

**Fall Executive Committee Meeting  
October 21-22, 2011, Chicago**

**Topic: Junior Board Proposal**

**Background: One way youth-focused organizations provide support to its constituency and recruit new leaders is by creating opportunities at the organizational level for youth participation through a junior board. These boards are usually made up of young adults, in their early to late 20s, who help the organization plan and test projects and activities, raise funds, increase awareness about the organization and more. An association Junior Board is a way for YALSA to: bring in ideas of the young people that members serve, inform teens about the work that librarians do within a community, and provide teens with opportunities for meaningful youth participation. This proposal for the YALSA Junior Board provides information on the goals of this type of Board, who would be involved and what options exist for how this Board might be organized.**

**Action Required: Discussion**

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**Proposed Action**

The YALSA Board implement a plan for development of an association Junior Board made up of seven to nine 15-18year olds from around the United States.

**Rationale**

- Frequently YALSA members, including Board members, ask if there are meaningful ways to involve teens in the work of the association.
- A YALSA Junior Board could provide the association with strong opportunities for learning about the needs of teens, in order to better support members
- A junior board can help YALSA make decisions in a variety of areas related to publishing, marketing, and trends in libraries.
- YALSA members will benefit from the YALSA Junior Board in a number of ways, including being able to see how to successfully build youth participation into planning and development activities.
- A national junior board can help inform and support the work of members' local Teen Advisory Boards
- A junior board can help YALSA grow future leaders in the association, and perhaps the profession. It provides an opportunity for YALSA to identify young talent and develop a relationship with them early on
- A junior board can create additional opportunities to get involved in the association

- A junior board can help support YALSA's work towards its advocacy goal

## **JUNIOR BOARD PROPOSAL**

### **Purpose**

The YALSA Junior Board will consist of a group of young adults who want to support and promote the mission of YALSA. The Junior Board will assist YALSA in cultivating the next generation of leaders committed to empowering teens through libraries.

### **Overview**

Through their work on the YALSA Junior Board, teens will have the chance to gain experience in association governance and in leading a national organization. They will be asked to actively participate in face-to-face and virtual meetings, plan meeting agendas, work with leaders in the field, collaborate with their peers from across the country, and keep to timelines and deadlines. All of these activities will help them as they move out of high school and into other educational and/or work opportunities. Work on the Junior Board will also support acquisition of a number of developmental assets including support, social competence, positive identity, personal values, and empowerment.

The Junior Board program will employ best practices in youth leadership development and serving learning, such as recommendations and research findings from organizations like the National Youth Leadership Council and from projects like the Youth Engaged in Leadership & Learning program (<http://tinyurl.com/5uwpblr> -- .pdf)

YALSA members will be asked to be actively engaged in nominating and supporting Junior Board members and will also have the chance to improve their programs and services through the ideas suggested by Junior Board members and implemented by YALSA.

### **Eligibility & Nomination Process**

- As YALSA serves librarians who work with and for young people between the ages of 12 and 18, a junior board of the association would need to be made up of teens within that age range.
- All Junior Board members must be nominated by librarians, educators, or community members. Once nominated, a potential Junior Board member will be asked to fill out and submit an application, which is also signed by their legal guardian.

### **Selection Process**

- Applications will be vetted by a task force made up of one current Junior Board Member, one YALSA Board member and at least two YALSA members at large with experience in organizing and managing teen advisory groups. Preferably, the task force will include a member of the YALSA Teen Advisory Group Interest Group.

The timeline for the nomination, application, and selection process would be:

Nominations/application process available	Year round
Applications and nominations submitted	December 1
Selection of junior board members	February 1
Junior board members participate in training/orientation	March - May
Junior board members serve on the board	June – following June

### **Term of Service**

- Members will participate for 16 months, beginning in March and ending in June of the following year. The first three months will consist of an orientation and training period, while the remaining months will focus on the work of the Junior Board.
- Initially, the Junior Board will be comprised of all new members; however, the goal will be to stagger terms so that the Junior Board doesn't turn over completely each year.
- Two members, selected by both the coordinator and the Junior Board, will be appointed to an additional two month term to provide peer mentorship and guidance for the incoming Junior Board members.
- All Junior Board members will have the option to apply to serve a second term.

### **Coordinator**

A YALSA past president will work as the coordinator to the Junior Board and be appointed to the role by YALSA's President-Elect. The experience of past presidents is well suited to mentoring and supporting the work of this group. As the coordinator to the Junior Board, the past president will work with YALSA staff and the current president to orient the board to the work of their group, help them plan projects and meetings, and act as the connector between the YALSA Board and staff to Junior Board members.

### **Structure**

- A president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer will be designated by a vote from the board at their first official meeting
- The Junior Board Coordinator will serve ex-officio on the board, but will not have voting privileges
- In order to facilitate communication between the Junior Board and YALSA's Board of Directors, a member of YALSA's Board will serve ex-officio on the Junior Board, but will not have voting privileges

### **Policies & Procedures**

- The Junior Board will have its own bylaws and procedure manual. The first board will review, refine and adopt a draft of each, which will be developed by the Junior Board Coordinator and Executive Director.

