

**YALSA Board of Directors
Midwinter Meeting, Seattle
January 25 – 29, 2019**

- Topic:** Alignment with EDI of Mission, Vision, Intended Impact Statement, EDI Statement, and EDI Plan
- Background:** In board document #4 from Annual 2018, the Advancing Diversity Taskforce identified several top priorities including a review of YALSA’s current mission, vision, intended impact statements to ensure alignment with equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) principles; and creation of a EDI statement and an EDI plan. Jane Gov, Kate Denier, Kafi Kumasi, Sandra Hughes-Hassell, and Crystle Martin have provided the following review and recommendations for the Board’s consideration.
- Action Required:** Action
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Proposal

Current YALSA Mission

Our mission is to support library staff in alleviating the challenges teens face, and in putting all teens – especially those with the greatest needs – on the path to successful and fulfilling lives

Revised YALSA Vision Statement

Our vision is that all teens, from a variety of backgrounds including, but not limited to ability, class, gender-identity, sexual orientation, race, religion and power-differentiated groups, will have access to quality library programs and services – no matter where they occur – that are tailored to the community and that create new opportunities for all teens’ to promote personal growth, academic success, and career development, while linking teens and staff to resources, connected learning opportunities, coaching, and mentoring.

Revised YALSA Intended Impact Statement

To meaningfully address the challenges teens face today, to foster safe spaces, and to put more teens on the path to a successful and fulfilling life, YALSA will support library staff who work for and with teens in the transformation of teen library services so that:

- Libraries reach out and equitably serve ALL teens in the community, understanding that teens come with a variety of interests and needs and come from a variety of backgrounds, including but not limited to race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, class and abilities.
- The library “space” is at once both physical and virtual. It connects teens to other people, printed materials, technology, and digital content, not limiting teens to a designated teen area but rather inviting them into the full scope of the library’s assets and offerings.

- Teens co-create, co-evaluate, and co-evolve library programs and activities with library staff and skilled volunteers (including mentors and coaches) based on their passions and interests. These programs and activities are inclusive of a diversity of teen voices; connected to teens’ personal, work, or academic interests across multiple literacies; generate measurable outcomes for teens’ skills and knowledge; and are tailored to the community.
- To provide continuing education, resources, and support for professionals and paraprofessionals working with teens.

It will be essential for the YALSA Board, staff, and members to use this intended impact statement to determine whether or not proposed initiatives are appropriate for YALSA to pursue with its time, energy, and financial resources. Thoughtful consideration will ensure YALSA's efforts are best aligned to impact the issues that matter most.

Proposed EDI Statement

Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are ideals that the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) seeks to affirm in all facets of the organization. As a professional organization dedicated to enhancing library services for and with teens, YALSA recognizes that all teens, and particularly teens from underserved and marginalized communities, need and deserve to see themselves reflected in the library staffing, policies, signage, web site content and much more. Therefore, YALSA seeks to address the cultural mismatch between today’s increasingly diverse teen population and the librarian workforce, which remains overwhelmingly white and female.

Although achieving greater representational diversity is an important component of YALSA’s EDI goals, there are two equally important issues that the YALSA is committed to redressing on an institutional level: equity and inclusion. Attending to issues of equity and inclusion are important because they help move the organization away from mere platitudes about diversity and demand measurable actions to redress the systemic power asymmetries that have kept certain groups of people on the periphery of the organization. When YALSA attends to inequities in the organization, there is a direct benefit to all of the nation’s teens who are more apt to feel included and empowered in library and information spaces, both physically and virtually. Moreover, an explicit EDI statement can help undergird cultural competence training and professional development for the library staff charged with serving the diverse needs of all teens.

Further, YALSA affirms and supports the American Library Association’s (ALA) EDI related policies, as outlined in the ALA Policy Manual, sections B3 through B8.

YALSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan

Foreward

The purpose of this plan is to affirm YALSA’s commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and to highlight the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion related strategies that the YALSA Board is taking in the organization’s Strategic and Implementation Plans. Given the predominant whiteness and femaleness of

the profession and the diversity of the populations served by the profession it is crucial that equity, diversity, and inclusion are at the forefront of our member's minds and that we as an organization are working to make the YALSA a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization. The document provides YALSA's Mission; Vision; Commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; Vision for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; and Strategies for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion for 2018-2020. The strategies section lists five goals with their supporting strategies. Each strategy is embedded in the Strategic and Implementation Plan and will be evaluated as it is completed. It is a living document that the YALSA Board will revisit and revise as necessary and during future strategic planning processes.

