ALSC 2017-2020 Strategic Plan Implementation Progress
May 2020

The ALSC 2017-2020 Strategic Implementation Progress Report is a quarterly representation of the most recent projects and activities that are underway by ALSC committees and staff in support of ALSC’s 2017-2020 Strategic Plan objectives under Advocacy, Diversity & Inclusion and Learning & Development. A full outline of the strategic plan and past progress reports can be accessed on the ALSC website at http://www.ala.org/alsc/aboutalsc$stratplan.

This Implementation Progress report includes updated deadlines for, and some minor revisions to, select strategic plan objectives based on the annual strategic plan review by the ALSC Board of Directors at the 2018 ALA Annual Meeting. The review included an assessment of ALSC resources and activities to determine viable opportunities to continue meeting strategic plan goals.

COVID-19
On March 11, 2020, COVID-19 was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization resulting in Shelter in Place (SIP) orders across the U.S. that reduced or shut-down business functions and personal activity throughout the nation. The pandemic has created a public health crisis impacting libraries and library staff as they have worked to continue providing services to their communities at a time when most libraries are closed to the public. Library staff began working from home, were furloughed and/or saw reductions in work hours.

Throughout this unprecedented time, ALSC members have been revisioning their roles, developing meaningful virtual content for their library communities and staying connected through ALSC division activities. As members made both professional and personal adjustments in response to COVID-19, ALSC committee work has been impacted in various ways. Committees have been navigating challenges to scheduling meetings, decreased capacity, changing priorities, revisioning committee projects, and finding workarounds to obtaining and reviewing materials for our book and media awards. These changes are reflected throughout this progress report, even as committees remain committed to their work, showing flexibility and creativity as they continue to move forward.

COVID-19 Resources
ALSC has been working to provide members with the tools and resources needed to continue learning and working during the COVID-19 pandemic. Most recent activity is noted below.

Virtual Storytime Guide - In response to COVID-19 and the need for library staff to transition their in-person programming to virtual opportunities for their communities, ALSC is working with member volunteers and the Colorado Early Literacy Library to develop a comprehensive guide that features best practices, resources, and tips on how to plan, promote, and conduct virtual storytime programming. They are working to finalize the guide by early June 2020.

Media Mentorship - ALSC is working with ALA’s Office of Communications and Marketing to create tip-sheets related to media mentoring and culling COVID-19 resources to inform children’s librarians and the families in their communities.

We Are ALSC Chats - We Are ALSC Chats were created to build community within children's librarianship. Led by ALSC Committees, these informal chats (held on Zoom or Twitter) are open to members and non-members and are designed to be online networking chats for resource sharing and discussion around timely topics in children's services. Two chats have been scheduled. The Membership committee hosted a chat in April to
network and connect about COVID-19 and the School-age Programs and Services committee will have hosted a chat in late May on virtual school-age programming.

**ALSC Open Resources** - To support the library community, in March ALSC made available some of the most recent member-driven content including webinar recordings and *Children and Libraries* journal issues.

**Advocacy**

ALSC will champion the value of library service to children and the resources necessary to deliver on our vision.

1. Establish an accessible content stream of valuation tools and research updates, including customizable content for members, to demonstrate the purpose and value of strong and meaningful children’s librarianship by August 2020. *Transforming ALSC*
   - **Early and Family Literacy Committee** – The committee continued to prioritize current research sources and organize the literacy-related articles that have been gathered to date. They are preparing an accessible and user-friendly method for sharing the relevant research with ALSC Youth Librarians, likely the summer of 2020. The committee continues options for writing an article for Children & Libraries and developing relevant and useful training.

2. Articulate a prioritized research agenda, including but not limited to summer learning/out-of-school time, by September 2018, and pursue avenues for conducting and/or supporting the research by September 2020. *Transforming Children’s Librarianship*
   - **National Research Agenda for Library Service to Children (ages 0-14)** – At the 2019 Annual Conference the ALSC Board approved the Research Agenda, led by the Research Agenda Task Force. The agenda includes six priority research areas that identify relevant research questions and includes a bibliography of research done under each priority area. The Research Agenda was made available in January and has been followed by strategic promotion of the publication.

