

YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
February Meeting via Conference Call
February 29, 2008

Topic: Periodicals Survey Results

Background: YALSA’s Editorial Advisory Board conducted an online member survey to get feedback about YALSA’s periodicals. The survey was available for four weeks in Sept. – Oct. and 108 complete responses were received. Highlights from the survey are provided below. Complete survey results can be viewed at <http://tinyurl.com/2zuqt8>. The Board may want to discuss how the findings can provide direction to YALSA in the coming two to three years.

Action Required: Discussion

Frequency of publications:

The majority of respondents felt that both publications should be offered quarterly

Format:

The vast majority of respondents indicated they prefer to receive information via both print and the web

Content:

The kinds of information that respondents indicated were most valuable were:

- Best practices (86%)
- Bibliographies & collection tools (74%)
- Research (59%)

90% of respondents indicated that they would regularly read a periodical that focused on “library relevant teen research.”

Design:

54% of respondents rated YALS’ design as above average or excellent, 43% rated it as average and 4% rated it as below average.

37% of respondents rated YAttitudes’ design as above average or excellent, 51% rated it as average and 12% rated it as below average.

YALS:

57% of respondents indicated that an annual award recognizing the best article in YALS would be a valuable way of encouraging writing or research in the profession

The most read parts of YALS are the: Teen Perspective, Best Practices and Hot Spot (i.e. featured topic or theme).

The least read parts of YALS are the: School Library Perspective, From the President and the View from ALA.

YAttitudes:

The vast majority of respondents indicated they would be more likely to read *YAttitudes* when it's delivered as full text in an email message

The majority of respondents indicated that they spent 5-15 minutes reading *YAttitudes*

Recommendations from the Editorial Advisory Board:

The EAB has assessed the results of the YALSA periodicals survey and noted valuable information that will guide the future of the journal and the newsletter. The Chair of EAB will discuss future topics for each gleaned from the survey with the editors at Midwinter (please note that those are not addressed in this report). The EAB also considered the YALSA student survey results in order to make the following observations and recommendations to the board.

YAttitudes

Accessibility was a problem cited by many who participated in the survey. We are confident that by having the full content of it delivered via email, more people will read it and that concern will be rectified. Navigability was also a concern but with the new email format, links to information are easily just a click away.

An interesting comment came from someone surveyed. The person stated that YALSA has so many online publication venues such as the wiki, blog, podcast, website, MySpace, flickr, etc. that *YAttitudes* may no longer be necessary. This is the downside of being so proactive with technology and using it to help disseminate valuable information to our members! While we don't agree that *YAttitudes* should be disbanded, it important to note that with so many "connections", the information found in this newsletter should not duplicate information found elsewhere. This could be why the survey results indicate that many readers skim much of the two publications. Rather than appearing to be redundant, information found in both *YAttitudes* and *YALS* should build upon, expand, or compliment information found in the other YALSA electronic venues. Also, since YALSA has so many venues for information, the frequency of the publications is adequate.

It was interesting to note that half of the respondents spend only 5-15 minutes or less reading something that is published on a quarterly basis. It stands to wonder if the access/design was the issue or if the content/layout does not grab the reader's interest. Eighty-one percent of the respondents stated that they use the information for work, yet not much time is spent reading it. The current content of *YAttitudes* seems to fit into what people have suggested. The features that were recommended by people are much of what is currently offered. Those surveyed would like to see best practices, booklists, and member profiles, which are already covered. This can be seen as a positive because we are meeting our members' needs, but it also stands to wonder why the members don't recognize what we are offering. Unfortunately "skimming" much of the information found on the internet has become normal behavior as more and more information is found in this manner. This is not necessarily just an issue with YALSA members and its publications.

YALS

The biggest issue with *YALS* is its design or lack of it. We recommend a design overhaul to make it more appealing and better able to market the benefits of YALSA to our

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members. In addition, many of the suggestions put forth in the YALSA student survey fall under the mission of YALS. Making this journal more attractive and easily read could add appeal to those student members who we hope to retain after their graduation.

We also see a need for more research in the field, but it has been noted that the research