

**YALSA Board of Directors
Virtual Winter Board Meeting
January 15, 2022**

Topic: CALA/YALSA Chinese American Reading Lists Proposed Criteria

Background: In order to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA), celebratory youth reading lists featuring Chinese American writers/characters will be created by CALA, YALSA, and ALSC. CALA and YALSA will work jointly to create a taskforce that will spearhead the creation of the celebratory youth reading lists in partnership with ALSC's Quicklists Consulting Committee.

The CALA/YALSA Chinese American Readings Lists will be determined by the proposed criteria (including eligibility, access, and rubric) below. Additionally, the taskforce will produce a digital PDF of the Lists' and accompany its release with promotional author talks. Crystal Chen, Melody Leung, and Susannah Goldstein have presented the information below for the Board's consideration.

Action Required: Action

Overview:

A reading list of recommended titles will be created by the CALA/YALSA taskforce, in conjunction with the ALSC Quicklists Consulting Committee, for the following three age groups: PreK-3rd Grade, Middle Grade (4th-7th), and Young Adults. These lists will be presented as part of CALA's 50th Anniversary Celebration in March 2023 and will contain selected titles published between January 2020 - December 2022 along with a section for influential or noteworthy books. These reading lists are intended to be used by youths 0-19 years old along with their parents/guardians and the adults who work with them.

Proposed Timeline:

- October 2021 - Present reading list criteria recommendations to YALSA and CALA Board for review and feedback.
- November 2021 - Taskforce will make changes as necessary based on Board feedback.
- December 2021 - All divisions vote for final approval.
- January 1, 2022 - September 1, 2022: The taskforce will work with the ALSC Quicklists Consulting Committee to select eligible books. Chairs or (an appointed taskforce member) will request any titles from publishers that taskforce members are having difficulty accessing.
- September 1, 2022 - September 30, 2022: Reading list selections will be finalized.
- November 1, 2022 - November 30, 2022: Reading list annotations will be finalized.

- October 1, 2022 - February 28, 2022: Work on promotional materials and author talks.
- January 27-31, 2023: Lists will be released during ALA LibLearnX to coincide with the Youth Media Awards.
- March 2023 - June 2023: Begin promotional activities in March 2023 to help kick off the celebration of CALA's 50th Anniversary. Those activities may extend into April-June 2023 depending on scheduling.

Taskforce Members:

- Crystal Chen (chair), Young Adult Librarian, The New York Public Library, NY, NY
- Melody Leung (chair), Youth Services Librarian, Everett Public Library, Everett, WA
- Gregory Lum, Library Director, Jesuit High School Clark Library, Portland, Oregon.
- Susen Shi, Young Adult Librarian, The New York Public Library, NY, NY
- Christy Lau, Children's Librarian, The New York Public Library, NY, NY
- Jen Woo, Adult Services Librarian, San Francisco Public Library, San Francisco, CA
- Cathy Andronik, Norwalk Public Library, Norwalk, Ohio
- Susannah Goldstein, YALSA Board Liaison

Reading Lists Eligibility Criteria:

- Eligible titles will be created by authors and/or artists (at least one) that self-identify as Chinese or are of Chinese heritage/descent that are based in the Americas (North America). It is preferred that at least one of the authors is of Chinese descent. Authors of the Chinese diaspora based outside of North America may be considered on a case-by-case basis due to their relevance.
- For realistic fiction and historical fiction, the primary protagonist should be of Chinese descent. Other genres will be determined based on the selection criteria rubric.
- Eligible titles will be published from January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2022. Titles published before January 1, 2020, will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may be included due to their historical influence, relevance, and importance to Chinese American literature.
- The lists will focus on primarily print titles that are accessible to libraries or available for purchase.
- Eligible titles must be in English or translated into English.

Reading List Rubric:

Key Criteria:

1. Authenticity: The book must be authentic to the Chinese culture and time period described. It must also reflect the Chinese experience and be free of harmful stereotypes.
2. Accuracy: The book must not misrepresent Chinese / Chinese diasporic peoples or the Chinese / Chinese diasporic experiences. If Mandarin, Cantonese, or another dialect is used, it must be accurately reflected.

Additional Criteria:

If authenticity and accuracy criteria are met, we will then consider these additional aspects:

- The writing and/or art is engaging to the intended audience.
- The book has youth appeal and is accessible to the intended audience.
- There is an element of creativity or originality in how the topic or story is presented.
- The characters are multi-dimensional and show growth or development.
- For graphic novels or picture books, the dialogue is as strong as the images. The story flows well through equal integration of text and art.
- BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ characters and characters with disabilities are represented accurately and are included in a meaningful way in the work.

