

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

Topic: Creating a More Inclusive Environment

Background: After an incident in which a member reported inappropriate comments based on race and gender identity were made in a particular member group was brought to the Executive Director's attention, and which was subsequently shared with the Board, the Board discussed recommended courses of action to create and maintain an environment where all YALSA volunteers are welcomed and treated with respect. Since the incident's report the staff and the board have begun reviewing policy and procedures to ensure that if another incident should occur that is procedures in place to enforce YALSA's policies. Franklin Escobedo has presented the following updated version of the Ethical Behavior Policy for the Board's consideration

Action Required: Action

Overview:

Over the past few months, the YALSA Board with the YALSA staff have been exploring a multi-pronged approach to making YALSA more welcoming, including but not limited to clarifying or expanding procedures and proposing updates to policies so that if another incident should occur that there a clear and enforceable repercussions.

The following activities are completed or in-progress as a response to the concern that was raised.

- Inform and instruct members to ensure inclusivity, compliance with policies, and empower them to report issues
 - Revisit and expand the training/on-boarding we provide all appointed group members to include content about what we mean by ethical behavior, building cultural competency skills, how to report concerns or problems, etc. Include in all trainings a detailed discussion about in the Ethical Behavior Policy and its components to ensure understanding. A cultural competency webinar is being recorded in May 2018 for use with on-boarding all new volunteers.
 - Expand the [Chair Manual](#) to include content about what we mean by ethical behavior, building cultural competency, creating a welcoming, inclusive environment, how to report concerns or problems, etc. A draft of this manual is being presented to the Board at their 2018 Annual meeting.
 - Ensure that the [Committee FAQ](#) and list of [responsibilities for committee members](#) has info about how to report concerns/problems. This was completed in April 2018.

- Revisit appointment instructions that are sent to the President-Elect to emphasize the need for due diligence in thoroughly vetting potential chairs and committee members. This was completed in April 2018.
- Create and distribute an exit survey for outgoing committee members and chairs to gauge their experience and identify areas for improvement. The survey is ready, and will be first utilized in July 2018.
- Prior to conferences, send YALSA attendees a reminder about ALA's [Statement of Appropriate Conduct](#). Implementation began with the June e-blast to YALSA attendees.
- Ensure policies are in place and enforced, as a means to promote inclusivity and ensure ethical behavior
 - Update and expand YALSA's [Ethical Behavior Policy for Volunteers](#)—a draft with proposed updates is below
 - Develop language for use with all advisory board/committee/jury/taskforce policies and procedures to address the issue of inappropriate remarks during committee meetings. Here's a draft: "Frame all discussions in an inclusive manner, and instruct group members to refrain from advancing personal beliefs, and using any discriminatory, racist, homophobic, sexist or similarly insensitive language."
 - For the particular incident that was reported, talk with the YALSA staff person who helps with committee appointments to alert them of the member's behavior, because, as per the Ethical Behavior Policy "in egregious cases where this policy is flagrantly violated, the incident may limit a member's capacity for securing future YALSA appointments." This conversation was had in April 2018.
 - At advisory board/committee/jury/taskforce meetings strive to have the board or staff liaison sit in on at least part of the meeting to gauge productivity and compliance with ethical behavior.
- Improve staff and member leader communication and knowledge around matters of equity, diversity and inclusion, including as it relates to member participation
 - Regularly attend and participate in relevant trainings to continue to build cultural competence knowledge and skills (e.g. all staff participated in an online training in Nov. to increase awareness as to what constitutes harassment)
 - Flesh out a process for reporting and acting on member concerns and develop the guidelines to enforce outcomes.
 - Develop an appropriate method for passing along pertinent information regarding members who have violated the Ethical Behavior Policy to incoming President-Elects, who makes volunteer appointments.

Financial Impact

- Potential cost for YALSA staff and member leader training
 - Professional development for staff is budgeted for in each annual budget at a rate of 1.5% of total wages
 - YALSA's Board is an organizational member of BoardSource at a rate of \$1,000 per year
- Staff and member leader time for updating documents, planning trainings, measuring progress, etc.
- Cost of trainings for members
 - We typically provide a \$100 honorarium for a webinar presenter
- Potential loss of membership if action is not taken

Evaluation

- Leverage tools such as the exit survey to measure progress and create new or follow up as needed
- Track appointee participation in trainings and knowledge gained
- Periodically revisit policies, procedures and practices and update as needed
- Leverage an annual focus group (per recommendation from the Advancing Diversity Taskforce) to gauge progress toward ensuring all groups in YALSA are maintaining a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere

Proposed Updated Language for the Policy of Ethical Behavior for YALSA Volunteers (Recommended additional text appears in red font)

This policy applies to all volunteers who perform official duties on behalf of YALSA, including: members of the Board of Directors, Task Forces, Juries, Advisory Boards, and Committees; as well as Editors, Member Managers, Bloggers, and so on.

