

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Annual Meeting, New Orleans
June 22-26, 2018**

Topic: Improving the Member Engagement Experience

Background: After receiving feedback from a member about negative experiences with the committee appointments process and with the committee work itself was brought to the Executive Director's attention, and which was subsequently shared with the Board, the Board discussed the issue and Franklin Escobedo volunteered to dive deeper into the topic and provide some ideas for the board's consideration.

Action Required: Discussion

Specific concerns raised by the volunteer about the appointments process

- Being turned down repeatedly over the course of three years
- Poor communication, including
 - Not hearing from YALSA at all or not in a timely manner
 - Responses from YALSA that were generic and terse
- The misperception that the volunteer was being turned down because they were not liked

Specific concerns raised around the volunteer experience

- Chair rejected the volunteer's ideas
- Feeling unappreciated for the time they gave and the work they did

Actions that have taken place since the member shared their concerns

- The Board explored the issue during their March virtual chat
- Updating and expanding the chair manual to include things like sample email messages, recommended communication tools, and more (see board document #19)
- Impressing upon ALA the importance of launching the Volunteer Match module in ALA Connect to improve communication about volunteer opportunities and increase awareness of these opportunities. YALSA has recently volunteered to pilot the module, but has not yet heard back
- Creating the exit survey for volunteers

Further actions the board discussed but still need implementation

- Providing more robust training to chairs and members, but especially chairs to help chairs better
 - Engage with group members and tap into their talents
 - Communicate with group members
 - Show appreciation for members' contributions to the group
- Putting processes in place with the President-Elect, who makes the appointments, and the Membership Manager, who helps the President-Elect, to ensure that everyone who fills out a volunteer form receives at least a confirmation message and a follow up message

- Putting processes in place so that there isn't the 'brain drain' each year when the appointments process is handed over from one President-Elect to the next
- Increasing and improving communication to members about the appointments process as well as other volunteer opportunities, including
 - more updates in the weekly eNews
 - expanding the committee FAQ online
 - at in-person events and exhibit booths
 - revisiting the messaging when we put out a call for volunteers and when we notify members about the status of their application
- Adding information to the volunteer form, including a question to identify individuals who tried but didn't get appointed in recent appointment rounds
- Continuing to work with ALA on the Volunteer Match Module
- Ensuring that every out-going chair sends messages of appreciation to their group members and extend an offer to send a letter to their supervisor acknowledging their contributions

Questions for the Board's Consideration

- What role can/should the Division and Membership Promotion Committee play in implementing the recommended actions? What role can/should staff play?
- Besides recognizing members via the established ways below, what else can YALSA to do show appreciation for the time and talent that members volunteer?
 - Recognition during National Volunteer Week
 - Volunteer of the Year Award
 - Thank you messages from chairs to members and to their supervisors at the close of their term
 - Weekly Member Shout in the eNews
 - Monthly thank yous in the President's report

Existing YALSA Resources:

YALSA Committee Chair Manual

http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/ChairManualVirtual_0.pdf

Committee FAQ

<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/committee-faq>