### Meetings

- The Junior Board will meet face-to-face two separate times in a 12 month period, both in June coinciding with ALA's Annual Conference.
  - As many Junior Board members may be under 18, each member will have to travel to conference with an adult chaperone approved by the young person's legal guardian. A Liaison will be appointed to help Junior Board members and the adult that accompanies them to conference navigate various aspects of the conference including finding meeting locations, and so on. The Conference Liaison may be a member of the Local Arrangements Committee, a Past President, or another YALSA member who is able to take on this role.
- The Junior Board will also meet virtually at least two times, and sub-committees of the board may meet virtually as needed to complete specific projects
- Members of the Junior Board will present at a YALSA Board meeting on the projects and activities on which the group is currently working
- When appropriate, the Junior Board may meet jointly with YALSA's Board of Directors

### Work

Junior Board members are asked to commit to two hours of work per month, plus meeting preparation and attendance.

- **Association Governance:** The Junior Board will assist the YALSA Board in overseeing activities that support the work of YALSA's mission and strategic plan. A key aspect of the work of the Junior Board will be to plan, develop, and initiate projects which they self-identify as closely supporting the goals in YALSA's strategic plan. The Junior Board will also contribute to work on proposals and projects being addressed by YALSA's Board of Directors.
- **Advising:** The Junior Board will serve an advisory role by providing important input on the needs of teens, as well as on marketing, publishing and pop culture trends that impact teen services. For example the Junior Board can provide feedback on YALSA products such as those for Teen Tech Week™, Teen Read Week™, etc.
- **Association Participation:** as members of the organization, Junior Board members will be encouraged to participate in activities, such as:
  - Publish in *YALS* about relevant topics, such as teen reading trends, pop culture, creating teen friendly libraries, etc.
  - Contribute content to the YALSAblog and The Hub
  - Work with YALSA's Youth Participation Coordinator to provide a strong teen presence at conference and symposium meetings and events.

- Develop, implement and participate in conference and symposium programs and workshops, such as a teen taste makers panel
- Work with Teen Read Week and Teen Tech Week committees to develop additional programming and resource lists for teens and teen librarians.

### **Evaluation**

- Each member of the YALSA Junior Board will be required to participate in an overall Board assessment at the end of their term.
- Exit interviews with out-going Junior Board members will be conducted by the Junior Board Coordinator
- YALSA committee and board members who work with the Junior Board will be surveyed as to the effectiveness and engagement of the Junior Board on projects developed and tasks assigned.
- Any conference programs presented by or participated in by Junior Board members will be evaluated as part of the normal conference evaluation process.
- After the first year of the program, a basic evaluation will be conducted in order to determine what, if any, changes need to be made to increase effectiveness for the second year.
- After the second year of the program, a comprehensive evaluation of the full program will be initiated. This evaluation will look at the success of the Junior Board in meeting specific goals related to youth participation and support of specific governing activities. The evaluation will also consider the age of the teens participating as Junior Board members and assess the ability to open up that age range to younger teens.

### **NEXT STEPS**

The Executive Committee can help with further refinement of the proposal by answering the questions below. Once the proposal is polished, it can be presented to the full board for consideration.

- What is the best way to proceed with implementation (assuming the board gives the green-light). Is it with the establishment of a member Task Force or the creation of an ad hoc committee of Board members who would flesh out implementation logistics and details? The benefits of a member Task Force are that it will give members the chance to build this new project, bring their expertise of youth participation to the development of the Junior Board and help members to understand the value of the project. An ad hoc committee of the Board has the benefit of being made up of members who are intricately involved in Board work and that understand the way association governance works. The taskforce or ad-hoc committee can address the following questions:
  - As part of the recruitment process, how will YALSA articulate and present the benefits of participation in this board?

- What exactly will the nomination and application process entail? In developing the nomination form and application, YALSA will want to consider the skills needed in order to be successful as an association Junior Board member and how those skills will be evaluated by the group selecting Junior Board members.
  - Skills and experience to look for via the application process may include:
    - previous TAB or civic association participation; leadership as demonstrated in participation in a library, school or community organization; writing and communication; social competencies and ability to work well with peers and adults; big picture thinking; ability to keep schedules, timeilnes, and deadlines.
  - What will the schedule for Annual Conference attendance by Junior Board members look like? How much time will Junior Board members will need to spend at Annual Conference each year?
  - How will the Junior Board and association Board members interact throughout the year and during face-to-face meeting times?
- How will the YALSA Junior Board be funded and how will funding be sought? In order for members to be able to travel to Annual Conference two times during their term, YALSA will need to have monetary support. This might come from:
  - a grant-making organization such as the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, the Kellogg Foundation or the Gates Foundation.
    - YALSA funds, such as the operating budget, Leadership Endowment or Friends of YALSA
    - A for-profit sponsor, such as a publisher or other vendor
    - Other?

### **Additional Resources**

The Benefits of Serving on the Board of a Non-Profit Organization, <http://tinyurl.com/3s6f88h>

### **Junior Boards**

- <http://www.mercyhome.org/juniorboard>
- <http://fotp.org/about/junior-board>
- <http://www.catholiccharitiesny.org/get-involved/junior-board/>

### **Junior Advisory Boards**

- State Farm Youth Advisory Board, [www.statefarmyab.com/](http://www.statefarmyab.com/)
- YPulse Advisory Board, <http://tinyurl.com/2csgjk5>

### **Youth Leadership**

- 15 Points: Successfully Involving Youth in Decision Making:  
[www.npgoodpractice.org/15-points-successfully-involving-youth-decision-making-1](http://www.npgoodpractice.org/15-points-successfully-involving-youth-decision-making-1)

*--respectfully submitted by Christopher Shoemaker and Linda Braun*