YALSA values its members as well as the time and expertise they give to the organization. Therefore, it is important to the organization to provide resources, guidelines and support that empower them to be successful in their activities with YALSA. The guidelines listed below lay out a minimum expectation for all members who are appointed or elected to official YALSA groups, or positions, to provide clear expectations, promote a sense of equity and improve the quality of everyone's experience and the work they produce.

Throughout the full term of their appointment or term of office, all committee/jury/taskforce/advisory board members and other volunteers will

I. Abide by all YALSA and ALA rules and regulations as well as federal, state and local laws, and laws of any other applicable jurisdiction.

A. Recognize that ALA/YALSA will be the copyright owner of any work created by/for the appointed group. Additionally, ALA/YALSA will have right of first refusal to any work product resulting from the appointed group (per ALA Policy Manual, Section 10.1.1).

B. Refrain from using YALSA or group resources to encourage or call for a boycott of any company. Federal antitrust laws prohibit ALA/YALSA as an organization from organizing, participating in or encouraging a boycott. This is enforced by criminal code (not tax code) and applies to a variety of organizations, including associations and not-for-profits.

C. Refrain from using YALSA or group resources to support or oppose any political candidate at the local, state or federal level. IRS tax code strictly prohibits ALA/YALSA as a 501c3 not-for-profit organization from lobbying for or against any political candidate.

D. Demonstrate a willingness to serve YALSA and support its mission and strategic plan.

E. Be personal members of YALSA and keep their membership up to date.

II. Conduct all affairs in a professional manner, with good faith, honesty, integrity, high ethical standards and due diligence.

A. Adhere to a minimum level of professionalism in both virtual and face to face environments when interacting with the association, members, library community, vendors, partners, supporters and the public.

B. Show respect for the chair, fellow group members, staff and liaisons at all times, in person and online. Personal insults, name calling, **harassment, intimidation, discrimination, hate speech, or creation of an unsafe/unwelcome environment based on an individual's personal attributes, including, but not limited to: race, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, sex, physical or mental disability, appearance, or any other classification protected by law is inconsistent with the ideals and principles of ALA/YALSA and will not be tolerated.**

C. Refrain from (as well as refrain from giving the appearance of) placing one's own self-interest or any third-party interest above that of YALSA.

D. Refrain from soliciting gifts, gratuities, free trips, honoraria, personal property, or any other item even of nominal value. If such items are freely given, members will use their own best judgment in accepting them. At no time should a member solicit or accept a gift, etc. as an inducement to provide special treatment to such donor with respect to matters pertaining to YALSA.

E. Frame messages, communications, comments, discussions, etc. as openly and inclusively as possible and be aware of how language or images may be perceived by others.

III. Keep matters confidential if they are designated as such in meetings, discussions or in writing.

IV. Use good judgment in dealing with association staff, vendors and the general public.

A. Understand that the only person with authority to speak for a member group is the chair. Only the President and Executive Director speak on behalf of YALSA, unless the task is delegated to another individual by the President or Executive Director.

B. Before making any contact with vendors, publishers, organizations, etc. first obtain consent from the chair, who then clears it with YALSA's President and Executive Director.

V. Use any association information and resources appropriately and ethically.

A. Refrain from using staff or YALSA resources (including items provided to you as part of committee service) for personal or third party gain.

VI. Make a good faith effort to be a productive group member.

A. Be able and willing to work year-round in a virtual environment, using digital tools (e.g. Skype, wikis, e-chats, ALA Connect)

B. Devote adequate time to the work of the group. Group members agree to serve continuously for the entire length of the appointment.

C. Take a proactive approach to group work and seek clarification or assistance when needed.

D. Make an effort to communicate in a timely manner with the chair and other group members.

E. Recognize when circumstances arise that prevent you from being able to contribute adequately to the work of the group, and step aside so that a replacement can be secured and the work of the group and YALSA will not suffer.

