

**Fall Executive Committee Meeting
October 25-26, 2014, Chicago**

Topic: Board Member Exit Interviews

Background: At the 2009 Annual Conference the Executive Committee expressed a desire to conduct exit interviews with out-going Board members as a means of obtaining feedback about individuals' experience with serving on the Board. The ultimate goal is to improve the overall experience for Board members so that the Board can function effectively and efficiently as possible. It was agreed that the Past President would conduct the exit interviews. Shannon is presenting her responses below. The Executive Committee may want to discuss the results with an eye towards identifying any possible areas of concern or opportunity.

Action Required: Discussion

Q1: Why did you agree to serve on this board?

- It came as part of my appointment to be a committee chair-- my agreement came from a place of being ready to chair a committee and feeling like my experiences both personal and professional have led to the point of being a good board member.
- Was asked to complete someone else's term.
- Because it's my life!!! Apparently. Seriously, I wanted the experience.
- Was asked to complete someone else's term.
- I wanted to give back to the organization, and I thought it would be a challenging and interesting professional development and learning experience.
- I love working with teens and want to be more involved with YALSA
- Wanted to give back to an organization that has given me so much; great professional development opportunity; asked twice
- Professional Development and I strongly support YALSA's mission.

Q2: Did you receive adequate orientation? Was your role well explained?

- Yes, board training was VERY useful. I appreciated getting the packet mailed to me in advance of the training so I had time to absorb things prior to orientation.
- I think it's a case of train to what you know what to expect, but then it's also hard to predict what will fall into your path. In other words, it's hard to know what you're getting into until you're into it.
- Sort of learned the role as I went along. Not sure it could have been adequately explained; the person I replaced did not explain anything.
- I thought so. It was a learning process, to be sure.

- Orientation was adequate. I did not feel like the challenges during the year were due to poor preparation.
- Yes
- Yes - I knew what I was getting into from talking to previous board members and the documents provided by YALSA staff.

Q3: What was most rewarding about your service?

- I enjoyed having a front-row seat to important discussions (and being an active participant in those discussions.)
- Moving an awesome association forward.
- Meeting and working with YALSA members from all over the nation and world; helping the association move forward; helping members grow
- Loved learning more about BARC and about how "Big ALA" worked.
- I really got a feel for how the organization works and was able to convey that to other members.
- Working with some fabulous people, getting to know more members in general, and being part of the excitement around the new report.
- Representing YALSA and working with members/chairs.

Q4: What did you like least?

- The Board Standing committee experience was a little iffy, and being a liaison to groups I was a bit unfamiliar with took some getting used to.
- Big ALA issues.
- The board phone calls got a little tedious.
- At times, other Board members were non-responsive or did not contribute to group work. My standing committee was not very organized or effective. This sort of thing happens in every group, because life happens to people, but I know I am not the only Board member who had these experiences this year.
- Miscommunication between the board and members and misinformation spread by members, leading to unnecessary drama
- The workload expectation of the volunteers at times seemed to be too much for a person with a full-time job. I felt that some things taken on by the board should have been delegated to members to work on. There also seems to be a negative attitude by some board / staff members towards awards/book lists, which I consider to be the brand of YALSA and are what attracts many members to join the organization.

Q5: Did you feel you were needed, appreciated, and able to use your skills?

- Yes (all 7)

Q6: Was it easy to integrate into the board?

- Yes (6)
- No (1)

Q7: What advice would you offer new board members?

- Jump in with both feet; don't worry about saying the perfect thing at the perfect time (trying hard to take my own advice here..) This experience, like many, is what you make of it.
- Don't get overwhelmed--ask lots of questions. Deal with what you can. And then ask questions. And then read a lot of board docs.
- Just go with the program and take part in everything; best way to learn.
- Ask questions!
- Be aware of how much time it will take.
- Read the YALSA handbook and explore the website multiple times
- The Board needs to set an example for the membership. Attend and participate in as many YALSA programs and events as possible during your term. If the board doesn't see the value in attending, why should the membership?
- Just go with the program and take part in everything; best way to learn.

Q8: How would you improve the way the board functions?

- Overall I found it to be a pretty well-oiled machine-- however I was surprised that so many people remain relatively quiet during in-person meetings. I know we don't have the time for EVERYONE to share their two cents, but with the board being populated with people who are there for a certain reason, it would be nice to hear from various perspectives.
- Maybe we should figure out how to be a better coach for our ED.
- It would be great if the board members discussed items a little more. Sometimes they offer no input.
- I think the Board works well- there is a lot of communication.
- We still need to improve communication, both within the Board and with members. I was discouraged when there were comments along the lines of, "Well, hardly anyone came to the Town Hall, so it's not our fault they don't know what's going on." To me, that means we need to rethink using virtual town halls as a way to communicate with the membership. Maybe that format (or timing, or whatever) doesn't meet our members where they are. We need to find better ways to communicate with the membership. Yes, the Board needs to be forward looking, but at the end of the day, we can't move the organization or teen services forward if our members are not on board.
- I had the perception that often major decisions were made and action initiated by the executive board and YALSA staff before being presented to the full board to discuss. I think it is important for the full board to have a voice before actions are taken.
- It would be great if the board members discussed items a little more. Sometimes they offer no input.

Q9: What should be the board's priority right now?

- Finding ways to assist front-line staff and administration in implementing the recommendations of the Futures report
- Preserving the integrity of YALSA. Moving the association forward.
- Get the Library Services for Teens report organized, with projects developed and helpful hints for teen librarians before moving on.
- I think helping YALSA members with ways to use the Futures report is key right now.
- Building YALSA' fiscal stability to support our ability to push out the Futures report.
- Advocacy, fiscal health
- Financial stability for YALSA and growing/keeping membership.

Q10: Would you be interested in remaining active with the organization or the board? In what way?

- I can see a time in the future when I'd be interested in returning to the board as a Director..but right now I've got Printz on my mind :)
- Am happy to help YALSA in any way. Beth sent a list of other possible ways to help, but haven't read it yet. Too much company!
- I wouldn't be against serving a full term, or doing more committee work.
- I will remain active with YALSA after my Board term ends, but will probably want a year or two with lighter commitments.
- Yes - I would like to remain active on committees.