

To: ALSC Executive Committee

From: Aimee Strittmatter, ALSC Executive Director

RE: Clarification language around frequency of service on award committees, notable books, and Wilder.

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The frequency of service on award committees is set and defined by the ALSC bylaws. In Article VIII: Committees, Sec. f) No individual may serve on either Batchelder Award, Caldecott Award, Geisel Award, Newbery Award, Sibert Award, Wilder Award or Notable Children's Books Committees more often than once every four years. The four year period shall begin from the last year of the term of service regardless of length of term. This guideline will apply to Batchelder Award, Caldecott Award, Geisel Award, Newbery Award, Sibert Award, Wilder Award or Notable Children's Books Committees only. This guideline will not apply to the selection of nominees for Chair. This guideline will not apply to other ALSC committees.

Over one-quarter of ALSC's total members voted in the 2009 election (1,015) with 92.3% in favor of adopting the current language (noted above) which expanded to include all ALSC-only administered awards and the Notables book committee. The rationale provided to members in advance of the vote was, "The proliferation of awards in recent years affords ALSC the enviable position of providing more opportunities to attract, develop, and encourage members to become part of some of our most public work. This motion speaks to the need to involve as many members as possible in award committees and to honor all awards equally by creating a standard term of service. The more opportunities there are to include more members to take an active part, the more appealing our organization becomes."

While it is most desirable to afford as many opportunities to as many members, in practice, ALSC leadership has found the parameters of this to be problematic in cases where there is a need to make a mid-year replacement due to a member withdrawing from the committee due to personal reasons or a conflict of interest. The appointment process is not a nimble one. There are many considerations taken into account in order to balance the committee's makeup. Some, but not all of these include expertise, access to materials, diversity in all aspects (ethnicity, gender, age, type of profession, geographical location, etc.), and commitment to ALSC and its mission. Research and eligibility vetting take time. Including members who have served in the last two or three year period expands the pool of experienced alternates.

Another aspect to consider is the support and engagement of members willing to step up and fill a need. A mid-year replacement has a greater challenge of entering a cohort that has already established a rapport. The replacement member must wait another four years before they are eligible to server a full term again which can feel punitive. It may be desirable to have someone who has recently concluded committee service and has had the full experience. Does the current practice short-change a person and deter future engagement?

Many association governance articles affirm that the bylaws should not be the organization's operational manual. Details should be designated in policies or guidelines:

<https://www.venable.com/SnapshotFiles/a9acafa5-11aa-4faf-ad88-e49127f6cef2/Subscriber.snapshot?clid=c2d1036d-648d-4bf6-9ef1-4e6f4e391844>

It is suggested that the Board approve an operational practice, disclosed in the Policy for Service on Award Committees, Policy for Service on Notable Committees, and Policy for Service on the Wilder Committee, that allows for flexibility and latitude in making mid-year appointments. Such language could be, "Additionally, in the event that an emergency, mid-year replacement appointment must be made, the four-year rule may be suspended, providing the appointing officer the necessary flexibility and a greater pool of experienced candidates.