

YALSA Board of Directors  
ALA Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C.  
June 20 – 25, 2019

**Topic:** Update on the Board Documents on Creating an Inclusive Environment and Member Engagement

**Background:** At ALA Annual Meeting 2018 in New Orleans, the Board passed two documents, #23 **Creating a More Inclusive Environment** and #29 **Improving the Member Engagement Experience**. Both of these documents directed the President and Executive Director to report on the progress of these items at ALA Midwinter Meeting 2019. Board document #2 that was voted on between ALA Midwinter 2019 and Annual 2019 directed the President and Executive Director to give an update on the status of the remaining items at 2019.

**Action Required:** Action

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### Overview

This documents updates the board on the items brought to the board at Annual 2018. Document #23 [Creating a More Inclusive Environment](#) focused on what YALSA needed to do to create welcoming and inclusive spaces for all its members. Document #29 [Improving the Member Engagement Experience](#) explored issues brought forth by members and what the Board could do to improve the member experience. The Board directed the President and Executive Director to provide and update on the progress made on these two documents. The updates are listed below.

### Document #23 – Creating a More Inclusive Environment

#### *Completed Items*

- Inform and instruct members to ensure inclusivity, compliance with policies, and empower them to report issues
  - Revisit and expand the training/on-boarding we provide all appointed group members to include content about what we mean by ethical behavior, building cultural competency skills, how to report concerns or problems, etc. Include in all trainings a detailed discussion about in the Ethical Behavior Policy and its components to ensure understanding. A cultural competency webinar was being recorded in May 2018 for use with on-boarding all new volunteers.
  - Expand the [Chair Manual](#) to include content about what we mean by ethical behavior, building cultural competency, creating a welcoming, inclusive environment, how to report concerns or problems, etc. An updated Manual was adopted by the Board of Directors on June 23, 2018.
  - Ensure that the [Committee FAQ](#) and list of [responsibilities for committee members](#) has info about how to report concerns/problems. This was completed in April 2018.

- Revisit appointment instructions that are sent to the President-Elect to emphasize the need for due diligence in thoroughly vetting potential chairs and committee members. This was completed in April 2018.
- Prior to conferences, send YALSA attendees a reminder about ALA's [Statement of Appropriate Conduct](#). Implementation began in June 2018 with e-blast to YALSA attendees.
- Create and distribute an exit survey for outgoing committee members and chairs to gauge their experience and identify areas for improvement. The survey is ready, and needs to be implemented. Survey has been created as is being implemented with Committees ending after Annual 2019.
- Ensure policies are in place and enforced, as a means to promote inclusivity and ensure ethical behavior.
  - Update and expand [YALSA's Ethical Behavior Policy for Volunteers](#). An updated version was adopted by the Board of Directors on June 23, 2018.
  - Develop language for use with all advisory board/committee/jury/taskforce policies and procedures to address the issue of in appropriate remarks during committee meetings. "Frame all discussions in an inclusive manner, and instruct group members to refrain from advancing personal beliefs, and using any discriminatory, racist, homophobic, sexist or similarly insensitive language." Adopted by the Board of Directors on June 23, 2018.
  - For the particular incident that was reported, talk with the YALSA staff person who helps with committee appointments to alert them of the member's behavior, because, as per the Ethical Behavior Policy "in egregious cases where the policy is flagrantly violated the incident may limit a member's capacity for securing future YALSA appointments." This conversation was had with the staff member in April 2018.
- Improve staff and member leader communication and knowledge around matters of equity, diversity, and inclusion, including, as it related to member participation
  - Develop an appropriate method for passing along pertinent information regarding members who have violated the Ethical Behavior Policy to incoming President-Elects, who makes volunteer appointments. A document was created in a shared Google Folder that the President, Past-President, President-Elect, and Executive Director have access to in order to share this information.
  - Flesh out a process for reporting and acting on member concerns and develop the guidelines to enforce outcomes. – Organization and Bylaws has created a process and a reporting form to be posted on YALSA's website
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### ***Ongoing Items***

- Ensure policies are in place and enforced, as a means to promote inclusivity and ensure ethical behavior.
  - At advisory board/committee/jury/ taskforce meetings strive to have the board or staff liaison sit in on at least part of the meeting to gauge productivity and

compliance with ethical behavior. – This should be encouraged by the President and the Executive Director

- Improve staff and member leader communication and knowledge around matters of equity, diversity, and inclusion, including, as it related to member participation
  - Regularly attend and participate in relevant trainings to continue to build cultural competence knowledge and skills (e.g., all staff participated in an online training in November 2017 to increase awareness as to what constitutes harassment). – This should be encouraged by the President and the Executive Director

## **Document #29 – Improving the Member Engagement Experience**

### ***Completed Items***

- Adding information to the volunteer form, including a question to identify individuals who tried but didn't get appointed in recent appointment rounds

### ***Ongoing Items***

- Providing more robust training to chairs and members, but especially chairs to help chairs better – Assign to President and Executive Director
  - Engage with group members and tap into their talents
  - Communicate with group members
  - Show appreciation for members' contributions to the group
- Putting processes in place with the President-Elect, who makes the appointments, and the Membership Manager, who helps the President-Elect, to ensure that everyone who fills out a volunteer form receives at least a confirmation message and a follow up message – Assign to Division and Membership Promotion
- Putting processes in place so that there isn't the 'brain drain' each year when the appointments process is handed over from one President-Elect to the next – Assign to Past-President, President and President-Elect create a manual
- Increasing and improving communication to members about the appointments process as well as other volunteer opportunities, including: - Work with Anna and Letitia
  - more updates in the weekly eNews
  - expanding the committee FAQ online
  - at in-person events and exhibit booths
  - revisiting the messaging when we put out a call for volunteers and when we notify members about the status of their application
- Continuing to work with ALA on the Volunteer Match Module – Unable to accomplish until status of ALA Connect
- Ensuring that every out-going chair sends messages of appreciation to their group members and extend an offer to send a letter to their supervisor acknowledging their contributions – President reminds liaisons to remind chairs

### **Fiscal Implications**

Minimal staff and volunteer time.

### **Evaluation and Measuring Impact**

If the items in this document work, feedback from members will reflect a more inclusive environment with more positive and rewarding member engagement.

The President and Executive Director should also present an update about these initiatives at the Midwinter 2020.

### **Alignment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Goals**

The initiatives in this document are intended to make YALSA more inclusive and create more opportunities for positive and rewarding member engagement.

### **Recommended Board Action**

The Board moves to direct Division and Membership Promotion to propose a process to notify all members about the status of their application for appointment.

The Board moves to direct the President, Past-President, and President-Elect to create a manual to help the new President-Elect better understand the appointments process and the ways to support equity, diversity, and inclusion through the process.

The Board moves to direct the President and Executive Director to evaluate and revise the training for committee, taskforce, and jury chairs and members to ensure it emphasizes facilitating equity and inclusivity in the group; engaging with group members and tapping into their talents; communicating with group members; and showing appreciation for members' contributions to the group.

The Board moves to direct the President and Executive Director to include items that should be encouraged by the President in the President's monthly activities list.

### **Additional Resources**

Update on the Board Documents on Creating an Inclusive Environment and Member Engagement #2:

[http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/BoardDoc2\\_Updates%20Inclusivity%20and%20Engagement.pdf](http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/BoardDoc2_Updates%20Inclusivity%20and%20Engagement.pdf)

Creating a More Inclusive Environment #23:

<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/InclusiveEnvironment18.pdf>

Improving the Member Engagement Experience #29:

<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/ImprovingMbrExperience18.rtf.pdf>