

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Midwinter Meeting, Dallas
January 20 – 24, 2012**

Topic: Piloting a Virtual Selection Committee

Background: Since 2010, all process committees moved to a virtual work environment and thus opened up the doors for more YALSA members to participate across the country. The YALSA Board may want to explore the desirability of expanding virtual options to selection and awards committees in order to further increase opportunities for members.

Action Required: Discussion

Proposal

For selection and award committees that start their work Feb. 1, 2013, YALSA would pilot one virtual selection committee and one virtual awards committee for one year to test the feasibility of moving this type of work into a virtual environment.

Rationale

- Only about 20% of YALSA's members come to conferences, and libraries across the country are less and less able to provide funds for staff to travel to Midwinter and Annual conferences. Virtual committees increase participation opportunities across the membership.
- Since Member Engagement is part of YALSA's strategic plan, YALSA needs to identify new ways for members to participate in the kinds of activities that are valued by them.
- The technology which enables committees to work virtually continues to improve and be more widely available, more individuals are comfortable with using it and YALSA has more procedures and resources in place to support virtual committees.
- A couple of selection committees are already doing significant amount of work virtually, especially those that announce a list of finalists in December each year.
- A significant amount of staff time and resources goes into planning and implementing selection committee meetings at Midwinter and Annual, including but not limited to the packing and shipping of dozens of boxes of books. Cutting down on these types of tasks can free up staff to work on strategic plan priorities.
- Bringing the work of these committees into a virtual environment can help position YALSA as a leader within ALA, and show that it is responsive to member needs.
- Other book award committees have embraced the virtual format.

Feedback from the pilot virtual committees will be sought throughout the year, and adjustments made as needed. This pilot would begin with training for the in-coming 2014 committees and continue through the 2014 Midwinter conference, after which a

final evaluation would be conducted to determine whether or not the pilot was successful. If so, then the Board would need to decide whether or not it is feasible to continue these committees as virtual groups and/or whether to begin transitioning other selection committees to a virtual format.

Proposed Next Step

Direct the President to establish an ad-hoc board committee to work out the details of piloting a virtual award and selection committee, including a timeline, suggested committees to use for the pilot, an evaluation plan, and recommended resources for facilitating virtual meetings and to present a preliminary report to the Executive Committee by April 2nd for spring April meeting.

Additional Resources

- Street Lit Book Award Committee (works entirely virtually):
www.streetliterature.com/2011/02/slot-available-on-2011-street-lit-book.html
- ALA’s Stonewall Book Awards Committee (works virtually all year, except for meeting face-to-face at Midwinter for the final vote)
www.ala.org/glbtrt/stonewall/procedures/
- ALA’s Virginia Hamilton Award Committee is piloting an all-virtual format this year (using Skype): www.ala.org/emiert/ckbookawards/