

TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: ALA Membership Report

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:

Information report

ACTION REQUESTED BY:

Melissa Walling, MBA, CAE, Director, Member Relations & Services

CONTACT PERSON:

Melissa Walling, mwalling@ala.org, ext. 2159

DRAFT OF MOTION:

N/A

DATE: Wednesday, March 24, 2021

BACKGROUND:

Report on membership activities and membership counts.

ATTACHMENTS:

Report on membership activities and membership counts.

February 2021 Informal Membership Snapshot

Count of Personal (Individual) Members:	48,681
Count of Organizational Members:	2,962
Count of Corporate Members:	131
Total:	51,774

ALA's membership has dropped just below 52,000 - a 12% decline from 2020 and a 10% decline when compared to the same time in 2019. We had been tracking closer to 7-9% decline and our membership took an additional decrease this month due to timing delays in processing United group memberships (which are received at HQ). This impacted our counts by 1,221 members in addition to the expected decline due to the impact of COVID-19 on library employment.

Division memberships currently total 42,123 which is a slight decrease from last month and mostly due to processing delays with group memberships through United. These checks have been received and are expected to be processed before next month's counts are distributed.

Round table memberships currently total 18,437 which is an increase when compared to February 2020. We have continued to see these gradual increases in round table membership over time.

At the ALA level, our Regular and Student memberships decreased since January which would have contributed towards the slight decreases that you see across divisions. In addition, our renewal activity decreased which we would expect to see as we move out of our busy season.

FY21 ALA Membership Dues - **ESTIMATED**

Membership Dues – 591-9152

ALA Membership Dues (Q1 Close) - ESTIMATED

Total Revenues Budgeted/Actual/Remaining:	\$ 3,717,768	\$ 930,671	\$ (2,787,097)
Total Expenses Budgeted/Actual/Remaining:	\$ (110,000)	\$ (26,297)	\$ (83,703)
Contribution Margin:	\$ 3,607,768	\$ 904,374	\$ (2,703,394)

Deferred membership revenue for FY21 cannot be calculated until we get caught up on FY20; therefore, the numbers on the financial statements are estimates (the same applies to division and round table membership dues). For the purposes of this report, I have manually deferred the payments we have received and there is a margin of error since these calculations are manual.

Our primary season to collect membership dues ends in February so we now have a very good understanding of where we will end the fiscal year. We are slightly ahead of budget for our membership dues and are still playing a bit of catch up with our mailed check and ACH payments. Our membership renewal processes occur monthly and include both e-renewals as well as printed notices. Our e-renewal notices have been on track; however, we are not mailing printed invoices when we are behind with check and ACH processing so those are happening every other month. We hope that by summer we will be back to our normal monthly schedule for printed renewals as well.

For FY21 we had decreased our budgeted membership revenue by 28% based upon the employment uncertainty and the number of members whose dues are paid by their library. We increased dues revenue for FY22 so it is good to see that we may be ahead of budget for FY21.

Membership Trends - One Year into the Pandemic

The chart below shows a four-year average of our counts for personal, organization and corporate members as well as the total. I have been reporting on how our total membership counts compare to previous years; however, I wanted to provide some additional detail about these trends.

	Average Member Counts Across Fiscal Year			
	Personal	Organization	Corporate	Total
FY17	50,992	5,560	174	56,726
FY18	52,764	5,210	161	58,134
FY19	52,231	5,410	153	57,795
FY20	51,645	5,188	148	56,981
Four Year Average (FY17-FY20)	51,908	5,342	159	57,409
FY21*	48,885	3,911	132	52,928
FY21 Variance to 4 year Average	-5.8%	-26.8%	-16.9%	-7.8%
<i>*FY21 counts are based on four months of informal membership statistics - November - February</i>				

The largest decline has been with organization members. This is primarily due to the delay in processing United group memberships which should be corrected over the next few months, but we have also seen a decline with organization memberships as well with organizational budget cuts. Here are some of our tactics to focus on organizational members:

- **Completed** - Launched the ALA Essentials Series as an organizational benefit. This means that the employees of organizational members can access this self-directed course at no additional cost. Also activated additional discount on new RDA subscribers who are Organizational Members. Lack of access to education discounts is one of the reasons why organizational members are dropping their membership.
- **Completed** – Activated automated emails when an organization joins, renews or reinstates their membership.
- **In Progress** – Working with IT and the United staff to better integrate United memberships within our membership database to deliver a more seamless member experience.
- **In Progress** – Segmenting printed membership invoices with organizational messaging.
- **Future** – Activating recruitment campaigns.

The decline in corporate membership is across both our Library Champion and our general corporate memberships. This appears to be primarily due to mergers and acquisitions and budget cuts. Here are a few tactics to focus on Corporate Memberships:

- **In Progress** – Activating automated emails when corporate entities join, renew, or reinstate their membership.
- **In Progress** – Segmenting printed membership invoices with corporate messaging.
- **In Progress** – Working with ERT to sunset and updating membership messaging accordingly.
- **Future** – Streamlining the membership types and benefits for ease of activation of membership.

Here is a bit more detail about the decline in Personal Members. The growth in Student Membership has been continuing annually and the decline in Regular Membership has continued as well. With Student Members representing nearly 15% of ALA membership, this growth is masking the decline in other areas.

