

YALSA Board of Directors
2020 Annual Conference
June 25-30, 2020

Topic: Virtual meeting dispensation for Award Committees

Background: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 ALA Annual Conference scheduled to take place in Chicago, Illinois has been canceled. Because of this highly unusual course of events, special dispensation is requested to allow the YALSA award committees to meet virtually. YALSA President Todd Krueger has provided the following recommendations for immediate Board action.

Action Required: Action

Overview:

The ALA Annual conference provides space for each of the five (5) YALSA award committees [Alex, Morris, Nonfiction, Odyssey (co-administered with ALSC), and Printz] to discuss titles in-person that have been nominated during the first half of their eligibility periods. Because of the cancellation of the 2020 Annual Conference slated to be held in Chicago, Illinois, these in-person meetings are not possible. However, committees can meet in virtual sessions.

Recommendations:

1. Despite individual award policy statements and presumed but unofficial guidelines that designate an in-person June meeting, the Board will allow all YALSA Award committees to meet virtually throughout the month of June and are not beholden to meeting during the dates of the original in-person meeting.
2. Online asynchronous discussions, including the use of Connect, should be considered in addition to virtual meetings, to assist in developing the list of mid-year candidates for discussion (e.g. using a straw poll to winnow the field of titles that do not require a full virtual discussion).
3. Chairs of each committee should contact the YALSA office to discuss June dates that will not conflict with other committee times, due to a limited number of slots available using the meeting software. As these June meetings remain mandatory as if they were in-person, all members of a committee must agree on times to meet. Meetings can either be within a contiguous timeframe or can be spaced out throughout the month of June.

4. Chairs are reminded to avoid excessively long virtual meetings, including breaks as necessary.
5. Accommodation and consideration should be given to the variety of time zones that will be present in each committee membership when selecting times to meet. Encourage each committee member to have viable virtual settings, including a space to concentrate and participate without interruption, for fairly long periods of time.

Board Action:

The Board directs the Alex, Morris, Nonfiction, Odyssey, and Printz Award committees to meet virtually in lieu of the expected in-person meetings in June in Chicago.

Additional Resources:

Printz Award Policies and Procedures

<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/booklistsawards/bookawards/printzaward/aboutprintz/criteria>

Nonfiction Award Policies and Procedures

<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/nonfiction-award>