If any appointee or committee/jury/taskforce/advisory board members, etc. are ever found to have breached one or more of these guidelines, he/she may be asked by the President to relinquish their appointed position. In egregious cases where this policy is flagrantly violated, the incident may limit a member's capacity for securing future YALSA appointments. Any individual who feels they were wrongly removed from an appointed position can seek recourse through YALSA's Executive Committee.

If any appointee or committee/jury/taskforce/advisory board member, etc. ever experiences personal insults, name calling, harassment, discrimination, hate speech, and/or any other situation that creates an unsafe or unwelcome environment, they are encouraged to report it to YALSA's President or Executive Director. Contact information is online at www.ala.org/yalsa/aboutyalsa/yalsaalacontacts. Effort will be made to keep reports confidential to the extent permitted without compromising the rights of others. It is important to recognize,

though, that in the process of following up on reports of harassment, complete confidentiality is not always possible.

If any member volunteer is ever in a situation where the YALSA President is the offender, they are encouraged to contact YALSA's Executive Director, and vice versa. ALA's President and Executive Director may also be contacted if the member feels that is the best approach given the particular circumstance.

In order to support the work of YALSA groups and its appointees, elected officials and volunteers, YALSA will, in addition to complying with the items stated above:

- I.** Coordinate the volunteer process
 - a. Identify potential group members, make appointments and fill vacancies
 - b. Compile, maintain and distribute rosters for each appointed group
 - c. Create and maintain policies and procedures to facilitate the work of member groups and appointees, and to provide that information via the online YALSA Handbook
 - d. Help clarify any policy or procedural matters
 - e. Conduct regular evaluation of appointed groups via the Organization and Bylaws Committee to ensure effectiveness of meeting its stated goals
 - f. Provide recognition for group members' achievements
 - g. Seek out and employ industry best practices in relation to managing member engagement activities
 - h. Seek feedback from members periodically to ensure the volunteer process meets their needs

- II.** Strive to provide members with the tools and support they need to be successful
 - a. Provide periodic training and resources to help group members be successful in their volunteer role
 - b. Maintain and provide a virtual work space and tools for groups
 - c. Lend support for each group in the form of a board liaison and staff liaison
 - d. Offer the group the opportunity to have a meeting space at ALA Midwinter and Annual conferences
 - e. Assist chairs with management and leadership challenges, as requested
 - f. Answer group members' and volunteers' queries in a timely manner
 - h. Facilitate communication between the appointed group and other entities, such as YALSA's Board of Directors or ALA committees. Strive to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all member volunteers, through activities such as providing orientation that includes a review of the Policy of Ethical Behavior and provides an emphasis on professionalism, mutual respect, and inclusivity.

Committee/jury/taskforce/advisory board members who feel that YALSA is not meeting the stated expectations, as listed above, may share their concern with YALSA's President in order to work toward a resolution.

Additional Resources

- ALA Policy Manual: www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/policymanual
- YALSA Handbook: www.ala.org/yalsa/aboutyalsa/yalsahandbook

--Adopted by the YALSA Board of Directors, June 28, 2014 and updated June XX, 2018

Recommended Board Actions:

1. Move that the YALSA Board adopts the updated Ethical Behavior Policy for Volunteers policy, as presented in this document and directs the Executive Director to work with staff to update it online by no later than July 15, 2018.
2. Move that the YALSA Board adopts the proposed language about meeting protocols to be added to all member group policies and procedures, as presented in this document and directs the Executive Director to work with staff to update it online by no later than July 15, 2018.
3. Direct the Executive Director to work with all staff on an on-going basis to identify and participate in cultural competence and other relevant training with the goal of ensuring that YALSA is welcoming and inclusive to individuals from all backgrounds.
4. Move that the YALSA Board direct the in-coming YALSA President and Executive Director to implement the as yet incomplete recommendations as outlined in this document and to provide an update for the 2019 Midwinter Meeting.

Existing YALSA Resources:

Ethical Behavioral Policy Adopted June 28, 2014

<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/EthicsPolicy.pdf>

YALSA Board Document 20, Annual, Las Vegas, 2014

http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/PolicyEthics_AN14.pdf

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>

Job Description for Advisory Board, Committee, Jury & Taskforce Members

<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/aboutyalsa/yalsahandbook/jobdescriptioncommittee>

Existing ALA Resources:

ALA Statement of Appropriate Conduct/Community Guidelines

<http://2018.alaannual.org/general-information/statement-appropriate-conduct-community-guidelines>