

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting  
ALA Midwinter Meeting, Seattle  
January 25 – 29, 2013**

**Topic:** Evaluating Selection Committee Processes

**Background:** YALSA selection committees have operated for nearly two decades with only minor changes in how their work is accomplished, and to the Executive Director’s recollection, there has not been a comprehensive review of their committee work processes during that time; however, there have been some efforts at evaluating other aspects of these committees. In 2007 a taskforce was established to evaluate the recommended lists in an effort to determine to what degree they were meeting member needs. In 2010 the Organization and Bylaws Committee reviewed the Policies and Procedures of selection committees and proposed revisions to provide more conformity across committees. Since YALSA members consistently identify selection committee work as an appealing activity for member engagement, and YALSA has a duty to use member time and dedication effectively. Chris Shoemaker and Sarajo Wentling have presented a proposal below for the board’s consideration.

**Action Required:** Discussion

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The lists of recommended reading that YALSA’s selection committees produce is very important to YALSA members and the library community. In the most recent member survey, 80% of survey respondents said that they are members of YALSA in order to stay up to date on young adult literature & media. The survey further indicated that the 3rd most important thing YALSA does is provide up to date info on YA literature via selected lists. Given the high value placed on the work selection committees by YALSA members, it is important to make sure that those committees are operating effectively, efficiently, and that they advance the mission of YALSA. As YALSA looks to use existing resources responsibly and to build capacity for furthering the mission and goals of the association, it is important to review the operations within the selection committees and evaluate what changes might need to occur to ensure that YALSA’s recommended lists continue to provide timely and relevant information of YA literature and media to members.

**Proposal**

The YALSA Board of Directors should direct the YALSA president to establish a selection committee evaluation ad hoc committee or task force to evaluate the work of YALSA’s selection committees. Nichole Gilbert should be identified as the staff liaison, given her existing work with selection committee processes.

This committee would be responsible for reviewing the current structure and operations of YALSA selection committees, identifying best practices, and advising potential courses of action to continue the strong work of the committees while furthering YALSA’s mission.

The evaluation would examine topics such as:

- Member selection and training
- Nomination process
- Meeting format
- Staff Support
- Documentation
- Connection to Booklist and The Hub
- Material needs

**Rationale:**

- The lists of recommended reading that YALSA’s selection committees produce is very important to YALSA members and the library community, as the lists are an essential tool for collection development and readers’ advisory. In the most recent member survey, 80% of survey respondents said that they are members in order to stay up to date on young adult literature & media. The survey further indicated that the 3rd most important thing YALSA does is provide up to date information on YA literature via selected lists. Given the high value placed on the work product of selection committees, it is important to make sure that those committees are operating effectively, efficiently, and continue to provide timely and relevant information of YA literature and media to members for use with collection development and readers’ advisory.
- As YALSA looks to build capacity for furthering the mission and goals of the association, it is important to review operations, including those within the selection committees, and evaluate what changes might need to occur to ensure that YALSA’s selection committees are 1) closely aligned with and advance the mission of YALSA, 2) that they are run efficiently and do not take time or resources away from strategic goal areas.

**Possible Next Steps:**

- Assign the evaluation to the existing Capacity Building Task Force.
- Create an ad-hoc group of the board. This option ensures that the evaluation committee will be familiar with and understand capacity building and YALSA’s resources. It also leverages the board liaison connections to the committees.
- Develop a new task force for the process. It is recommended that at least one member of the task force be a board member in order to ensure that the evaluation committee will be familiar with and understand capacity building and YALSA’s resources.

**Additional Resources:**

- Selected Lists Committee Policy Alignment, Midwinter 2010 Board Doc #15, <http://ow.ly/gBZkd> (.pdf)
- Selected List Evaluation Taskforce Final Recommendations, Midwinter 2008 Board Doc #18, <http://ow.ly/gBZrW> (.pdf)
- Strategic Plan, [www.ala.org/yalsa/aboutyalsa/strategicplan](http://www.ala.org/yalsa/aboutyalsa/strategicplan)