3. Amplify children’s librarians’ essential role as information literacy experts through advocacy outputs, including communications, webinars, and establishing collaborations, by December 2018. *Transforming Communities through Libraries*
   - **Advocacy and Legislation** – The committee produced their ALSC Webinar, Advocacy A-Z in partnership with the Public Awareness Committee (PAC), published monthly blog posts and wrote two more Everyday Advocacy columns for ALSC’s *Children and Libraries* journal. The committee also stayed up to date with ALSC at midwinter - both co-chairs attended the public ALSC board meeting, and as a committee, began discussing takeaways and best practices from this year’s committee as we prepare to merge with PAC to become the new Public Awareness & Advocacy Committee.
   - **Public Awareness Committee (PAC)** – The committee’s final products for the Championing Children’s Services toolkit continue to be promoted through ALSC social media. The committee collaborated with the Advocacy & Legislation committee and two advocacy experts on a series of three webinars that introduced the Championing Children’s Services toolkit, broadly discussed advocacy and how one might use the toolkit.
• **Building Partnerships** – The committee continued doing monthly ALSC blog posts on partnerships. Since the committee is being discontinued, they are tying up loose ends including making a plan for the Building Partnerships infograph and the Partnership database to exist as a resource for other committees in the future. The committee will be posting a blog post specifically on this in June or July.

• **Summer/ Out of School Time Learning Task Force** – The task force is created a recommendation to add Active Learning/21st Century Skills to summer reading and is developing a library of research/resources to support librarians in this area. The task force presented a webinar in partnership with the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) regarding Summer 2020/Covid-19 response, began planning for session for the NSLA Pre Conference on libraries, and met with Scholastic representatives for focus group on library needs in summer 2020.

• **Engage, Cultivate, Provide, Assess: An Outreach Model for Serving Children and Families** white paper - ALSC staff, in partnership with the research team, J. Elizabeth Mills, Kathleen Campana, and Dr. Michelle H. Martin, developed a white paper that shares Project LOCAL research results examining how libraries are going outside of their walls and into the community to reach and serve children and families in underserved communities who are not currently using the library. The white paper titled, *Engage, Cultivate, Provide, and Assess: An Outreach Model for Service All Children and Families* was made available in January and has been followed by strategic promotion of the publication.

Other activities in support of the Advocacy strategic action area:

• No additional activities to report.

**Diversity & Inclusion**
ALSC will become more diverse and inclusive, acting to promote these values in all aspects of library service to children.

1. Increase diversity in ALSC membership and reduce barriers to participation as measured against the Diversity in ALSC baseline survey by September 2019. *Transforming ALSC*

• **Equity, Diversity & Inclusion within ALSC Implementation Task Force** – The task force continues to promote awareness of EDI across committees as steps toward a more diverse and inclusive association. The task force’s ongoing goal is to see EDI baked into the work of all the committees and on the minds of all ALSC members. Current task force work includes evaluating the Equity Fellows pilot program and exploring the feasibility of an EDI focused gift membership for new and returning members. The task force has contributed to other divisional work, including incorporating an EDI focused question on the 2020 National Institute Scholarship application and providing feedback on several projects: the Education Committee's Competency Revisions, a web accessibility blog post and the new strategic plan. The current Fellows are continuing to develop a fast-motion video explaining the committee appointment process.

2. Expand opportunities for existing members from underrepresented experiences to serve in ALSC activities, as measured by longitudinal studies and/or focus groups, by September 2020. *Transforming ALSC*
Nominating and Leadership Development Committee – The committee is mindful of ALSC’s EDI priorities when considering and making nominations. They reviewed all nominations and added additional names as nominations submitted did not produce a racially diverse list. Only 9 out of 75 nominated candidates were identified to be people of color. These “identified” candidates either were self-identified through a self-nomination or were identified as such by nominators.

