

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting  
ALA Midwinter Meeting, Boston  
January 8 – 12, 2016**

**Topic:**                   **Communications Plan for Organizational Planning**

**Background:**           **In November following the Executive Committee’s meetings with consultant Eric Meade, a short-term communications plan was drafted in order to start connecting YALSA members and stakeholders with the organization’s planning process. Once the new organizational plan is published, the association will need to continue to: inform members of the plan, highlight what’s included in the plan, provide updates on re-alignment and implementation steps, articulate what the new plan means for the association and for members, and encourage member engagement in the roll-out of the plan. The following is a proposal developed by Kate McNair for a four-month communications plan to keep members engaged and informed with the plan and the association’s next steps.**

**Action Required:**   **Discussion**

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**Proposal:** create and implement a formal plan in order to keep the membership informed about the new organizational plan and opportunities for engagement in YALSA and the work ahead. Build buy-in in a way that ensures success of the plan. Through communication we will strive to anticipate reactions, questions and possible opportunities and challenges.

**Focal Points for Communications:**

At this point before the plan is developed we do not have a full idea of the actual content of the communications that we will send to members and stakeholders about the plan. However, we will want to continue to talk about the following (while adding new messages based on the fully developed content of the plan):

- The new organizational plan has as its foundation YALSA’s “Future of Library Services for and with Teens: A Call to Action” report
- The plan was developed as a part of a multi-year process that brought members, stakeholders, and others together
- YALSA leaders are taking a “teens first” focus and approach in the new organizational plan
- The plan outlines the work and focus for the next three years - previous plans used a five year horizon
- The association wants members to be engaged in the work ahead
- Updates about the work carrying out the plan will be available on the YALSAblog, Twitter, and official YALSA communications channels
- This is an exciting time for YALSA with lots of new opportunities, and while some things will change, these changes will also open the door for some new opportunities to help libraries support the needs of teens and their communities.

Board members will also want to (re)familiarize themselves with key points outlined in [Change Management Communication Best Practices](#) that was accepted by the Board at Midwinter 2015.

**Four Month Communications Activities**

In the first phase of organizational planning communications with members and stakeholders (Nov. – Jan.), YALSA board members wrote blog posts, published articles in *YALS*, hosted Twitter chats, posted information on Twitter, had one-on-one conversations with members and stakeholders, and provided opportunities for feedback. In the second phase of communications activities we suggest continuing the blog posts, articles, one-on-one conversations, and Twitter postings and expanding into other activities and communication channels.

It’s important to note that throughout the organizational re-alignment process the Board will want to identify significant changes that will call for a more extensive level of communication and adapt the proposed communication plan to accommodate these. These could include things such as: new and unique membership opportunities, changes to participation requirements, changes to dues categories and/or rates, changes to organizational structure, and sunsetting or relocation decisions.

All communication should follow talking points and other tools and expectations developed by the Board and/or staff.

Below is a four month outline of communications activities for YALSA board members to implement once the plan is published. At the beginning of month three, the YALSA Board will want to evaluate the progress of the communications and determine, based on the planning activities in play, what activities should be implemented for the next four months.

Month	Communication Activities	Responsibility Of
Month 1 (Feb. or March)	Develop talking points for significant changes identified above to be given to Board members, chairs, and change agents.  Identify key stakeholders that should be informed first of impactful changes to their work.  Announce & publish organizational plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Listservs</li> <li>● E-News</li> <li>● Website</li> <li>● Social media - Twitter, Facebook, etc.</li> <li>● Blogs</li> <li>● Press Release</li> </ul> Share new plan with internal and external partners	Executive Director w/ Board input  Board  Communications Specialist writes release and adapts for e-news, listservs and social media. Board members write YALSAblog posts and leverage social media  Executive Director

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	<p>Host Google Hangout conversation on organizational plan with YALSA Board members and archive on YALSA website</p> <p>Submit the new, finalized plan to <i>YALS</i> for publication in next issue</p> <p>President’s column in <i>YALS</i> includes content related to the new organizational plan and direction of the association</p> <p>Seek questions from members and stakeholders about new plan via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Website</li> <li>● Twitter/Facebook</li> <li>● E-News</li> <li>● Listservs</li> </ul> <p>Add link to plan in new member messages</p> <p>Provide opportunities for committee chairs to ask questions, get clarifications, etc. about the plan’s implementation, including via the quarterly report form</p> <p>Begin developing FAQ based on questions received Board members has one-on-one conversations with members and stakeholders</p>	<p>President</p> <p>Executive Director &amp; Communications Specialist President</p> <p>Staff create online form and post to web site. Board members share out</p> <p>Membership Marketing Manager President &amp; Board Liaisons</p> <p>Executive Director &amp; Board members</p>
<p>Month 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● At least once during the month blog post by YALSA Board member(s) on aligning YALSA work with the organizational direction.</li> <li>● Updates on plan implementation shared via e-news and listservs</li> <li>● Create evergreen in-house ad promoting new plan that can run in <i>YALS</i>, the e-news and on the blogs and <i>JRLYA</i></li> <li>● Weekly Twitter highlights of plan components, implementation, opportunities</li> <li>● Continue to seek questions using same communications channels as month 1 and update FAQ</li> <li>● Board members continues one-on-one conversations with members and stakeholders</li> <li>● Work with <i>YALS</i> Editor to include content in each of the next four issues that is organizational direction focused</li> </ul>	<p>Board members</p> <p>Communications Specialist</p> <p>Board members</p>
<p>Month 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Host Google Hangout with YALSA board members on plan implementation and to answer questions received already from members and stakeholders</li> </ul>	<p>President &amp; Program Officer for CE</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● At least once during the month an update posting on the YALSAblog</li> <li>● Highlights of organizational direction work via e-news and listservs</li> <li>● Weekly Twitter highlights of plan components, implementation, opportunities</li> <li>● Evaluate the progress of the communications and determine, based on the planning activities in play, what communications activities should be implemented for the next four months and who should be engaged in that work—for example, it could be time to pull in committee chairs.</li> </ul>	<p>Board members</p> <p>Staff</p> <p>Board members</p>
<p>Month 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Incorporate new plan in training for incoming strategic committee chairs and members</li> <li>● Blog post updating latest news related to the organizational plan</li> <li>● Host a forum, and possibly provide special swag, at the 2016 ALA Annual Conference to highlight and discuss the exciting engagement opportunities for members as a part of the plan</li> <li>● Highlights of the organizational direction posted in e-news, listservs</li> <li>● Highlights of organizational direction posted on Twitter/Facebook/etc.</li> <li>● Board members follows-up on one-to-one conversations to learn more about questions and responses to the plan</li> </ul>	<p>President-Elect</p> <p>Board members</p> <p>Staff</p> <p>Board members</p>

**Fiscal Implications**

- Staff and member leader time
- Minimal funding for possible swag or fliers to distribute at conferences (\$100 - \$200)
- Minimal funding for creation of in-house ad

**Recommended Board Action**

The Board moves to adopt this communication plan as outlined above, and directs the Executive Committee to oversee implementation of the plan.

**Additional Resources**

- [Phase 1 communication plan](#)
- [Change Management Communication Best Practices](#)
- [Feedback Form](#)