

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Midwinter Meeting, Atlanta
January 20 – 24, 2017**

Topic: ALA Executive Director Search

Background: With the Sept. 20th announcement of Keith Fiels' retirement, to go into effect in July 2017, the YALSA Board may want to discuss and determine its preferences for the types of qualifications needed for this leadership position, and present ALA President Julie Todaro with our recommendations. The proposal below was presented by Sarah Hill on Sept. 23, 2016, and the board voted on Sept. 28, 2016 to share their support for a 'recommended but not required' approach to the job requirements for the ALA CEO. In order to be entered into the official record of the organization, this document is presented as a consent item for the Board's 2017 Midwinter Meeting.

Action Required: Consent

Proposal

In order to help ensure that the next leader of ALA is well positioned to move both ALA and its units forward, the Board may want to go on record stating its preference that candidates must have relevant credentials in association or nonprofit leadership, while other credentials may be recommended, but not required, such as an MLIS degree.

Rationale

- There are valid legal concerns around the requirement of an MLIS for the CEO (see Appendix on p. 3)
- If ALA limits the pool of candidates by requiring all applicants to have an MLIS, it could exclude qualified people of diverse backgrounds who, for whatever reason, chose not to dedicate their schooling to librarianship. According to ALA's Diversity Counts report, 88% of credentialed librarians are white and 83% are female. Since diversity is a key action area for ALA, the CEO search should be conducted in a manner that allows for the greatest potential of qualified applicants.
- ALA consists of 56,000+ members and leaders who are experts in librarianship, many of which hold MLIS degrees. As long as the CEO has the passion for the organization's mission and a familiarity with libraries and library values, as well as a willingness to learn more, that is adequate because he or she could call on the expertise of the member leaders surrounding them, especially the ALA President.
 - It is a widely acknowledged association industry best practice that the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Chief Elected Officer (President) work in tandem and accept the responsibility of co-leading the organization and maximizing mission-driven impact.

- Industry best practice indicates the CEO position requires expertise in nonprofit and association leadership. Credentials such as the Certified Fundraising Executive (CFRE), a Certified Association Executive (CAE) or a certificate or degree in non-profit management are typical ways in which individuals demonstrate their qualifications in this area. These types of credentials should be sought after in ALA's next CEO.
- Talented, mission-driven nonprofit leaders will want to be part of our organization because they value libraries and the good work that we do. Requiring a MLIS could weaken the pool of qualified candidates by excluding this group of experts.
- YALSA's own Succession Plan does not require that the YALSA Executive Director have an MLIS degree, and encourages individuals to have a CAE.
- According to the Nonprofit Answer Guide, a Project of the Center for Nonprofit Management, effective nonprofit leaders have the following characteristics:
 - Have strong executive, operational and financial skills.
 - Are emotionally intelligent – trustworthy, persuasive, perceptive and flexible.
 - Infuse the organization at every level with a commitment to the big-picture vision.
 - Advocate for the mission at every turn.
 - Collaborate with people and organizations that can help to advance the cause.
 - Motivate people with passion, a proactive attitude and a commitment to set and reach goals.
 - Fundraise and encourage the board to do so too.
 - Clarify board and staff relationships and encourage open communications.
 - Embrace participation, build strong teams and encourage risk taking.
- ALA needs to attract the best CEO possible to lead positive change and solve some real challenges in our organization.
- YALSA is only as strong as ALA, so it's in our best interest to ensure that the Search Committee finds a strong and diverse pool of candidates.

Recommended Board Action

The Board directs the President to share their support with ALA's President that an MLIS be recommended, but not required, in the job requirement for the next ALA CEO, that the applicant be able to demonstrate familiarity with the current library landscape and its values, and that relevant nonprofit and/or association credentials (such as the Certified Association Executive) be strongly considered.

Additional Resources

- "ALA Executive Director Keith Michael Fiels Announces Retirement," <http://www.ala.org/news/press-releases/2016/09/ala-executive-director-ke...>
- "A Better Job Description for CEOs," <http://associationsnow.com/2013/10/a-better-job-description-for-ceos/>
- List of Nonprofit Executive Recruiters, <https://www.ceoupdate.com/association-and-nonprofit-executive-recruiters>
- Sample job descriptions:
 - For an association CEO
<http://www.imsearch.com/modules/1/DisplaySearchPDF.aspx?itemID=s5-759>

- For a nonprofit executive
[https://www.bridgespan.org/insights/library/hiring/nonprofit-job-description-toolkit/president-\(medium-organization\)](https://www.bridgespan.org/insights/library/hiring/nonprofit-job-description-toolkit/president-(medium-organization))
- YALSA Executive Director Succession Planning Policy and Procedures, <http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/SuccessionPla...>

Appendix

ALA Council Background and Resolution from Midwinter 2000

RESOLUTION ON REQUIRING PROFESSIONAL LIBRARIAN CREDENTIALS FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND DIRECTOR LEVEL MANAGEMENT POSITIONS IN THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, CD#44.

Councilor James 8.Casey moved the adoption of CD#44, "Resolution on Requiring Professional Librarian Credentials for Executive Director and Director Level Management Positions in the American Library Association", which reads: "That the American Library Association shall henceforth require the ALA-designated Master's degree in Library Science for all Executive Director and Director level positions as such time as these positions shall next become vacant; and, that these director positions shall include the Executive Director of ALA, Directors of ALA Offices: Chapter Relations Office, Library and Research Center, Office of Accreditation, Office for Information Technology Policy, Office for Intellectual Freedom, Office for Human Resources Development and Recruitment, Office for Literacy and Outreach Services, Public Information Office, Public Programs Office, Washington Office, Directors of the ALA Divisions: AASL, ACRL, ALCTS, ALSC, ALTA, ASCLA, LAMA, LITA, PLA, RUSA, YALSA."

In speaking to the motion, Paula Goedert, ALA legal counsel, said there are legal implications to imposing requirements on jobs. She said that the Civil Rights Act requires that all job requirements be job-related, especially if there is a class disproportionately represented within a field. As an example, she did not believe that an MLS was necessary for the director of the Public Information Office. She further stated said that ALA could be challenged to prove that a MLS was specifically required in order to do the job. Also, she said that if a minority candidate from a population disproportionately represented among MLS holders applied for the job and didn't get it, the candidate would have cause to complain.

After much debate, Council

VOTED, To amend CD#44, Exhibit 19, Resolution on Requiring Professional Librarian Credentials for Executive Director and Director Level Management Positions in the American Library Association, to read: "That the American Library Association shall henceforth require a Master's Degree from a program accredited by the ALA or a Master's Degree with a specialty in school library media from an educational unit accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) for the Executive Director of ALA."