

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting  
ALA Midwinter Meeting, Philadelphia  
January 24 – 28, 2014**

**Topic:** Establish a Selection Committee Evaluation Taskforce

**Background:** An ad-hoc committee of the board was established last year to review the current structure and operations of YALSA selection committees, identifying best practices, and advising potential courses of action to continue the work of the committees while furthering YALSA's mission. The evaluation examined topics such as: Nomination process, Meeting format, Staff Support, Connection to Booklist and The Hub, and Material needs. The purpose of the examination was to ensure that YALSA's selection committees are 1) closely aligned with and advance the mission of YALSA, 2) run efficiently and do not take unnecessary time or resources away from strategic goal areas. In addition, the group looked at these areas through the lens of the three capacity building questions discussed at the Board Planning Meeting at 2013 Midwinter: What would it change? How does it move our mission forward? Who and how many would it impact? The co-chairs, Pam Holley and Candice Mack, have provided a final report below.

**Action Required:** Action

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### **Ad-Hoc Committee Work accomplished**

- Committee members were reviewed the list of topics the group was given to explore and added:
  - Member recruitment to the selection committees and training
    - An e-course on literary evaluation is being developed and will be offered this July
    - Jack Martin and Linda Braun are working on a proposal for a digital badge on literary evaluation
    - Chris expanded the training done for in-coming committee members
    - Chris sent an e-blast specifically to new members encouraging them to consider committee participation
  - Defining documentation, as in policies and procedures, including procedures for ensuring information sharing/transition from current chair to next chair
    - The group looked at each selection and award committee's policies and procedures under the lens of the Policies and Procedures template set up by the Organization and Bylaws Taskforce in 2010 and attempted to standardize them using the template.
- Helped develop the committee FAQ and selection chair FAQ

## **Recommendations**

- Come up with a recommended standard size for all selection and award committees
  - Currently, committee sizes all vary
    - BFYA = 15 members
    - Award committees = 6-9
    - Selection committees = 9-11
- Create a recommended standardized nomination timeline and deadlines
  - For instance, the last date a committee will accept titles for consideration from a publisher varies greatly. QP says 60 days before Midwinter, others say Nov. 1 or Oct. 31.
  - Timelines would help answer the question of time commitment when members are applying to join committees
- Reconsider elections for award committee positions and make a recommendation
  - Are elections the best method for identifying the most qualified individuals as well as for building a balanced committee?
  - Why do only three of our award committees have elected positions?
- Reconsider the Five Year Rule and make a recommendation
  - Currently BFYA and QP policies and procedures state that once a member is on those committees, they cannot be on them again for at least another five years. Recently, one person has served three times on Odyssey over the last six years, which points out how easily something like this can happen with no parameters in place. However, this particular circumstance is unique, because both ALSC and YALSA appoint to this group and the two Divisions may not be aware that the other has previously appointed this individual.
  - Should this policy be removed entirely or applied to all award and selection committees to widen participation? Or would this alienate long time members or create other unforeseen issues?
- Examine the purpose/core function of Quick Picks and Popular Paperbacks and make a recommendation as to whether or not these committees serve unique purposes, or are redundant.
  - Are these committees creating resources that fill different needs?
  - Has Popular Paperbacks strayed too far from its original purpose of providing timely themed lists? Would that committee do a better job of meeting members' needs if it had no limitations as to format, and produced a new list every three months or so, based on a topic that arose from member needs? The committee could conduct regular environmental scans via such resources as the yalsa-bk, listserv to find topics that libraries need resources for.
- Work with Organization and Bylaws Committee to conduct survey to award & selection committee chairs regarding efficiency of committee policies, procedures and practices and then analyze the results and make recommendations to the board.
  - Sample Questions:
    - Does your committee have a chair handbook or manual?
      - If yes, is it physical or virtual?
      - Do you have a copy?

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- Did you meet with the previous chair of your committee to discuss policies, procedures, running of the committee, etc.?
- In the policies and procedures for your committee, as posted on YALSA's website, have you noticed any policies or procedures that no longer seem appropriate? If so, what are they?
- Are you satisfied with the procedure for counting votes, or have you amended it?
  - If so, what have you found that works better?
- Are there practices for your committee that you feel should be turned into policies or procedures? If so, what are they?
- How important is it that you have physical copies of the nominated books/audiobooks at your Midwinter and Annual meetings?
- Has it been easy for you to find out who your Board Liaison is? What about your Staff Liaison?
- How does your committee discuss titles between conferences?
  - What way has been most successful for the members?

### Pro Bono Collaboration

In addition to the work of the ad-hoc committee, YALSA participated in a pro-bono activity with the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance in January. Eight undergraduate students working towards a nonprofit management certificate spent a day working on an issue for YALSA. Information is provided below:

#### Issue:

A significant portion of YALSA's resources are currently directed toward an activity that does not directly support YALSA's mission. This activity is identifying the year's best books and media for teens through lists and awards.

#### Strategies to address the issue:

1. SERVE: Identify strategies for streamlining this member engagement activity so that it requires fewer resources
2. EMPOWER: Better leverage the activity for public awareness and advocacy efforts.
3. ENGAGE: Identify strategies for how we can better leverage this activity to generate funds that would go toward directly support our mission

#### Streamline & Serve

- Have only half of the selection and award committees meet at each conference, or have all of them meet at just one conference
- Max each book list to 50 titles
- Develop a hierarchy within committees – each one gets an expert or guru that can coach or mentor newbies
- Create a member position that serves as the head of all committees who works alongside the president-elect and staff to reduce staff work load. This would be the go-to person for

chairs when they had questions or concerns. Consider giving them a stipend, such as a travel stipend to attend conferences

### **Empower Committees to Advocate**

- In order to more closely align the committees with the mission, leverage members' passion for YA literature while they're still on the committee
  - Committee members are given 'homework' to advocate to their local, professional networks about the lists, awards or YALSA services and resources
  - Report "homework" to the committee chair which reports to head of all committees
  - Committee member with best advocacy work recognized at conference or some other visible way

### **Engage libraries**

- Provide resources and incentives for them to incorporate the list/award books in their Young Adult collections and programs

### **Funds:**

- Charge a fee for individuals to serve on the selection committees (e.g. \$10)
- Redistribute current funds to more beneficial and impactful functions

### **Conclusion**

Members have to be engaged and empowered to engage and empower others

### **Presenters**

- Marykaye Barnes
- Raelynn Brown
- Keith Davis
- Catherine Noland
- Katelyn Olszak
- Kim Reitzel
- Nicole Terranova

### **Proposed Action**

Direct the President to work with the ad-hoc chair to develop a charge for a new member task force, and then appoint a taskforce comprised of recent committee chairs and O&B members that will carry out the ad-hoc committee recommendations listed in this document and explore options presented by the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance.