

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting  
ALA Midwinter Meeting, Philadelphia  
January 11-16, 2008**

**Topic:** Request for Board Action: Printz Policy Change

**Background:** YALSA’s Current Printz Committee Chair submitted the following Request for Board Action to the YALSA Office in December 2007.

**Action Required:** Action

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**Request:**

We are requesting a revision of the Policies and Procedures and the Chairman’s handbook of the Michael L. Printz Award to clarify the language and better reflect the original intent of the task force. The current language in the Criteria section is: “The book should be self-contained, not dependent on other media for its meaning or pleasure. The book should not be considered in terms of other works by the author but as complete in itself.”

After discussion with Task Force chairman, Michael Cart, we are proposing that this section be deleted.

**Rationale:**

Printz committees have struggled with the language in this section, often interpreting it as meaning that sequels should not be considered by the committee or that the book is required to stand alone. As Printz committee chairs, we sought to understand the original intent of the Task Force and asked Michael Cart for clarification. He stated that the original intent was not to define literary merit too strictly or to confine the committee by too many limitations. The sentence, “The book should be self-contained, not dependent on other media for its meaning or pleasure,” was modeled on the Newbery handbook which reads, “The book should not be dependent on other media (i.e. sound or film equipment for its enjoyment.” The Task Force decided to modify the phrase to avoid technological obsolescence and it was never meant to address the issue of sequels. Since technology continues to evolve rapidly as does publishing, we suggest eliminating this sentence.

The second sentence in the section, “The book should not be considered in terms of other works by the author but as complete in itself,” was also not intended to address sequels but rather that the book should be considered on its individual merit and not in the context of other books in an established author’s work.

We feel eliminating this section will reduce future confusion and allow the committee to focus on the elements of literary excellence which was the original intent of the Task Force.

**Areas of the strategic plan this proposal supports:**

Advocacy  
Marketing

**How Advances YALSA's Mission:**

Clarifying the language of the Policies and Procedures will allow future committees to work more efficiently and consistently on its charge and continue to expand awareness of outstanding literature for young adults.