YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Midwinter Meeting, New Orleans
June 22 - 26, 2018

Topic: **Statement on Continuous Learning**

Background: **As part of the writing process for YALSA's forthcoming report,**
Transforming Teen Services through Continuing Education:
Recommendations and Findings, **Beth Yoke conducted an audit of**
existing documents in support of continuing education for the library
community, and only found three: one from the Association of College
and Research Libraries, another from the Coalition to Advance
Learning in Archives, Libraries and Museums, and a third from the
International Federation of Library Associations. Given the
importance of continuing education (CE) to YALSA, as evidenced by
its inclusion in the Implementation Plan and the range of services
YALSA provides its members, as well as by this latest IMLS funded
project, it makes sense for YALSA to issue a statement on the
importance of CE for all library staff. The statement is meant to
support and complement the forthcoming report. Linda Braun and
Beth Yoke have provided it below for the board's consideration. The
text in red show changes made after the Board's initial feedback. The
Board voted online in May and adopted the statement as edited below.

Action Required: **Consent**

YALSA Statement on the Importance of Continuous Learning for all Library Staff

All library staff, regardless of library size or type, have both the right and the responsibility to be engaged in effective continuing education (CE) and professional development (PD) throughout their careers. Keeping up to date with new knowledge and practices in adolescent development, librarianship, and related fields, as well as being engaged in creating or contributing to new knowledge or best practices is essential for all library staff to be able to serve all teens in their community successfully.

All library staff must commit to continuous learning because of the ever-changing nature of teens and the materials and technologies we use to engage with and serve them. Our communities are changing and evolving as well, so keeping up to date on information and skills is essential if libraries are to remain relevant in the 21st century.

In return for committing to continuous learning, participating in high quality CE helps library staff
- Expand and enhance their job qualifications
- Increase their employability and/or income
- Gain confidence

- Grow a network of peers
- Contribute to improving the profession

In addition to continuous learning for teen ~~services~~-focused staff, YALSA firmly believes it is imperative that all library staff from all types of libraries, not just those with teen services in their job titles and job descriptions, must have the skills required to work successfully with and for teens. As teens make use of all areas of libraries - from circulation to reference and from readers' advisory to ~~children's services~~ computer labs and makerspaces- all staff take part in critical interactions with the age group. Therefore, to effectively support teens, all library staff must take advantage of CE/PD that enable them to gain confidence and competence in ~~essential~~ serving teen~~s service areas~~, especially those outlined in *Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff*.

The ~~professional development~~ continuous learning of library staff is a responsibility shared among library staff, library administrators, CE/PD providers, graduate programs at iSchools and LIS programs, professional associations and other stakeholders. Library staff need support from key stakeholders to be successful in their professional development endeavors. Recommendations for how stakeholders, such as library administrators, can support ~~CE~~ continuous learning for library staff are detailed in *Transforming Teen Services through Continuing Education: Recommendations and Findings.*

As a part of a commitment to continuous learning, all library staff must:

- **Read and embrace national guidelines and standards for serving teens ~~services~~ through libraries and ~~CE~~continuous learning**, such as *Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff.*
- **Embrace a culture of learning**
    - Use tools such as *Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff* to assess ~~CE~~ continuous learning needs and prioritize areas for growth, resisting the temptation to take CE/PD in areas of comfort and confidence, and instead focus on topics that are less familiar and comfortable.
    - Be open and willing to try new things, take risks, and explore areas that might cause discomfort.
    - Accept a role as a co-learner, who builds knowledge and skills alongside teens.
    - Seek mentors and peers, both inside and outside the library, whose work with teens can help inform and advance personal practice.
    - Join and participate in relevant personal learning networks and respected communities of practice and professional associations.
    - Recognize that since everyone in the library is responsible for working for and with teens, all library staff need teen ~~services~~-focused CE/PD.
    - Share knowledge and skills with peers and colleagues and support their learning.
    - Take time to celebrate CE/PD achievements and include them on resumes, in portfolios, etc.
- **Proactively seek out and participate in high quality CE**, which is learning that helps library staff:
    - Develop skills and understanding
    - Practice what's learned in a real-life setting

- ○ Receive feedback on that practice
- ○ Engage with other learners from within and beyond the library field
- ○ Reflect and analyze what's been learned
- ○ Move on to a next level in the learning
- **Advocate for access to high quality CE opportunities**
  - ○ Advocate to supervisors and managers about teen-focused ~~services~~ CE/PD needs, using this report and YALSA's *Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff* to help make the case.
  - ○ Research the CE/PD offerings from library-focused institutions and organizations as well as youth-serving organizations and advocate to supervisors and managers about the value of participating.
  - ○ Work with supervisors and peers to forge collaborative opportunities between ~~school and public libraries~~ and among all library types to build continuous learning opportunities across institutions and work together to support teen-focused ~~services~~ knowledge and skills.
  - ○ Encourage state library agencies, graduate programs at iSchools and LIS programs, and other library-focused organizations to expand CE/PD opportunities that support the learning needs that academic, school and public library staff have in common.

