TO: PLA Board of Directors
RE: Board Liaisons to Committees and Advisories
DATE: June 17, 2024
SUBMITTED: Mary Hirsh, PLA Deputy Director

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT: Discussion, Motion

Draft Motion: The PLA Board approves in concept assigning board liaisons to selected PLA committees and advisories and tasks PLA staff with developing a more detailed implementation plan.

Over the last governance year, the PLA board has continued discussions on how best to structure and align committee work. Beginning on July 1, 2024, with the new governance year, five committees will transition to advisory groups. These groups will support PLA projects and revenue-generating activities directly. The remaining committees will continue to support strategic priorities, core governance activities, and conference programming.

There are more opportunities to work more closely aligning the work of committees and advisories to the board’s priorities. One approach is to pilot board liaisons to the following committees and advisories for governance year 2024-2025. Please note that not all committees require liaisons, either because Board members already serve as committee members (Budget and Finance, Nominating) or because the committee charge is so specific (Conference program Committees) as to not require additional guidance.

- Advocacy and Strategic Partnerships Committee
- Committee on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Social Justice
- Leadership Development Committee
- Digital Literacy Advisory Group
- Family Engagement Advisory Group
- Measurement, Evaluation and Assessment Advisory Group
- Public Libraries Advisory Group
- Technology Advisory Group

Liaisons would mirror the relationship the PLA board has with the ALA Executive board: an assigned and consistent liaison would share information and bring important updates through two-way communications. Other divisions including CORE, ALSC and ACRL use board members as committee liaisons. Common roles for board liaisons include:

- Communicates the board of directors’ goals to the committee chair (i.e., what the board wants the committee to accomplish) at the first committee meeting.
- Communicates committee action plan from/to the board of directors.
- Communicates to the board of directors through liaison reports as requested.
- Communicates any action requests or approvals needed to the board of directors via board reports.
PLA proposes the following process for appointing liaisons:

- Executive committee members (presidents, fiscal officer) will not take on additional committee liaison responsibilities.
- President makes the appointments at the start of the new committee year post-Conference and in advance of the committee chairs orientation in late July.
- Board members may indicate committees of interest, with the understanding that the president appoints.

Each committee or advisory has an assigned staff liaison. These roles will not change with the addition of board liaisons. Staff will be responsible for making the initial contact between the board liaison and the committee or advisory chair(s). Staff will not manage the relationship beyond this.

Committee and advisory chair orientation will take place in late July, with full committees and advisories expected to meet in early September. With board input, PLA staff will work to refine the liaison roles and responsibilities over the summer.

As PLA staff work to build out a more robust description, process, and approach, we welcome the board’s input. Are there additional roles and responsibilities to be articulated? Creating liaison relationships will bring value to the committees and advisories. How is the relationship best structured to bring value back to the board?

Motion: The PLA Board approves in concept assigning board liaisons to selected PLA committees and advisories and tasks PLA staff with developing a more detailed implementation plan.