3. Increase the practice of cultural humility among children’s library staff serving youth by developing an accessible online cultural humility training series by August 2020. Transforming Children’s Librarianship

Communities of Practice - The Education committee submitted a Communities of Practice proposal to the ALSC Board that supports cultural humility training. A task force is being assembled to vet the proposal and other options.

Bystander Training – ALSC and other ALA divisions participated in bringing bystander intervention training opportunities to their members. This collaborative effort provided an opportunity to maximize training opportunities across several divisions. ALSC provided this bystander intervention training to ALSC leadership including ALSC’s current and incoming board members, Priority Group Consultants and committee chairs. A train-the-trainer program on Ally Skills/Bystander Intervention will be in the works and will result in a training opportunity that can be made available to a wider ALSC audience.

Other activities in support of the Diversity and Inclusion strategic action area:

Belpre 25th Anniversary Planning Task Force - Due to COVID-19, the task force realized that plans for a traveling art exhibition and catalogue to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Pura Belpre Award were no longer feasible. After meeting with the presidents and staff members of ALSC, REFORMA, and YALSA the task force has begun formalizing new plans that include articles about the award, its history, and its recipients in relevant publications, approaching TeachingBooks.net to see what teaching and learning resources they may be able to make available for the 25th anniversary; collaborating with REFORMA to make a donation of Belpre Award-winning books and supplies to a community in which Pura Belpre worked and publicizing this donation in relation to the 25th anniversary; and making plans for the 2021 Celebración that could suit either an in-person event at ALA Annual in Chicago or an online event, if necessary.

National Institute Task Force – The 2020 Institute theme is, Dive In: Engage, Amplify, Activate. While navigating COVID-19 the task force continued developing plans for Institute by verifying sponsorships, discussing Wednesday evening venue receptions, finalizing speakers and creating a restaurant guide.

Welcoming Spaces National Forum - Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) - ALSC was awarded an IMLS National Leadership Grant in the area of Community Catalysts. ALSC, in collaboration with the Association of Children’s Museums (ACM), will convene a one-day National Forum attended by representatives from up to 12 children’s museums, 12 libraries and up to 24 of their partnering organizations. In response to the current situation with COVID-19, ALSC and ACM have postponed the forum and will request a one-year no cost extension to the grant to host an in-person or virtual event in 2021. ALSC and ACM also will distill a set of best practices highlighting forum participants’ exemplary work serving immigrants and refugees, compile the best practices resulting from the forum into a white paper, and broadly disseminate the best practices document to elevate these practices and
encourage their adoption by libraries and children’s museums to create more welcoming spaces for immigrants and refugees in their communities. The initial application window was from January – March 2020. With the need to reschedule the forum, the application will also be reopened.

- **Charlemae Rollins President’s Program** – The committee has been working with ALSC staff to move the program to a virtual format. The new format will keep with the original topic, Telling Our Authentic Story: Connecting, Sharing and Bridging Divides Through Children’s Literature. The program will ask what is it about authentic stories, drawn from experience, culture, fears, and joys that draw us in and touch our hearts? The ALSC President, members and guests in the 2020 ALSC Charlemae Rollins President’s program will explore the ways stories help young people preserve and learn from the past. The program includes a moderated discussion with three noted children’s authors/illustrators who will explore how stories help children prepare, celebrate and connect with our diverse world. The committee is in the process of developing resources to supplement the program.

- **Summer/Out of School Time Learning Task Force** – The committee is taking into consideration how COVID-19 will reframe some summer activities. Recognizing the strong response from members providing digital programming/digital logging, the TF is developing recommendations addressing the growing digital divide and the need for a blended response.

**Learning & Development**

ALSC will actively develop new generations of leaders.

1. Build a discernible pathway, along with opportunities for training and mentorship, to develop ALSC members as leaders in their libraries, the profession, and/or the association by September 2020.