As part of a commitment to its members and to CE YALSA will

- **Commit substantial resources to support members' continuous learning efforts** by
  - o Creating affordable, accessible, dynamic and relevant CE/PD opportunities.
  - o Adopting new modes of delivery as they emerge.
  - o Supporting members in identifying and participating in relevant high-quality CE/PD.
  - o Playing a role in facilitating self-directed learning among its members.
  - o Developing assessment tools to assist members in evaluating their skills and knowledge and identifying areas to focus on for CE/PD.
- **Set a strategy and vision for ~~CE~~ continuous learning that advances a 21st century vision of serving teens through libraries ~~services~~** as outlined in key documents, such as YALSA's *The Future of Library Services for and with Teens: A Call to Action*
  - o Promote, create, and distribute foundational documents such as *Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff.*
  - o Update existing or create new position statements, guidelines, standards, etc. as needed that emphasize the importance for library staff to commit to learning throughout their career as well as the importance of creating a culture of learning within libraries.
- **Identify and use effective CE/PD models and share emerging and best practices,** especially those outlined in YALSA's report, *Transforming Teen Services through Continuing Education: Recommendations and Findings*
- **Build the capacity of YALSA and the library community to provide CE/PD**
  - o Partner with organizations and agencies outside of libraries to guarantee inclusion of CE/PD perspectives that support teens with diverse needs and from diverse backgrounds.

- o With stakeholders, develop a method for identifying qualified CE/PD trainers, who can provide a range of voices and perspectives on high quality library teen services, and disseminating that information out to the library community.
  - o Seek out short-term and long-term funding to help design, development, implementation, and evaluation of innovative CE/PD.
  - o Conduct and use programmatic evaluation information to improve outcomes and refine CE/PD models.
- **Promote a culture of learning**
  - o Work with partners to develop and disseminate resources that support libraries in creating a culture of learning among their institution's staff.
- **Advocate for the importance of ~~CE~~continuous learning**
  - o Support national advocacy efforts that call attention to the importance of CE/PD and continuous learning for all library staff.
  - o Advocate nationwide for the importance of teen ~~services related~~focused CE/PD for all library staff, regardless of job title or job description.
  - o Promote existing and create new methods for honoring high-quality training and innovative CE/PD models.
- **Gather data for informed planning and decision making**
  - o Continue to learn about the current needs of teens and library staff training.
  - o Regularly assess the value and content of the teen ~~services related~~focused training provided to library staff.

Selected Resources
- Braun, et. al. *The Future of Library Services for and with Teens: A Call to Action.* (YALSA, 2014). Retrieved on May 15, 2018 from http://www.ala.org/yaforum/future-library-services-and-teens-project-report
- Braun, et. al. *Transforming Teen Services through Continuing Education: Recommendations and Findings.* (YALSA, 2018). Retrieved on May 15, 2018 from http://www.ala.org/yalsa/guidelines#papers
- Coalition to Advance Learning in Archives, Libraries and Museums. *LAM Education Needs Assessments: Bridging the Gaps* (2015). Retrieved on May 15, 2018 from https://educopia.org/publications/lam-education-needs-assessments-bridging-gaps
- Coalition to Advance Learning in Archives, Libraries and Museums. *LAM Education Needs Assessments: Bridging the Gaps* (2015). *National Agenda for Continuing Education and Professional Development across Libraries, Archives, and Museums.* (2016). Retrieved on May 15, 2018 from *http://www.coalitiontoadvancelearning.org/why-collaborate/national-agenda/*
- Coalition to Advance Learning in Archives, Libraries and Museums. *Spanning Our Field Boundaries: Mindfully Managing LAM Collaborations*. (2015). Retrieved on May 15, 2018 from https://educopia.org/publications/spanning-our-field-boundaries-mindfully-managing-lam-collaborations
- YALSA, *Teen Services Competencies for Library Staff*. (2017). Retrieved on May 15, 2018 from http://www.ala.org/yalsa/guidelines/yacompetencies

The following documents were consulted when developing this one:

- Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL)
  http://www.ala.org/acrl/publications/whitepapers/acrlstatement
- National Science Teachers of America
  http://www.nsta.org/about/positions/profdev.aspx
- International Association for Physical Education in Higher Education
  http://aiesep.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/2009-AIESEP-Position-Statement-on-Continuous-Professional-Development.pdf
- American Mathematics Association of Two Year Colleges
  http://www.amatyc.org/?page=PositionProfDev