

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Annual Conference, San
Francisco June 26 – 30, 2015**

Topic: Award and Selection Committee Oversight Recommendation

Background: The Selection and Award Committee Evaluation Taskforce completed a set of recommendations and survey results in February 2015, which the Executive Committee reviewed during their 2015 Spring Executive Committee Meeting via conference call. Based on discussions from the call, Chris Shoemaker and Pam Spencer Holley, the taskforce chair, have developed the proposal below for the board's consideration.

Action Required: Discussion

Proposal

Create and pilot a Selection and Award Oversight Committee to serve as primary liaison to and provide support to YALSA's 12 selection and award committees

Rationale

- **Members want more support:** in the survey conducted by the Award and Selection Committee Taskforce, respondents indicated that the top improvements that YALSA could make to improve the function of the selection and award committees were having a committee liaison who
 - could stay on through the whole term
 - has experience navigating policies and procedures
 - has the contextual knowledge that comes from serving on the committee
- **It creates a new opportunity for member engagement:** members with collections expertise are currently limited to serving on selection and award committees or writing for The Hub. Creating an oversight group can be another way for YALSA to leverage their expertise and provide them with an opportunity to participate in YALSA. Given the proposal to require selection and award committee members to take off a certain amount of time before they can serve on such a committee again, providing more opportunities to stay engaged with YALSA can be a plus.
- **The capacity of the board to oversee these committees is limited**
 - Not all board members have served on selection or award committees, so their knowledge of policies and procedures relating to these groups is limited. By transferring that responsibility from the Board to an oversight group recruited for their specific expertise, the selection and award committees would receive better support
 - YALSA board members often do not have adequate time to devote to the needs of all of the committees. Collectively they liaise with a total of 65 different groups (averaging 4 groups per board member). Each of the selection and strategic committees, advisory boards and juries are linked to one of the areas of the strategic plan, which results in the following breakdown:
 - Advocacy – 5
 - Capacity Building – 11
 - Continuous Learning – 9
 - Member Recruitment - 26

- Research – 14

Within the groups that are identified as linked to member recruitment and retention, 12 of the committees are selection awards or lists, and 14 are non-collection related work. The high number of groups designated as member recruitment and retention forces the President to divide those committees across other standing committees to manage the workflow.

- **Preserving the integrity of YALSA, the awards and lists is essential.** The board's limited capacity leaves the integrity and reputation of the awards, lists and YALSA at risk of being compromised. A more qualified oversight group with more time and expertise to dedicate to the work of these groups is a proactive step in ensuring the reputation and integrity of awards, lists and YALSA is preserved.
- **YALSA's board would have more time for fundamental work** required of all boards, including but not limited to: determining the organization's mission and purpose, providing proper financial oversight, and ensuring effective organizational planning.
 - The board is currently spending a significant amount of time at meetings and through board liaison work on oversight of selection and award committees. In the past five years 17% of all action and discussion items on board agendas have centered around proposals related to the 12 award and selection committees, yet these groups make up just 19% of YALSA's portfolio of committees, juries, taskforces and advisory boards. During the same time period 12% of agenda items were related to strategic committees, juries and advisory boards, which comprise 81% of YALSA's portfolio of committees et. al.

Proposed Action

To make these improvements in the simplest way, YALSA's Board could create and pilot an award and selection committee oversight group with the primary function of ensuring the smooth operation of the selection and award committees. The pilot oversight committee would:

- Take over the liaison role that board members currently hold
- Report directly to the Board
- Be composed primarily of members who have previously served on various selection and award committees, but past Board and O&B committee members would also be sought out for their policy and process expertise.
- Be appointed at the same time as the selection and award committee members, ensuring their terms were in sync.

Selection and Award Oversight Committee Draft Charge

To ensure efficient functioning of YALSA's award and selection committees. To advise committee chairs on recommended procedures for committee operations based on a thorough knowledge of YALSA policy, committee operation, background, and experience. To collect, analyze and respond to quarterly chair reports. To summarize, analyze and evaluate periodically for the YALSA Board the progress and concerns of the selection and award committees. To facilitate communication among selection and award committees and to identify common areas of concern and identify solutions. To coordinate training and orientation for in-coming committee members. To note particular abilities of committee members in the work of the organization and to share this information with the Board and nominating committees. 5 to 7 virtual members, including the chair, as well as a designated liaison from the O&B Committee. Term commencing Feb. 1 – 2016 through Jan. 31, 2018.

Proposed Task List for the 2016 - 2018 Oversight Committee

Work with the O&B Committee and use information gathered by the Selection and Award Committee Evaluation Taskforce to prioritize and carry out the following tasks that were recommended by the taskforce:

- Create one standardized set of policies and procedures with content that is relevant across all six award committees and post online

- Create and include a standardized voting procedure for all award committees, including a process for determining both honor and winning titles
- Include a clarification of title eligibility in terms of format, specifically e-books (for Odyssey this relates to downloadable audiobooks)
- Create and include a set of guidelines for administrative assistants
- Set deadlines for all field suggestions four weeks before, and for all committee nominations two weeks before
- Determine whether it is desirable for *Booklist* to continue its role of serving as a consultant to certain award and/or selection committees, and if so co-create a set of guidelines for chairs and consultants so they know exactly what the role of the *Booklist* Consultant is. If not, submit to the YALSA Board a recommendation to sunset the *Booklist* Consultant designation.
- Create a chair handbook specifically tailored for each of the six award committees that includes one section of general award chair information and another with information specific to that committee. Ensure each handbook will be housed in the YALSA office and direct the Program Officer for Conferences and Events to work with chairs at the end of each committee term to update them as needed
 - As part of the committee-specific information, include a calendar/timeline tailored for each committee
 - As part of the committee specific information, create a standard method for selecting vetted nominations for Alex and Nonfiction
 - Provide a template for chairs to compile notes and other information as a sort of addendum to their chair handbook, and ensure that it is passed from chair to chair

Implementation

1. The board votes to adopt the proposal in this document and inform members of this new group
2. As part of fall appointments, the President-Elect appoints to the oversight group
3. The group begins work Feb. 1, 2016, with the first task of prioritizing their work based on the outline in this document
4. Between 6 – 12 months into the committee's term, the chair will submit a report to the Board with any recommendations for changes to the work of the group.
5. The board will designate a sub-group to begin work with the chair at 18 months into the term to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the committee and determine whether it should continue beyond two years.
6. Based on the evaluation results, the board can decide to continue with this group or discontinue it and implement another approach to selection and award committee oversight

Additional resources

10 Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards <http://ow.ly/ODetD>

Report from Selection Committee Evaluation Taskforce -

http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/SelectionEvalTF_spring15.pdf

Board standing Committees -

http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/BoardCmteProposal_Dec13.pdf

Establish Selection Committee Evaluation Taskforce -

http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/SelectionCmteEval_MW14.pdf