

**YALSA Board of Directors
2021 Annual Conference, Virtual
June 26, 2021**

Topic: Advocacy Resources Community Listening Taskforce Report

Action: None

Name of Chair

Kerry Townsend, chair
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Task Force

YALSA Advocacy Resources: Community Listening Task Force
Charge:

<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/YALSA%20Advocacy%20Resources%20Community%20Listening%20Task%20Force%20Item%20%236.pdf>

Committee members and email addresses

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How many times did your group meet this reporting period?

Our group began meeting in January 2021. We met as a group 3 times and conducted 4 focus groups.

Committee agendas:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/13RKXhzCyEzS_giSIIxbNkeiMkYX2wOINKkmECwpRbN8/edit

Listening session interview questions:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XgIB6NYW1twUu08LKvbWq7qYHU7TQUA5n-B-Ys6o0ho/edit>

Please summarize work accomplished, decisions made and follow-up actions determined during this reporting period.

How do you define advocacy?

Generally, participants understood advocacy to be both an internal and external process enacted by varied stakeholders. All listening session participants explained the need to tell the “story” of the library as an advocacy tool. Advocacy, to them, meant educating others about the power of libraries, public and school libraries, to support teens.

How have you advocated as a librarian?

The best advocacy is successful teaching and learning, according to participants. Positive experiences are shared broadly by teachers, community members, and teens. Developing positive relationships are essential to this advocacy. Technology and other community groups support the advocacy work of librarians.

How have others advocated for you?

Administration, in public and school libraries, advocated for participants. In general, the administration publicly promoted and supported the work of YALSA members: teacher collaboration, makerspaces and other innovative programming.

How do you listen to and work with teens?

Listening to teens, first and foremost, is essential to advocating for them, according to participants. This can help advocates predict future needs and proactively advocate for them. Participants suggested the following ideas for working with teens: model the value of libraries for teens, create apprenticeship programs, let teens design programs, etc.

What support do you need?

According to participants, it will be challenging to standardize advocacy needs. All participants voiced the need for a database of effective programming ideas and success stories as a means for supporting YALSA members. These resources should be open-ended and include opportunities for teen voice to be included in implementation. Additionally, YALSA’s collaboration with other national organizations leading to increased financial support for youth programming is a need. In general, participants believed effective programs are a powerful advocacy tool.

How can YALSA support teens advocating for issues?

Collaboration with national teen organizations to provide resources and ideas for helping teens enact their own ideas would lead to powerful support. Resources tailored to the specific developmental needs of teens would support the work of youth librarians working with teens.

The more, varied ideas, the better. A promotional campaign reminding librarians about the YALSA resources would also be helpful.

Sample advocacy tools suggested:

- Teen summer reading leaders (Zoom allowed this to continue this year — some resources should be built using this tool going forward)
- Include teens in the grant writing process
- Apprenticeship programs can be powerful tools

A full explanation can be found here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1v7RfP7Q9MxS_2RGg7tpXV8O2e2BriS65YrUakAml-AA/edit?usp=sharing

Which area of YALSA Strategic Action does the work described align?

Advocacy; Professional growth

Date Created

June 10, 2021

Staff Liaisons

Letitia Smith