to Executive Committee at Midwinter. Liaison and reps attend ALA meetings
- April 2018 -Liaison reports to Executive Committee during Spring Executive meeting. YALSA staff opens application process for 2018 – 2019 liaison
- June 2018 -2017 – 2018 liaison reports to the Executive Committee at Annual. Liaison and reps attend ALA meetings at Annual, YALSA board reviews applications and selects liaison for 2018 - 2019.
- July 2018 – Board Standing Committee on Fund & Partner Development initiates an evaluation process to measure first year impact

**Recommended Improvements to Current Processes:**

- The president-elect will appoint the ALA Schneider Family Book Award member at the same time as other book award positions are filled to simplify procedures.
- A YALSA board member who is a member of the Advocacy standing committee will be the representative for the ALA Advocacy Coordinating Group and Legislation Assembly
- Hold an orientation call with all new reps (and the YALSA Liaison, if approved) each summer.

**Fiscal Implications**

YALSA will need to identify an additional \$1,000 per year in funding to support a \$500 stipend to defray the cost for the liaison to attend Midwinter and Annual. This could possibly come from FOY fundraising, redirecting a portion of funds from another project, or increasing a revenue stream. Since YALSA has either met or exceeded its FOY fundraising goals the past three years, FOY may be the most viable option. Another possibility is that the Member Awards Evaluation Taskforce could recommend sunseting an existing member grant that is underperforming, and those funds could be reallocated to this effort.

**Measuring Impact**

**YALSA Board of Directors – Annual 2017**  
**Topic: Creating a YALSA Liaison to ALA Groups**

In July 2018 the Board Standing Committee on Fund & Partner Development will implement an evaluation process to measure first year impact. The evaluation will seek to identify the degree to which the Liaison position was able to strengthen YALSA and ALA relations. Desired outcomes include improved communication between YALSA and ALA, and increased awareness of opportunities for collaboration. Possible questions to explore during the evaluation phase could include:

- What specific actions were taken to strengthen ties with ALA?
- To what degree was the transferring of knowledge between the ALA groups and YALSA (and vice versa), achieved?
- How many ALA group meetings were attended in person? How many conference calls/virtual meetups? How many YALSA blog posts were written by the liaison?
- What opportunities for collaboration was YALSA able to leverage through the efforts of the Liaison?

**Recommended Board Actions:**

- Create a YALSA Liaison member position to liaise with the following ALA groups:
  - Accessibility Assembly
  - Conference Program Coordinating Team
  - Education Assembly
  - Freedom to Read Foundation
  - Intellectual Freedom Committee
  - Literacy Assembly
  - Professional Ethics Committee
  - Website Advisory Committee
- Direct the Executive Director to work with staff to flesh out the details of creating the Liaison position, including such tasks as identifying the appropriate funding method; creating the letter of agreement, the application form, and marketing plan; and identifying the processes and supports needed for the new Liaison role.
- Direct the Executive Director to work with staff and the past president to put processes and supports in place to improve the YALSA Representative effort for the ALA groups that will not be the purview of the Liaison.

**Additional Resources:**

- List of YALSA reps: <http://www.ala.org/yalsa/workingwithyalsa/committees/alareps>
- Updated Executive Committee Function Board Document from ALA Annual 2016
- Refocusing Executive Committee Proposal Executive Committee Document Fall 2016