Promotion:

- After the lists' release, we plan to present three author talks (either in-person, virtual, or hybrid), ideally one for each age category. We would like to request \$2000, split between YALSA and CALA, for 3 webinars (\$500 in author payment per webinar) and for artwork for digital PDFs (\$500 for artist or artwork licensing).
 - The taskforce members will develop outreach to local Chinese or Chinatown communities (New York, San Francisco, Seattle) to encourage teen and youth attendance.
 - We hope to also develop these author talks so that there is teen participation from the Chinese community, either through teen moderation or teen Q&A's with taskforce facilitation.
 - The taskforce will also find an artist, either from the final reading lists or within local communities, to create artwork for digital PDFs of the lists.
- Additional potential avenues for promotion:
 - Provide books to youth community centers.
 - Partnering with Chinese/Chinese American independent bookstores.
 - Print promo postcards for regional and national conferences.

Tasks already completed or in progress include:

- Discussion and determination of reading list title, audience, goals, book access, rubric, and eligibility criteria.
- Exploration and discussion of list promotion in printable PDF and author talks.

Questions to explore before taking next steps:

- Does the proposed criteria suit the intended audience?
- Does the proposed promotional strategy directly market to the intended audience?
- How does the joint effort between CALA and YALSA provide financial and structural support to the taskforce?
- Will there be seal sales for this booklist? If so, will the profits go to CALA exclusively?

Possible Next Steps:

- Find opportunities to promote the collaborative list and incorporate it into existing advocacy.
- Chairs contact publishers to introduce the taskforce and to request advanced reader copies of new and upcoming 2022 titles.
- Get feedback and approval from the CALA Executive Board. Liaise with ALSC Quicklists Consulting Committee once proposed criteria are approved by both CALA and YALSA.
- Develop a list of potential titles for consideration in consultation with ALSC Quicklists Consulting Committee.
- Incorporate the final CALA/YALSA/ALSC list into selection list promotion in January and February 2023.
- YALSA creates a website page to recognize taskforce members once appointed (and to direct publishers too if necessary). The page will also host the completed list and any accompanying materials.

Fiscal Implications:

- Staff time, coordination, and resources to support the taskforce in their work
- Request for \$2000 in funding for author visits and artwork. Suggested split between CALA and YALSA of \$1000 each.

Measuring Success/Impact:

- Tracking the statistics and usage of the final booklist(s) on the YALSA website or in any YALSA social media promotion, as well as social media discussion surrounding the list in general.
- Tracking participation statistics if any additional media like webinars or panels are developed.
- Anecdotal information from members about this work in relation to YALSA's Core Professional Values.
- Anecdotal information about how this list supports library workers, educators, and caregivers.

Existing YALSA resources:

- [YALSA EDI Plan](#) and specifically the following goals:
 - 2. Recruit, retain, and develop a more diverse membership and cadre of volunteers at all levels in the organization
 - 4. Ensure that YALSA members know how to develop inclusive and equitable library spaces, services and programs
 - 5. Create and maintain formal and informal partnerships with other organizations around a shared commitment to redressing institutional inequities and systemic power asymmetries
- [YALSA Core Professional Values for the Teen Services Profession](#)

Existing ALA resources:

- ALA's statement on [Combating Xenophobia and Fake News in light of COVID-19](#)

- [ALA's Policy Manual - Diversity](#)

Other Resources:

- [BCALA and ALSC Social Justice Reading List](#) that led to [Netflix's Bookmarks: Celebrating Black Voices collaboration](#)
- [AILA's Reading Native 2021](#)
- [AILA American Indian Youth Literature Award Criteria](#)

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Impact:

By highlighting Chinese American creators and books, this joint taskforce aligns with [YALSA's commitment to EDI](#), ensuring that the organization is an inclusive environment that welcomes different perspectives and promotes underrepresented voices. This taskforce would allow more voices to be involved and help contribute to a more inclusive organization as well as more inclusive youth library collections. This would also hopefully encourage future collaborations with CALA and the National Associations of Librarians of Color (NALCo) more broadly. Aligned with ALA's statement on [Combating Xenophobia and Fake News in light of COVID-19](#) and [ALA's Policy Manual](#), these booklist(s) will also help empower youth that may have faced sinophobia/xenophobia due to the pandemic and also provide a pathway for library workers to use these lists to make positive change in impacted communities.

Charge:

To determine a booklist to highlight and promote Chinese American creators and characters to commemorate the 50th anniversary of CALA. To select titles for the list in conjunction with ALSC (to begin work in February 2022). To provide recommendations to the board for review. To make changes as necessary depending on feedback from the YALSA Board.