Acknowledgements

We wish to thank the Advancing Diversity Taskforce for laying the groundwork for this Plan. The taskforce members included Nicole A. Cooke (Chair), Amanda Barnhart, Shauntee Burns-Simpson, Veronica Rey, Alice Son, Valerie Tagoe, and Julie Winkelstein.

YALSA Mission

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YALSA Commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

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--Adopted by YALSA's Board of Directors October 17, 2018

YALSA Vision for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The vision for YALSA is to be a diverse, inclusive and equitable organization which flourishes on the exchange of ideas from different perspectives. We believe the diversity of viewpoints that comes from different life experiences, identities, cultural backgrounds, and more enables YALSA to better achieve its mission to support library staff in alleviating the challenges teens face, and in putting all teens – especially those with the greatest needs – on the path to successful and fulfilling lives.

We are committed to:

- Increasing diversity, which is expressed in myriad forms, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, language, culture, national origin, age, disability status, ideology, religion, power differentiated groups, and professional skill and experience levels, across the organization including among our members, leadership, staff, and partners.
- Working actively to redress institutional inequities and systemic power asymmetries that affect our society, to challenge bias, harassment, and discrimination, and to provide equal opportunity for all persons.
- Deliberately pursuing efforts to ensure that YALSA is an inclusive place where differences are welcomed, where different perspectives are respectfully heard and responded to, and where every individual feels a sense of belonging and inclusion.

Goals and Strategies for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion 2018-2020

Over the next two years, YALSA seeks the following goals to move toward our Vision for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion:

1. Audit existing YALSA activities to create a more inclusive, equitable, and welcoming organizational environment
2. Recruit, retain, and develop a more diverse membership and cadre of volunteers at all levels in the organization
3. Continue to align our policies, procedures and practices with our EDI vision

4. Ensure that YALSA members know how to develop inclusive and equitable library spaces, services and programs
5. Create and maintain formal and informal partnerships with other organizations around a shared commitment to redressing institutional inequities and systemic power asymmetries

Goal 1: Create an inclusive, equitable, and welcoming organizational environment

Strategies

- Expand current YALSA Board member leadership training to include high-quality education and experiences in diversity, equity and inclusion
- Provide professional development experiences for YALSA staff focused on related topics such as cultural competency and handling diversity, equity and inclusion issues
- Provide training for committee, taskforce, and jury chairs related to diversity, equity and inclusion both as part of their onboarding process and as continued leadership support.
- Leadership and staff will apply what they learn from EDI-related training and implement it in member engagement, recruitment and retention
- Provide feedback mechanisms for participants in webinars, listserv discussions, committee meetings, and conference programs to ensure they are inclusive and respond to incidents of bias, harassment, discrimination, and intolerance if necessary
- Offer ongoing opportunities for YALSA members, leaders and staff to discuss EDI and what it means
- Conduct yearly surveys and periodic focus groups with YALSA members and potential members to help the association understand EDI perspectives related to YALSA's organizational environment
- Offer conference buddies for first-time attendees
- Ensure events and experiences at conferences, including networking opportunities, are inclusive
- Continue to encourage diverse participation in activities such as the weekly Member Spotlight in the eNews
- Provide regular communication to Members as laid out in the Communication Plan.

Goal 2: Recruit, retain, and develop a more diverse membership

Strategies

- Develop a recruitment campaign targeted at library staff from underrepresented groups
- Encourage ALA to investigate alternative dues structures
- Assess existing pathways to professional success and involvement within YALSA for underrepresented groups
- Provide support for members from underrepresented groups such as a mentoring program, networking opportunities at conferences or in ALA Connect, grants to attend YALSA's symposium or other events, and other opportunities.

- Continue to reach out to and engage with individuals representing underrepresented groups to serve on the YALSA Board, committees, task forces, and juries, and to present at conferences.
- Continue to provide guidance for committee appointments and volunteer opportunities to include and increase diversity, equity and inclusion
- Continue to expand member involvement in YALSA committees, task forces, and other volunteer activities that do not require conference attendance
- Promptly respond to volunteers who fill out the volunteer form
- Implement a member referral program aimed at individuals from diverse backgrounds
- Partner with other organizations to recruit diverse members
- Ensure recruitment materials prominently feature YALSA’s commitment to EDI

Goal 3: Align our policies and practices with our EDI vision

Strategies

- Institute a practice to ask ourselves these questions: How does this policy, practice or partnership support YALSA’s Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion vision? Does it support equitable and inclusive access and opportunity? Is it neutral? Does it stand in the way of our vision?
- Audit existing policies, procedures and practices to align them with YALSA’s EDI vision
- Use an equity lens to create messaging, resources, services and programs
- Require that all proposals that come to the Board include a section on attention to equity, diversity, and inclusion
- Hold ourselves accountable through annual internal review of all strategies in this plan, our values, and YALSA policies and adjust as needed.

