

YALSA Board of Directors
ALA Annual Conference, Chicago
June 28 – July 2, 2013

Topic: Determining Advocacy Priorities and Strategy

Background: YALSA's Board and Executive Committee have had multiple discussions around past challenges relating to advocacy efforts. However, the Board is in strong agreement that advocacy is a key priority for YALSA and will to examine YALSA's overall advocacy efforts, explore strategies for moving forward in this area and determine next steps.

Action Required: Discussion

Advocacy goal in strategic plan: teen and young adult library services within all libraries are highly valued as a result of YALSA's advocacy and activism efforts.

Objective 1a: Members and others in the library community understand the importance of advocacy and their role in it.

- **Strategy:** Educate members and others about key topics, including advocacy, lobbying and political activity.
- **Strategy:** Empower members and others to inform and engage local and state policy makers.

Objective 1b: Members and others become activists in support of teen and young adult services.

- **Strategy:** Educate members and others about how to become activists and how to recruit and train a local group of advocates.

Objective 1c: National public officials and policy makers sustain and expand library services and resources for teens and young adults.

- **Strategy:** Design and implement activities that inform, engage and influence national policy makers.

Objective 1d: Graduate schools of library and information science develop and/or expand their teen and young adult services curriculum.

- **Strategy:** Engage and partner with appropriate academic professional stakeholders and organizations within and without ALA.

Objective 1e: Increase YALSA's reach and impact.

- **Strategy:** Establish and maintain strategic partnerships with targeted organizations whose mission and goals are similar to YALSA's.

Member groups in place

- Advocacy Benchmarks Taskforce (the rebooted version)
- Legislation Committee

Key challenge: few members volunteer for advocacy focused groups, and groups often lack the expertise or vision for executing advocacy focused tasks

Current activities

- National Library Legislative Day
- District Days
- Advocacy Toolkit
- yaadvocacy@ala.org listserv
- Issue briefs
- Canned advocacy presentation materials
- Advocate of the Month
- Advocacy booth at ALA Annual

Key challenge: low participation among the membership

Desired new activities as per the Action Plan

- Recruit individuals to create advocacy materials (blog posts, webinars, canned presentations, Academy videos, conference presentations, articles in non-library publications)
- Briefings on the Hill
- New issue briefs
- Create an advocacy badge
- Facilitating networking between/among advocates and would-be advocates
- Collecting & sharing stories, incl. building out a part of the website to showcase that
- Bring back the advocacy contest in some form
- Promote subscriptions to the yaadvocacy listserv & post tips there regularly
- Offer honorary memberships to key officials and policy makers
- Spotlight key policy makers on the YALSAblog, in YALS, etc.
- Use Presidential Citation &/or Resolutions to recognize public officials & policy makers
- Work with graduate school faculty to incorporate teen focused information, resources and projects throughout the curriculum
- Identify faculty who teach YA and send them regular updates, including tools for their classroom or desk copies of YALSA books
- Increase number of places JRLYA and YALS are indexed

Desired new activities as per board discussions

- Building ties to administrators
- Creating professionalism taskforce
- Identify the key story or stories we want to tell

- Beef up audience-specific information (e.g. info for administrators, parents, GSLIS faculty, etc.)
- Conduct formal lobbying on an as needed basis
- Develop a database of teen quotes/testimonials to use for advocacy efforts
- “Amy” campaign
- Quarterly member e-chats on advocacy topics

Key challenge: capacity to implement new efforts

Questions for discussion

- Are there any proposed new items listed above that are no longer desirable to implement?
- Of the items listed above, which are the highest priority?
- Of the proposed items listed above, are there any gaps or omissions? If so, what?
- Are the two groups already in place organized so that they can support the strategies in the plan? If not, what changes need to be made?
- Are the existing groups adequate for accomplishing the strategies in the plan? If not, what new groups need to be formed and/or what existing groups need to be restructured?
- What role should the board play in advocacy?
- What role should the membership at-large play in advocacy efforts? How do we engage more members in advocacy efforts?
- What resources are needed in order to successfully implement the desired new activities?
 - Does the FY14 budget adequately incorporate advocacy activities?
- What resources from ALA or other units within ALA can YALSA can leverage?
 - Washington Office text and email alerts and calls to action
 - Washington Office webinars
 - District Dispatch
 - Cap Wiz
 - Other?
- Who should YALSA be partnering or collaborating with in order to advance its advocacy efforts?
- How do we better identify and recruit advocacy experts to serve on YALSA’s advocacy groups?
- Other?

Additional Resources

Please note: most of these documents are about 20 pages, and some have a research focus. However, there is good information in them.

- “The Challenge of Assessing Policy and Advocacy Activities,” (The California Endowment)
www.calendow.org/uploadedFiles/challenge_assessing_policy_advocacy2.pdf (.pdf)
- How do members count? Membership, governance, and advocacy in the nonprofit world, <http://ow.ly/jG09A>
- Making a Difference for Your Cause, <http://ow.ly/jG1cD> (.pdf)

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Item #18

- Virtual Activist 2.0 Training Course: <http://www.netaction.org/training/>
- Stoking the Nonprofit Advocacy Engine: <http://ow.ly/jG1wi> (.pdf)
- YALSA Strategic Plan: www.ala.org/yalsa/aboutyalsa/strategicplan
- YALSA Advocacy page: www.ala.org/yalsa/advocacy