*Transforming ALSC*

- **Managing Children’s Services** – The committee submitted to the Education committee a proposal for a two-part webinar series to update the webinar entitled "Managing Children's Services: Scheduling and Time Management in the Youth Services Department". One webinar will be dedicated to time management and the other dedicated to staff/program scheduling.

- **Early Childhood Programs & Services Committee** – All committee members participated in designing and presenting the Honoring Infancy webinar series, Growing the Garden: Nurturing a Play and Early Learning Space; Libraries Welcoming Babies; and Beyond Baby Storytime. The committee also continues to write monthly posts to the ALSC Blog.

- **Public Awareness Committee** – The committee began their blog series about the “nuts and bolts” of ALSC. Projected posts include, “How to Join a Process Committee,” “The Difference in Process and Awards Committees,” and “What is a PGC?”.

- **Nominating and Leadership Development Committee** – The committee is building a candidate matrix into our working document for the Award candidates. This is based on the Candidate Matrix included in our packet, but should be more feasible to complete and report on to the EC. We are currently working on filing out that data, which will help us assemble our potential slates for Awards and submit names for vetting. (The matrix will also be applied to the Board candidates).
2. Provide at least two educational opportunities in media mentorship and child development, ideally developed and/or presented with collaborative partners from other ALA units, by September 2018. *Transforming Children’s Librarianship*

- No additional activity to report

3. Organize and promote ALSC activities to position the core competencies as central to library service to children, by May 2019. *Transforming Children’s Librarianship*

- **Education Committee** - Core Competencies revision project: The committee has continued its work updating ALSC’s core competences. They have made updates to the competencies based on member feedback from the results of a survey sent to ALSC membership. The competencies are also being edited in coordination with the EDI Task Force. The committee has reworked the production timeline for the competencies in response to COVID-19 and the cancellation of ALA Annual Conference.

- **Intellectual Freedom** - The committee’s 8-part series of ALSC Blog posts on intellectual freedom and information literacy in children's programs and services concluded with a May 16th post. Two of the posts will be included in upcoming issues of the ALSC journal, Children’ and Libratories. The committee also will begin redesigning and branding the content as a downloadable resource, with an accompanying webinar.

- **School-age Programs & Services Committee** – The committee worked to schedule their 3-part webinar series, "Building Literacy in Every Library: Building Fun Programs that Support Reading for School Age Kids." However due to the pandemic crisis, the committee decided to postpone this webinar series. They shifted focus to the topic of virtual programs with blog posts and a "We Are ALSC Zoom Chat" scheduled for May 21, 2020. If there is a high demand, the committee may offer a follow-up Zoom chat in June, with the hope to give youth librarians a forum for discussing their challenges and successes with virtual programs for school-age children.

- **Children & Technology Committee** – The committee was recently contacted by the Excellence in Early Learning Digital Award Committee, regarding potential blog post collaborations to highlight their work. The Children & Technology committee shared their suggestions for partnering and the possibility of a webinar. The committee also began discussing the ALSC Digital Media links to determine if updates and changes are needed. The project was paused due to the ongoing health situation and members are encouraged to contribute as they are able without a specific deadline.

- **Quicklists Consulting Committee** – The committee discussed booklist-creating best practice, conducted a SWOT analysis for potential revenue streams for ALSC, completed the 2020 Día booklists, and began working on the ALSC Presidents program list. In response to COVID-19 we created a resource and booklist for the ALSC community. The committee decided to move forward with creating the new Graphic Novel list, but with a later due date to accommodate the COVID-19 resource list.

4. Develop a toolkit of research-based best practices for out-of-school time learning and disseminate the toolkit and best practices to members by September 2019. *Transforming Communities through Libraries*

- No additional activity to report.
Other activities in support of the Learning and Development strategic action area:

- **Children & Libraries Advisory Committee** – The committee discussed how to include content in upcoming CAL issues about the impact of COVID-19 on libraries, given that CAL is a quarterly publication that has a longer lead time than most other journals in the field. The committee will solicit stories from members about three main topics: 1. Virtual programming after libraries closed; 2. How Summer Reading will look different this year, and how summer reading/learning going forward beyond this year may also be affected; 3. Reporting on any short-term, or possibly longer lasting, trends that shelter-in-place may have precipitated, including increases in new users of digital resources (audio downloads, ebooks, etc), a marked increase in digital resources being checked out, etc. Several ALSC committees will be asked to submit articles related to this areas.