Goal 4. Ensure that YALSA members know how to develop inclusive and equitable library services and programs

Strategies

- Continue to provide professional development experiences for YALSA members of all job types, including support staff, focused on cultural competency, diversity, equity and inclusion
- Embed cultural competency, diversity, equity, and inclusion in all YALSA professional learning opportunities no matter the topic focus
- Create a clearinghouse or speakers’ bureau of people with expertise in equity, diversity, and inclusion
- Provide models of inclusive and equitable library services and programs
- Create and distribute materials, such as toolkits, to help members better serve diverse youth and to address issues of institutional bias and racism in their library

Goal 5. Create formal and informal partnerships with other organizations around a shared commitment to redressing institutional inequities and systemic power asymmetries

Strategies

- Work with LIS and iSchools to ensure that cultural competencies, equity, diversity and inclusion is included in all youth-oriented curricula
- Identify potential partners whose mission is in alignment with YALSA’s EDI vision and build opportunities to move our work forward through the partnership
- Identify potential funding agencies who make diversity, equity, and inclusion central to their missions and philanthropic efforts

Implementation

The strategies listed in this plan have been and will be embedded in YALSA’s current and future Strategic Organizational and Implementation Plans.

Evaluation

Each of the strategies will be evaluated separately as part of its individual implementation. The YALSA President will present a progress report at the 2019 ALA Annual Conference at the end of year one of this plan. For the ALA Annual Conference in 2020 a two year annual report will be presented to give an update on the status of this plan, as well as an updated plan for the following two years.

Additional Information/Resources Consulted

- YALSA’s Next Steps for implementing the Advancing Diversity TF recommendations, www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/EDINextSteps_AN18.pdf
- Draft YALSA Statement on the Value of EDI, www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/EDIstatement_AN18.pdf
- ALA Policy Manual, www.ala.org/aboutala/b3-diversity-old-number-60
- YALSA Advancing Diversity Task Force Report, www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/AdvancingDiversityReport_AN18.pdf
- Examples of EDI plans from other organizations:
 - <http://www.collinsfoundation.org/sites/default/files/DEI%20Vision%20and%20Strategies%2C%20approved%2012-9-15.pdf>
 - https://www.edf.org/sites/default/files/content/edf_2014_diversity_strategy_full_report_0.pdf

Rationale

These small changes in language will better align these statements with the proposed expanded statement on diversity submitted by Kafi Kumasi.

YALSA’s statements do not contradict EDI principles, and while they do not use the words equity, diversity, and inclusion, the use of “all teens” is aligned to EDI principles. “All teens” is derived to mean being inclusive of all teens from diverse backgrounds and populations. The mission statement affirms YALSA’s commitment to equity by highlighting services to “those

with the greatest needs.” By making small but meaningful changes to the language, YALSA will be sending a stronger message to members and the library community about its commitment to EDI principles.

The creation of an EDI statement and an EDI Plan strengthen YALSA’s commitment to EDI and give members a point to start from when having EDI conversations.

Financial Implications

Member leader time for disseminating information about the updated statements and staff time for updating the statements online.

Measuring Impact

Member and library community feedback on the updated statement.

Alignment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Goals

The revision of existing YALSA statements and creation of new EDI materials help bring YALSA into greater alignment with its desired goals for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Proposed Board Action

The board moves to adopt the changes as outlined in this document and direct the Executive Director to work with staff to update or originally post the statements online by no later than October 20th; and further direct the incoming President to create a YALSAblog post that promotes the updated statement and the rationale behind it.

Additional Information

ALA Policy Manual, www.ala.org/aboutala/b3-diversity-old-number-60

YALSA Advancing Diversity Task Force Report,

www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/AdvancingDiversityReport_AN18.pdf

YALSA Mission, Vision & Impact Statements

www.ala.org/yalsa/aboutyalsa/mission%26vision/yalsamission

YALSA Statement on Diversity www.ala.org/yalsa/statement-diversity