

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

Topic: Evaluation of Dues Policy & Structure

Background: Recent practice has been that the Board makes time to evaluate YALSA's dues structure and policies every five years in order to ensure that the organization 1) has adequate entry points in the organization for individuals who may want to participate in YALSA; and 2) has adequate funds to support programs and services for members. 2010 was the last time the Board had a discussion about dues. The last change to YALSA's dues structure went into effect in September 2011 when a category was created for non-salaried members and regular member dues were raised from \$50 to \$60, student dues were raised from \$20 to \$25 and corporate dues were raised from \$60 to \$70. Any proposed changes to YALSA's dues structure must be put to a vote before the YALSA membership. YALSA's Board has between now and January 2016 to decide what, if anything, it wants to propose on the ballot relating to dues. Linda Braun has presented the document below to begin the discussion.

Action Required: Discussion

POLICIES

The method for changing dues, whether it's adding or condensing dues categories or changing the fee for various categories, is a two-step process, as dictated by the YALSA Bylaws. First, YALSA's Board discusses and votes on the matter. Then, if approved, the issue goes on the ballot for a member vote. Past Board practice has been to bring dues-related matters to members infrequently, between every 5 – 10 years, in order to avoid having the issue on the ballot constantly. As a result, when dues increases need to occur, they are often a sizeable—between \$5 and \$10. This is because the rate has remained flat for a number of years while expenses have been increasing due to inflation, rises in the cost of living, etc. Additionally, changes to the dues structure happen infrequently and not always in a timely manner. For example, when the recession began in late 2008 YALSA did not have a discounted dues category for non-salaried library staff. The Board took action to create one; however, due to the process outlined in the Bylaws, the change was not able to go into effect until nearly two years into the recession.

Because dues increases and category changes are infrequent and there is no ability to plan for them (since a ballot measure may or may not pass), long term financial planning is difficult. Additionally, in years when dues are static but the cost of living increases, YALSA is at a disadvantage because the organization has less buying power but still has to deliver the expected level of service and amount of products. Lastly, implementing any changes at all

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related to dues takes a significant amount of time. For example, if the Board were to determine at this meeting that it wants to change something about dues, the measure would be placed on the spring 2016 YALSA ballot and, if passed, would be put into effect in Sept. 2016, 14 months after the board decision. If the measure failed, the board would have to reassess in summer of 2016, and another 14 months would go by before any action could occur, due to the annual ballot cycle.

Questions for the Board's consideration

- Is continuing with the current policy for making changes to dues, as outlined in the Bylaws, in the best interest of the organization?
- Would an annual incremental increase help YALSA better prepare for future initiatives and/or improve its financial planning and forecasting?
- Would an annual incremental increase likely have less personal impact on members' wallets and budgets, as opposed to a larger increase every so many years?
- Does tying dues increases to something specific, like the increase in the cost of living, provide stronger justification to members regarding why increases are necessary?
- Would a change in policy allow the Board to respond in a more timely manner to changes in the field (e.g. the prior example of creating a discounted category as a response to the recession)
- Is YALSA in line with industry best practices?

CURRENT DUES STRUCTURE (in place since FY10):

- Regular member, \$60
- Student member, \$25
- Retired member, \$25
- Non-salaried member, \$25
- Friends, \$25
- Trustees, \$25
- International member, \$60
- Organizational member, \$70
- Corporate member, \$70

