

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

Topic: Partnerships Best Practices

Background: YALSA's [Future of Library Services for and with Teens](#) report highlights “partnering strategically to reach beyond the library’s walls” as one of the five fundamental elements that will need to shift in order for libraries and communities to successfully work for and with teens” (p. 21-24). Members may need additional support around best practices, strategies or resources in order to partner strategically in their community. The Board will want to discuss this topic specifically, and what, if any, additional resources are needed by members. Maureen Hartman has presented the information below for the Board’s consideration.

Action Required: Discussion

Overview:

YALSA's [Future of Library Services for and with Teens](#) report highlights “partnering strategically to reach beyond the library’s walls” as one of the five fundamental elements that will need to shift in order for libraries and communities to successfully work for and with teens” (p. 21-24).

While many YALSA members may be ready to adopt this new role, existing capacity, infrastructure and/or culture of their organization may make this very challenging, if not impossible.

Members may need additional support around best practices or other resources in order to partner strategically in their community and shift the culture of their library towards supporting a new role for the library in their community. Specific changes that members will need to make around partnerships and collaborations, and that are called out in the report include:

- Discontinuing existing roles that have become less of a priority for students or communities
- Looking beyond the library field itself to organizations who share similar mission or values who may not yet see the library as a possible partner
- Identifying possible partners in the community and possible areas in which to partner
- Identifying types of partnerships and strategies to be most successful at each.
- Initiating partnerships
- Evaluating partnerships
- Leveraging training, support and coaching for staff
- Supporting supervisors, managers and administrators in changing staffing practices

Tasks already completed or in progress include:

- Futures Taskforce is creating content, presentations and examples for members, looking for opportunities to share the report with other ALA divisions and other partners beyond libraries.
- *YALS* editor establishing both regular feature and articles focused on report.
- YALSAblog has been re-focused in support of the report.
- YALSA staff coordinated online discussions of report in March.
- YALSA staff (with help from Continuing Education committee) offering webinars throughout 2014 focused on report
- National Guidelines Committee will revisit guidelines and issue papers
- Research Committee will revise Research Agenda to reflect report

Questions to explore before taking next steps:

- Why are successful partnerships and collaborations important to the Board, to members and to members' libraries?
- How skilled are YALSA members in initiating, developing, sustaining and evaluating partnerships or collaborations as highlighted in the report?
- What existing YALSA work is planned or underway in which partnerships could be highlighted or emphasized differently?
- What kinds of support would be helpful to members?
- What kind of support could YALSA create that libraries would purchase?

Possible Next Steps:

1. Incorporate partnerships and collaboration into existing advocacy efforts, including Teen Read Week™, Teen Tech Week™ and/or summer reading/learning efforts and look for other opportunities to embed or highlight partnerships in other existing YALSA projects or tasks.
2. Establish a member taskforce or standing committee to create a position paper, toolkit and/or other resource(s) on this issue
3. No additional action at this time.

Existing YALSA resources:

[Future of Library Services for and with Teens](#)

[Guidelines for Strategic Partnerships](#) (Guides partnering process for the organization as a whole).

[Advocacy Toolkit](#)

Existing ALA resources:

ALSC's [Engage With Your Community](#) section of [Everyday Advocacy](#)

Other Resources:

WebJunction [Partnerships and Collaboration](#) resources

California Library Association, [California Summer Reading Program Community Partnerships](#)

[Partnerships, Collaboration: What is the Difference?](#) from National Coalition for Homeless Veterans