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Template for Task Force Final Reports

Date: 10 June 2016

To: ALSC Board of Directors

From: ALSC Summer Reading and Learning Task Force

Subject: Final Report and Recommended Next Steps

**Task Force Charge:** To explore and make recommendations to the Board regarding ways in which ALSC can expand and strengthen its support of members in their summer reading and learning work.

**Overview of Task Force Work Plan:** Description of the Task Force’s activities, including their action plan and how they communicated and worked. Finish by summing up work, “This report, which outlines recommendations for next steps, concludes the work of the task force.” The Summer Reading and Learning Task Force’s action plan included the following activities:

- gather input from members
- scan the environment for existing resources
- research what additional national organizations are doing around summer learning
- assess any gaps in knowledge
- explore the Requests laid out in the charge document (see attached report for notes)
- use the gathered information to make recommendations to the ALSC Board.

To accomplish these goals, the Task Force worked with ALSC Staff and Leadership to reach out to gather input from the membership, including the February 2016 Summer Reading and Learning Community Forum, networking at the PLA Conference, and will also host a session at ALA Annual in the Networking Uncommons in June 2016.

In reviewing existing resources, the Task Force, with support from ALSC Leadership, participated in several learning opportunities. Task Force member, Christy Estrovitz, attended the PLA Pre-Conference, *Powerful Summer Learning Partnerships*, and reported on ideas from both the presenters and participants, including a focus on data sharing and collaboration. ALSC President, Andrew Medlar shared the ULC Webinar, *Libraries + Schools: Partnering to Produce Effective Summer Learning Programs*, focusing on partnership programs especially with underserved populations, positioning the library as a successful desired program, especially for schools. ALSC President-Elect, Betsy Orsburn the YALSA Webinar, *Making the Leap from Summer Reading to Summer Learning to Increase Impact*, which focused on connected learning and highlighted school-library partnerships and highlighted that the most successful summer teen programing was STREAM focused programs which includes Maker activities. ALSC Executive Director, Aimee Strittmatter, and ALSC Staff also funneled summer related information to the Task Force including the California Library Association’s Outcome Initiative. The Task Force also looked at information available from the National Summer Learning Association, Urban Libraries Council, Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP), iRead, Center for Childhood Creativity, as well as looking at information available about various libraries and organizations focused on summer reading and learning including, Chicago Public Library and California Library Association’s Summer at
Your Library project. All of these resources provided insights into what is working in various communities.

Additional topics that the Task Force discussed include, a holistic approach to summer; community engagement including needs assessments (ala Harwood Institute/ Libraries Transforming Communities project); what motivates people to read; looking at summer programs as one component of a library’s yearly program offerings – a year round approach to out-of-school-time learning; learning objectives tied into activities; guidance for open programming; and self-care for staff to address summer burnout.

Andrew Medlar and the ALSC Leadership were very thoughtful in laying out the charge for this work, and the Task Force took care to review all the questions and suggestions. The Task Force worked primarily through e-mail and conference calls, both on our discussions and on sharing resources.

This report, which outlines recommendations for next steps, concludes the work of this Task Force.

**Summary of Task Force Findings:**

*Key findings may be bulleted after a summary paragraph.*

Summer Reading and Learning is a large area of focus with many strands of important work being done by libraries and other organizations across the country. Summer Learning in libraries is a core service, but there is not much research currently available on what works best. More organizations are beginning to bring this core function of libraries to the forefront and ALSC has an opportunity to take a leadership role. Given the assertive timeline of the Task Force’s work, much was learned, but it became apparent that there was much more work to be done. Below are a few of our findings:

- Summer Reading is traditionally what libraries have called their summer programming. Today libraries are doing a wide variety of programming related to STEM/STEAM, THREAD (Technology, History, Reading, Experiences, Art, and Discovery), Maker movement, collaborations with other organizations, and so much more, so the task force is recommending calling our summer programming summer learning, which includes reading and literacy.
- There are many different kinds of summer learning activities, but there is still not a lot of research on what are the most effective strategies that help libraries appropriately measure outcomes.
- Organizations such as Urban Libraries Council, National Summer Learning Association, and YALSA are all have active summer learning projects.
- Public Libraries are more effective at providing summer learning opportunities when they partner with other libraries, community or learning-based organizations. ALSC is well-positioned to build relationships with umbrella organizations that could encourage their local chapters to work with the public library in their community.

**Task Force Recommendations:**

Based on input from ALSC members and the findings of the Task Force members, we recommend the following (insert as many recommendations as developed by task force):

**Recommendation #1:** Implement the Task Force’s interim report recommendations for Summer 2016 as approved by ALSC Leadership.

**Recommendation #2:** Reach out to other organizations (i.e. ULC, NSLA, YALSA, AASL, The Center for Childhood Creativity – but not exclusively) involved in summer learning and libraries to work together on providing research around successful outcomes in public libraries.
Recommendation #3: Support one or more summer learning programs in ALSC member libraries to assess efficacy and outcomes for both the library and the participating children and families, focusing on time read vs. titles read and length of overall engagement with participants.

Recommendation #4: Over the long term, create an organized service model for summer learning that libraries can use in their summer and year round learning programs (like Every Child Ready to Read does for early literacy programming).

Recommendation #5: Create opportunities throughout ALSC’s portfolio of existing professional development for members to share and learn best practices, including webinars, conference presentations, and a preconference later in the timeline.

Recommendation #6: Include self-care in professional development programming to assist library staff in better managing summer learning without burning themselves out.

Recommendation #7: Work with ALA to add summer learning messaging and activities into National Library Legislative Day.

Recommendation #8: Work with the National Summer Learning Association to include libraries in their messaging and conference programming.

Recommendation #9: Appoint a combo of task force members (the existing members plus several new members) to a new task force with the following charge:

**New Charge for Task Force:** To work with ALSC Leadership, Staff, and Committees to refine and implement the recommendations in this report.

Action to Be Taken: The Task Force asks the ALSC Board adopt the 9 recommendations, which includes creating a new task force and designing a long term plan to create a framework for summer and out-of-school-time learning

Thank you for your consideration. Member(s) will be present at your Board meeting at Annual Conference.

List of the Task Force Members:
- Shawn Brommer, Youth Services and Outreach Consultant, South Central Library System, Madison, WI
- Christine Caputo, Chief - Public Service Support, Free Library of Philadelphia (Chair)
- Christy Estrovitz, Manager of Youth Services, San Francisco Public Library
- Matt McLain, Manager - South Jordan Library, Salt Lake County Library Services
- Shannon Schinagl, Emergent/Family Literacy and Children's Services Consultant, Maine State Library (Shannon withdrew from the Task Force, May 3, 2016)