

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

Topic: Request for Board Action: Teens' Top Ten Merge with CBC

Background: In September 2007, the Children's Book Council (CBC) contacted the YALSA Office with the following request. As per instructions from Paula-Brehm Heeger, the CBC was informed that due to time constraints, this was not possible for 2008, but that the Board would consider the request for the 2009 Children's Book Week.

Action Required: Action

Request:

The CBC and the CBC Foundation are in the process of taking our IRA-CBC **Children's Choices** program to the next level. We will take the top 5 vote getters in each age range/category and open them up to a web-based voting vehicle so that children across the country can weigh in and choose their favorites. The top vote getter in each category will receive an award at the CBC Annual Benefit Gala, the first of which will be held in May 2008, during the new and improved Children's Book Week. The program will be called **Top Choice Awards by Kids and Teens**.

However, the Children's Choices program is for grades K-6 and we really want to include a YA/teen component. We ask YALSA to join their Teens' Top Ten books program with the new program. We would need to adjust the timing of the project, as teens would need to be reading 2007 titles for this program and we'd need their finalists by the end of January 2008. Perhaps YALSA could continue with the 2006 titles as is and bring in another set of advisory groups to read 2007 titles this fall?

Additional Information from CBC:

The **Top Choice Awards by Kids and Teens** program will aim to reinforce and build upon the goals of the underlying both Children's Choices program and the Teens' Top Ten books project. Most notably, this program will provide young readers with an opportunity to voice their opinions about the books being written for them.

Equally importantly, we will undertake to promote this program heavily so that we reach families in their homes and raise awareness of IRA and CBC resources among parents. In the course of promoting this program, we will be both directly and indirectly promoting the Children's Choices list and the Teens' Top Ten books list. Also, this program will raise awareness of the both lists in time for summer reading, which is an important benefit of moving Children's Book Week to May.

Management of and publicity for the voting and awards process will be CBC and CBC Foundation endeavors, as the Children's Book Week gala will be a CBC and CBC Foundation-

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sponsored event. We are seeking corporate sponsorship to underwrite the cost of the awards program, the gala and other events and programs planned for Children's Book Week. This gala and the awards program give us an opportunity to bring many of our partners together so that we can stand unified in our promotion of literacy and love of reading.

We have retained a publicity firm, Goodman International Media, in recognition of the fact that the success and broad reach of the project will depend to a large extent on the manner in which it is promoted. Our publicist will assist us in promoting the awards program to publishers as well as to booksellers and librarians who will be encouraged to make certain they have the books in contention in stock and, finally, to children, their parents and their teachers, to let them know that this is their opportunity to speak up and let publishers know what kinds of books they like to read. We are in discussions with Barnes & Noble and we have received an indication that they are prepared to display the finalists in order to raise the profile of the program. In addition, we are in discussion with Scholastic, Inc., which is exploring ways to promote the finalists at Scholastic Book Fairs.