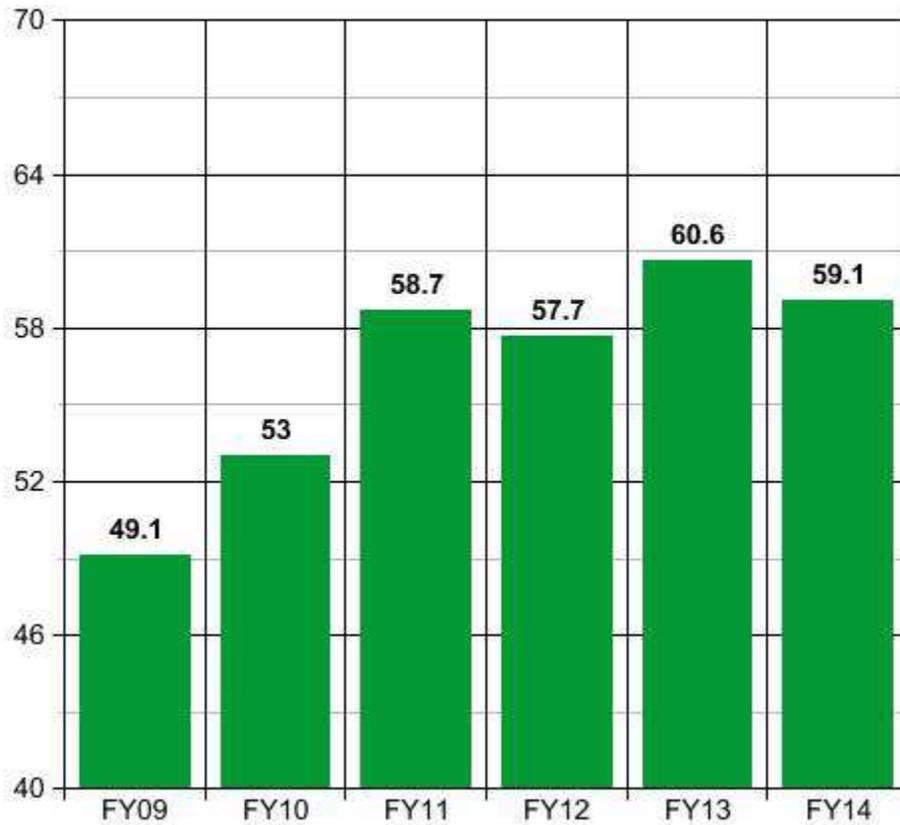
YALSA stats by member type (current as of April 2015)

- Regular full-price, 3133
- Student, 718
- International, 41
- Support staff, 199
- Non-salaried, 428
- Retiree, 104
- Trustee, 9
- Associate, 57
- Organizational, 265
- Corporate, 16

Total membership - 5189

Trend data: percent of total personal members using a discounted dues rate

Regular members vs. discounted members



ALA Divisions' dues rates as of FY15:

Division	regular member	student member	Other Personal member	Organizational Rates (libraries)
AASL	\$50	\$35	\$35 (retiree)	\$75
ACRL	\$60	\$39	\$39 (retiree)	\$125
ALCTS	\$65	\$15	\$35 (retiree)	\$75
ALSC	\$50	\$20	\$35 (retiree)	\$55
ASCLA	\$54	\$20	\$20 (retiree)	\$60
LLAMA	\$50	\$15	none	\$65
LITA	\$60	\$25	\$30 (non-salaried)	\$90
PLA	\$70	\$30	\$50 (retiree, non-salaried)	\$100

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United for Libraries	\$55	\$20	\$55 (trustee)	\$55
RUSA	\$60	\$25	\$30 (retiree, support staff or non-salaried)	\$80
YALSA	\$60	\$25	\$25 (retiree, friends, trustees, non-salaried)	\$70

Questions for the Board's Consideration

- Are the number and types of dues categories adequate for YALSA and aligned with its mission and the Futures Report?
- Are the rates within each of the dues categories equitable and reasonable?
- Given the increase in discounted membership versus regular membership, would raising the student and/or special categories of dues, perhaps by \$5, offset the reduced overall dues revenue caused by fewer people paying the regular rate?
- What impact would a revision of the YALSA dues rates and/or categories have on member recruitment and expansion?
- How does the outcomes-based and strategic planning work being done tie in with the fiscal needs of YALSA and dues categories and revenue?
- All members get the exact same services and benefits regardless of the rate they pay. Is this sustainable?
- What, if any, innovative membership models within the association industry may be a good fit for YALSA to adapt?
- Based on this board discussion, what should next steps be?

Additional resources:

- ALA Council Approves Dues Adjustment Proposal www.ala.org/news/press-releases/2013/02/ala-council-approves-dues-adjustment-proposal
- The Lowdown on a Dues Increase www.asaecenter.org/Resources/EnewsletterMembership.cfm?ItemNumber=32393
- New Membership Models:
 - <http://associationsnow.com/2014/07/tiers-put-power-choice-members-hands/>
 - <http://membershipmarketing.blogspot.com/2007/09/growing-revenue-through-membership.html>
- PLA 2011 Ballot Items for Member Vote www.ala.org/pla/about/board/election/ballotitemsqa
- When Should You Raise Dues? <http://institute.uschamber.com/when-should-you-raise-dues/>
- YALSA Bylaws www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/BYLAWS_2013approvedchanges.pdf