- **Membership Committee** – The committee developed the idea for Zoom chats to network and talk about things members and their libraries are working on. The concept evolved from an idea that a Membership Committee member had to help people find other people with the same specialties within the organization-"Find Your People". As COVID-19 crisis evolved, and morphed into a networking event for people to have an opportunity to talk to each other, with a membership bent.

  Additionally, several Membership Committee blog posts were repurposed/shared with the broader library community, and one post is being used to help recruit enlist members with volunteering. Current outstanding projects that will transfer into the next "volunteer year" are ALSC 101 organization and implementation (tentatively scheduled for August in a Zoom format) and continuing to write profiles, as needed, for Children and Libraries highlighting members within the organization.

**Opportunities**

ALSC considers many opportunities for collaboration with ALA Divisions and other organizations. The ALSC 2017-2020 Strategic Plan serves as a primary guide for determining how ALSC will prioritize potential projects and activities. New or potential opportunities are identified below:

**Kent State University - Project SHIELD: Supporting Healthy Infant Early Learning and Development**

*ALSC provided a Letter of support in March 2020*

Kent State University’s (KSU) School of Information, in partnership with KSU’s College of Nursing and Akron-Summit County Public Library, OH (ASCPL), has applied for a one-year IMLS planning grant in the Community Catalysts category to conduct a pilot study that will take place in Akron to explore the feasibility and impact of partnering public library staff with nurses to provide parents and caregivers with information and mentoring on how to effectively bond with their baby. In addition to providing findings on the impact of this initiative, it will also inform a plan for a larger project grant to create a replicable model of how libraries, by working with nursing staff, can be catalysts for supporting learning and health for the youngest members of their communities.

**University of Washington – Autism-Ready Libraries**

*ALSC provided a Letter of support in March 2020*

The research team is working to create an Autism-Ready Libraries toolkit, which will contain evidence-based professional development training modules and early literacy program resources specifically for children with autism and their families. This research proposal will provide important tools for librarians serving autistic children and promote early literacy among families.
University of North Carolina - Future of Youth Public Librarian Education
*ALSC provided a Letter of support in March 2020*

UNC is applying for a one-year IMLS National Forum Grant that would fund a yearlong exploration into the future of public youth services librarianship culminating in a two-day national symposium. The Forum will be comprised of 40 innovators, scholars, and practitioners from LIS and related fields and hosted at Chapel Hill, NC. This project will be an intensive exploration of the developing trends in youth services in public libraries to determine how higher education LIS curricula should change to meet the needs of 21st and 22nd century youth library professionals. UNC is also engaging with YALSA on this project.

National Association of the Deaf
*ALSC provided a Letter of support in March 2020*

ALSC, along with the other youth-serving divisions, was approached by ALA’s Association of Specialized Government and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASGCLA) to join that division in signing on to a letter of support. The National Association of the Deaf is applying for a grant to establish a Deaf Youth Self-Advocacy Center to create a junior NAD curriculum and regional onsite training for deaf youth in middle school.

ALA Public Policy and Advocacy – Women’s Suffrage Centennial Commission

ALA has partnered with the Women’s Suffrage Centennial Commission. WSCC was created by an act of Congress and consists of Presidential and Congressional appointees, as well as representatives of federal agencies, including the Library of Congress. One of WSCC’s projects is the donation of 6,000 sets of books about women’s suffrage that are written for elementary, middle and high school audiences. ALA will co-brand the distribution of the books and related materials (reading list, program/display ideas) to public and school libraries across the country. ALSC was invited as an ALA stakeholder to appoint a representative to a short-term working group. A co-chair of the Quicklists Consulting Committee is serving this role.