

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

**Topic:** Executive Session

**Background:** According to BoardSource, executive sessions provide a venue for handling issues that are best discussed in private, for fostering robust discourse, and for strengthening trust and communication. Distinguished by their purpose and participants, executive sessions serve three core functions: (1) they assure confidentiality, (2) they create a mechanism for board independence and oversight, and (3) they enhance relationships among board members and with the chief executive. By the board and for the board, executive sessions enable the board to manage itself. They create an appropriate forum for board members to talk openly about topics that warrant special treatment. In effect, executive sessions are a kind of special meeting-within-a-meeting.

**Action Required:** Discussion

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**Additional Resources:**

- “Executive Sessions: how to use them regularly and wisely,” (BoardSource, 2007)  
[www.boardsource.org/dl.asp?document\\_id=555](http://www.boardsource.org/dl.asp?document_id=555)
- “Should the Board Hold Executive Sessions?” (Blue Avocado, Aug. 2008)  
[www.blueavocado.org/content/should-board-hold-executive-sessions](http://www.blueavocado.org/content/should-board-hold-executive-sessions)