

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Midwinter Meeting, Dallas
January 20 – 24, 2012**

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

Mega Issue:

Can YALSA strengthen its network and advance its mission by connecting with state library associations, especially around the advocacy portion of its strategic plan?

Rationale:

- State associations, especially young adult round tables and sections, have the same or similar goals and values as YALSA
- YALSA could exponentially increase its impact by working with state associations to strengthen YA librarianship at the state and local levels. Instead of 5,300 YALSA members working toward an envisioned future where every library has at least one full time young adult services on staff, there could be tens of thousands more
- Channels of communication can be established with this group by leveraging existing channels, or by creating an email list for internal use
- Working more closely with state associations would build YALSA’s capacity and increase efficiency, as it would avoid duplication of effort and increase resource sharing
- Such an effort fits with YALSA’s strategic plan in multiple places, including
 - **Objective 1e:** Increase YALSA’s reach and impact.
 - **Strategy:** Establish and maintain strategic partnerships with targeted organizations whose mission and goals are similar to YALSA’s.
 - **Objective 2d:** YALSA establishes the future direction of teen and young adult services.
 - **Strategy:** Lead a national discussion with key stakeholders about the current state of teen and young adult services that yields information regarding potential directions the field needs to take to meet the needs of teens and young adults.

- This effort could help increase YALSA's presence at the local level, facilitate member engagement with YALSA without them having to travel to conferences and also provide members with networking opportunities—all of which members have indicated are important activities that they'd like YALSA to provide for them.
- The effort could help boost use of YALSA products, services and resources as well as membership

Items for consideration:

- As a first step, YALSA could:
 - survey state library association YA leaders to find out what our common focus is and how YALSA can best help them
 - Are there opportunities to create or co-create resources, including turn-key, ready to implement efforts?
 - Are there projects (existing or new) that we could implement jointly?
 - Is it desirable to work together on a year-long thematic type of initiative?
 - Compile an email list of YA leaders at the state level and reach out to them monthly (like we do now with state agency youth consultants)
- How can we identify best practices going on at the state level and 1) promote them and/or 2) scale them up to a national level?
 - Grants?
 - State by state competitions?
- Is there a successful model being used by other organizations which YALSA could adapt to establish and maintain closer ties with state level organizations? Should YALSA try to create a formal relationship with state level organizations, such as chapters or affiliates?
- Should YALSA create grants or other incentives for state associations who adopt YALSA's national guidelines and other key resources?
- Where does ALA's Chapter Relations Office fit in and what support could they provide?
- Where do the ALA Council Chapter Councilors fit in and what support could they provide?
- Should YALSA be encouraging all YA round tables to create and adopt a single mission that the state and national organization would work towards?
- Could we tap the state YA groups to use as focus groups for YALSA initiatives, such as Teen Read Week™, Teen Tech Week™, District Days and Virtual Library Legislative Day?
- Could the YALSA Road Trip that we did in 2009 to state library association conferences be formalized and become an annual effort?
- How can we leverage YALSA leaders to establish closer ties with state associations?
- How can we connect with state association conferences and work together to create richer and more diverse training (online and face-to-face) content?
- Is it feasible to hold a joint membership with some or all states?

Resources to help guide the discussion (please access and read these prior to the meeting)

- AASL Affiliate Assembly: www.ala.org/aasl/aboutaasl/affils
- ALA Chapter Relations Office: www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/cro/index.cfm

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- Duties of ALA Council State Councilors:
www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/affiliates/chapters/chaptercouncilor/chaptercouncilor.cfm
- Roster of ALA State Councilors:
www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/governance/council/council_roster/statecouncilors.cfm
- “The Networked Nonprofit” (*Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 2008)
www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/the_networked_nonprofit/
- State Level Contacts compiled on YALSA’s wiki:
http://wikis.ala.org/yalsa/index.php/State_Level_YA_Services_Contacts