Detail on Primary "Library Worker" Membership Types			
	Regular	Student	Support Staff
FY17	29,238	7,408	1,692
FY18	29,901	7,870	1,654
FY19	28,914	8,486	1,599
FY20	28,703	8,486	1,502
Four Year Average (FY17-FY20)	29,189	8,063	1,612
FY21*	26,204	8,806	1,383
FY21 Variance to 4 year Average	-10.2%	9.2%	-14.2%

Here are some of our tactics to focus on personal members:

- **Completed** – Activated print membership postcard for renewing members with clearer call to action and demonstrated member value.
- **In Progress** – Twelve-month membership onboarding campaign will be activated this summer which will include emails, virtual meet ups, and a new member web pages to ensure that our new members learn about everything ALA membership can offer. This effort is being supported through the sponsorship of OverDrive.
- **In Progress** – Reviewing the data that we collect about our members including their interests and information about their employment to ensure that this data is actionable and can be used to drive revenue and engagement.
- **In Progress** – Segmenting membership renewal invoice with clear description of cost/benefit of membership (see below).
- **Future** – Understanding our member and customer journeys across the entire organization to ensure that we are encouraging non-members to take a step towards future engagement (including joining, donating, advocating, etc.).
- **Future** – Creating an engagement plan for our graduating Student Members to ensure that they convert to a Regular Member.

WAYS YOU CAN USE YOUR MEMBERSHIP TO MEET YOUR PROFESSIONAL GOALS

Connect with information about libraries, library work, association news, and other topics of interest to the profession through your *American Libraries* subscription.



Benchmark your salary to understand the value your expertise brings to the community through the **ALA-APA Salary Survey Database**.



Expand your skill set through **conferences, webinars, certifications, and courses** for any job in every type of library including two webinars bundled with your membership.



Crowdsource ideas and solutions from a community of 55,000 library workers—and collaborate as part of a volunteer group—across the globe through **ALA Connect**.

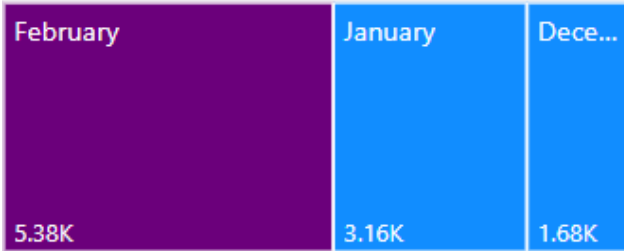


ALA Connect Dashboard

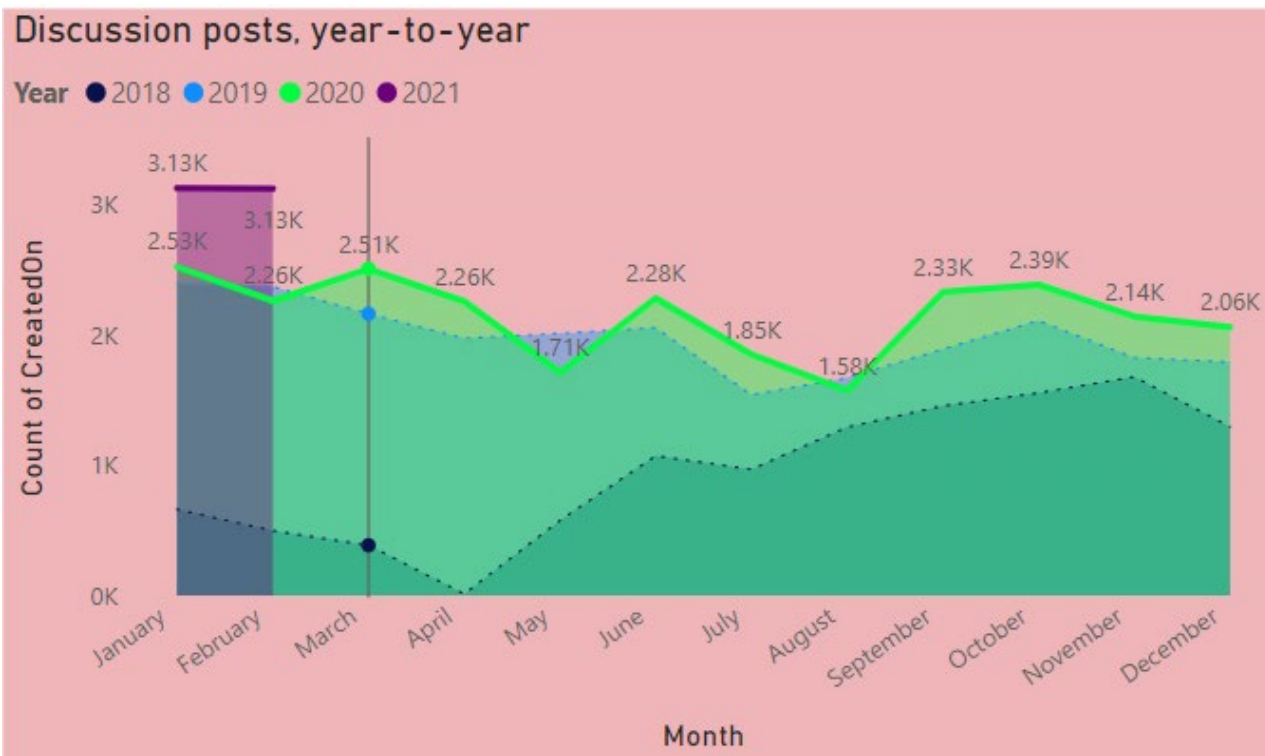
ALA Connect is a key member benefit and as more communities transfer onto Connect, we are monitoring key metrics to ensure that this remains a relevant and useful tool for our members. Here is a snapshot of some of the data we are monitoring which all reflects an upward trend in usage and engagement.

Key Performance Indicator: Logins to the Web site

Unique web logins this quarter, by month of most recent (platform-wide)



Key Performance Indicator: Engagement



We are also looking at trending topics on the community. Here are the 10 most active topics in the last quarter

