

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

Topic: Updating the Petition Candidates' Process

Background: Association best practices point to the need to provide an opportunity for petition candidates in elections. In the past, a member could be a petition candidate and be added to YALSA's election ballot by having 25 YALSA members sign a petition in support of a member's candidacy. Requiring only 25 signatures was appropriate when YALSA received the small division subsidy [50% of funding needed came from revenue and dues] in the 1980s and had only about 2,000 members. Since then, YALSA's membership has grown to over 5,100. Additionally, the method of finding people to physically sign a paper petition, which would then need to be faxed or mailed to YALSA headquarters, was also appropriate in the pre-Internet days. Between the growth of the membership and the proliferation of doing association business online, YALSA's board will want to consider modernizing the petition candidate process. YALSA members Sarah Flowers, Pam Holley and April Witteveen have presented a proposal below for the board's consideration. In April the YALSA Board, via its space in ALA Connect, discussed the recommendation and voted to approve it. Including the item as a part of this meeting simply ensures it will be entered into the official record of the association.

Action Required: Consent

Proposal

Put a proposal for the members' consideration on the 2015 ballot that would change YALSA's bylaws to mandate that petitions be made available in electronic form, and to adjust the number of signatures needed on a petition to reflect the growth of YALSA's membership.

Proposed Changes to Bylaws

Current wording:

Article VIII, Section 4

Any candidate may be placed on the ballot by a petition signed by twenty-five personal members of YALSA. The nominee shall be a member in good standing of the Association. The petition and the written consent of the nominee shall be filed with the YALSA Executive Director a minimum of four months before the Midwinter meeting, and the name of each candidate so nominated shall be listed on the official ballot. These nominations shall follow the procedures outlined in Section 3 of this article.

Proposed new wording for Article VIII, Section 4: (text to be deleted is struck through, text to be added is in red italics)

Any candidate may be placed on the ballot by a petition signed by ~~twenty-five~~ *1% of the* personal members of YALSA *as determined by the number of personal members as of July 1 the year preceding the actual election. A petition, which will be made available electronically and in print,* and the written consent of the nominee shall be filed with the YALSA Executive Director a minimum of four months before the Midwinter meeting, and the name of each candidate so nominated shall be listed on the official ballot. These nominations shall follow the procedures outlined in Section 3 of this article.

Rationale

- The original requirement for the number of member signatures was enacted when YALSA was a small division (about 2,000 members), and was 25, or the equivalent of 1.25% of the membership. Changing the bylaws to require petition signatures equal to 1% of the membership ensures that, regardless of membership size, the number of required signatures remains proportionate to the membership and will eliminate the need for future adjustments to the bylaws as YALSA's membership size changes.
- A petition that can be signed and sent electronically eases the process for both signers and the prospective candidate. The increased use of social media enables a candidate to more easily spread his/her request for signatures and balances out the increased number of signers.

Proposed Action

The board adopts the proposal as presented and directs YALSA's Executive Director to include the measure on the 2015 ballot for the members' consideration.

Additional Resources

- YALSA Bylaws, <http://ow.ly/vRU00> (.pdf)
- YALSA Petition Candidate Form, <http://ow.ly/vRV9c> (.doc)