

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting  
ALA Annual Conference, Las Vegas  
June 27 – July 1, 2014**

**Topic:** Mega Issue Discussion

**Background:** Mega issues are issues of strategic importance, which represent choices YALSA needs to make in defining the ultimate direction of its long-range plan. These issues represent potential impediments to achievement of YALSA's Envisioned Future, and form a basis for dialogue about the choices facing YALSA. The Board can use these questions to create regular opportunities for strategic dialogue about issues facing the association and/or profession YALSA serves. In order to ensure that topics of strategic importance get addressed by the Board, the Board agreed to place one of them on the agenda for each meeting.

**Action Required:** Exploration

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**Mega Issue:**

*How might a commitment to diversity and inclusiveness increase the YALSA Board's ability to achieve its mission?*

YALSA's report *The Future of Library Services for and with Teens: A Call to Action*, describes a significant shift in teen demographics in the United States, as well as the need for library staff serving teens to build capacity in cultural competencies. In order for YALSA to effectively support members in this area through organizational excellence and modeling however, nonprofit best practices point to the need for the Board to come to a consensus on a definition of diversity and to openly discuss current challenges and opportunities.

According to the BoardSource Diversity in Action Toolkit:

Developing cultural competence is an ongoing process that starts with recognition of the need and value of incorporating diversity, progresses to implementation of policies and practices, and continues with further refinement and understanding of the benefits of inclusive practices. According to the National Center for Cultural Competence at Georgetown University, it involves

- having a defined set of values and principles and demonstrating behaviors, attitudes, policies, and structures that enable people to work effectively cross-culturally
- having the capacity to value diversity, conduct self-assessment, manage the dynamics of difference, acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge and adapt to diversity and the cultural contexts of the communities they serve
- incorporating the above in all aspects of policy making, administration, practice, and service delivery

## Board of Directors – Annual Conference 2014

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The BoardSource Nonprofit Governance Index 2010 asked board members and chief executives whether their boards had reached consensus on the value of diversity, discussed ways to address non-inclusive practices, and developed an inclusive culture. The following table reflects the survey results on these three questions.

Relative to the diversity on the board, to what extent has the board done the following?	Not Done	Small Extent	Some Extent	Great Extent
Reached consensus about the value and benefits of expanding diversity of the board.	26.3%	21%	32.2%	20.4%
Discussed ways to identify and address discriminatory or non-inclusive behaviors	51.9%	25.6%	17.3%	5.2%
Developed an inclusive culture and inclusive board dynamics	26.1%	24.5%	34.2%	15.0%

### Questions for Exploration

- How does the YALSA Board define diversity?
- Why is diversity and inclusiveness important to the Board?
- What are challenges related to the YALSA Board's ability to achieve diversity?
- Can our practices, traditions, or culture be perceived as biased or unwelcoming?
- What, if anything, will we have to occur or change in order for the YALSA Board to become more diverse and inclusive?

### Resources to Explore:

- Achieving Diversity in the Non-Profit Workplace: A Step-by-Step Guide <http://bit.ly/1nTaG28>
- Beyond Political Correctness: Building a Diverse Board <http://bit.ly/1kKRkZW>
- The California Endowment's Online Diversity Toolkit <http://bit.ly/1kTjAL4>

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- The Future of Library Services for and with Teens: A Call to Action  
<http://bit.ly/1n6PoKS>
- [ALA Diversity Counts Study](http://bit.ly/1feMhh2) <http://bit.ly/1feMhh2>
- YALSA's Mission: The Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) is a national association of librarians, library workers and advocates whose mission is to expand and strengthen library services for teens, aged 12-18. Through its member-driven advocacy, research, and professional development initiatives, YALSA builds the capacity of libraries and librarians to engage, serve and empower teens.