

ALA Committee/Taskforce Report Form to Council

CD 34
2025-2026

TO: ALA Council

DATE: December 2025

RE: *(select one)*

ACTION REQUESTED

INFORMATION

REPORT

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:

Action requested from Councilors is to cast their vote to:

- **Motion 1:** Recommends that the ALA Council direct the ALA Bylaws Committee, the ALA Committee on Organization, and the ALA Policy Monitoring Committee to take the necessary actions to develop and present this board eligibility change* for Council approval no later than June 2026.
 - ***Eligibility:** ALA Executive Board Eligibility shall be limited to members who served on ALA Council, ALA Division, or ALA Round Table leadership within the past five (5) years of election.

- **Motion 2:** Recommends to the ALA Council to direct the ALA Bylaws Committee, the ALA Committee on Organization, and the ALA Policy Monitoring Committee to advance the Committee Recommendations* as outlined in EBD 10.4.
 - ***Committee Recommendations:**
 1. Discontinue the Committee on Committees and distribute its work to the Presidential Advisory Committee or the ALA Nominating Committee
 - a. Amend the charge of the ALA Nominating Committee to include responsibility for nominating candidates to serve as members of the ALA Executive Board. Further, move to remove the existing restriction that limits ALA members to serving only one term on the Nominating Committee, thereby allowing members to be considered for future service.
 - b. Move the responsibility for advising the President-elect on committee appointments from the Committee on Committees to their Presidential Advisory Committee.

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ACTION REQUESTED BY: 2025-2026 ALA Executive Board

STAFF LIAISON CONTACT: Sheryl Reyes, ALA Governance Director

BACKGROUND:

At the 2025 ALA LibLearnX Conference, ALA Board Election Ad-Hoc Committee was created by the ALA Council via the following resolution: [2024-2025 ALA CD#49](#), charging the Executive Board to form “*an Ad-Hoc Committee to explore the possibility of those standing for election to the Executive Board not be limited to Council members. The Ad-Hoc Committee will report to the Executive Board with recommendations by October 2025.*”

The Ad-Hoc Committee was formed and consisted of the following members:

1. Eboni Henry, School Library Media Specialist at District of Columbia Public Schools; Councilor-At-Large
2. April Hernandez, Director of Latah County Library District, ID; Councilor-At-Large
3. Leah Richardson, Director of Archives & Special Collections, George Washington University; Councilor-At-Large
4. Je Salvador, Research & Instruction Librarian, University of Washington Bothell & Cascadia Campus Library
5. Sarah Schroeder, Director of Library Development, South Carolina State Library; South Carolina Chapter Councilor
6. Nick Tepe, Director, Athens County Public Libraries; Ohio Chapter Councilor
7. Joseph Thompson, Director of Public Services, Carroll County Public Library; Maryland Chapter Councilor; Ad-hoc Committee Chair

During the ALA Executive Board Meeting on October 2, 2025, Joe Thompson, Chair presented the [committee’s final recommendations, outlined in EBD 10.4](#) (see Appendix).

After deliberation, the ALA Executive Board voted in the affirmative of the following motions, as amended:

- **Motion 1:** ALA Executive Board accepts this report as follow-up to the "Resolution on Elections to Executive Board" (2024-2025 ALA CD#49; 2025 ALA LLX Meeting) and recommends to the ALA Council to take appropriate action to advance the following Recommendations: Option A *as amended* for Eligibility to include ALA Division and Round Table Leadership; and Option A for Elections by directing the ALA Bylaws Committee, the ALA Committee on Organization, and the ALA Policy Monitoring Committee to take the necessary steps to propose and present these recommendations for Council approval by December 2025.
- **Motion 2:** The ALA Executive Board recommends to the ALA Council to direct the ALA Bylaws Committee, the ALA Committee on Organization, and the ALA Policy Monitoring

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Committee to advance the Committee Recommendations* as outlined in EBD 10.4 and present a proposal to the ALA Council by December 2025.

Thus, the ALA Executive Board is bringing the following recommendations to Council for deliberation and vote. The recommendations include:

1. Eligibility for nomination to Executive Board:

Current	Proposed
Current ALA Councilors	Members who served on ALA Council, ALA Division, or ALA Round Table leadership within the past five (5) years.

2. Election of Executive Board Members – *remains unchanged*

Current	Proposed
Current ALA Councilors	Current ALA Councilors

3. Discontinuance ALA Committee on Committees; transfer responsibility to the following committees:

Current	Proposed
The four elected members of the Committee on Committees shall serve as additional ex-officio, voting members of the Committee on Appointments to advise on committee appointments.	The ALA Presidential Advisory Committee shall serve as additional ex-officio, voting members of the Committee on Appointments to advise on committee appointments.
The Committee on Committees shall nominate annually from among the current members of the Council candidates for nomination to the Executive Board to serve three-year terms.	The ALA Nominating Committee shall nominate annually from among the membership who served on ALA Council, ALA Division, or ALA Round Table leadership within the past five (5) years for nomination to the Executive Board to serve three-year terms.

TO: ALA Executive Board

SUBJECT: ALA Board Election Ad-Hoc Committee Final Report

BOARD REQUEST: Board Action

ACTION REQUESTED BY: ALA Board Election Ad-Hoc Committee

CONTACT PERSON: Joseph Thompson, ALA Board Election Ad-Hoc Committee Chair

STAFF LIAISON CONTACT: Sheryl Reyes, Director of ALA Governance Office

DRAFT MOTION:

Motion 1: ALA Executive Board accepts this report as follow-up to the “Resolution on Elections to Executive Board” ([2024-2025 ALA CD#49](#); [2025 ALA LLX Meeting](#)) and take appropriate action to advance Recommendation Option A for both Eligibility and Election by directing the ALA Bylaws Committee, the ALA Committee on Organization, and the ALA Policy Monitoring Committee to take the necessary steps to propose and present Option A for Council approval by December 2025.

Motion 2: The ALA Executive Board directs the ALA Bylaws Committee, the ALA Committee on Organization, and the ALA Policy Monitoring Committee to advance the Committee Recommendations as outlined in EBD 10.4 and present a proposal to the ALA Council by December 2025.

DATE: September 26, 2025

BACKGROUND: At the 2025 ALA LibLearnX Conference, ALA Board Election Ad-Hoc Committee was created by resolution ([2024-2025 ALA CD#49](#)), charging the Executive Board to form “an

Ad-Hoc Committee to explore the possibility of those standing for election to the Executive Board not be limited to Council members. The Ad-Hoc Committee will report to the Executive Board with recommendations by October 2025.”

ALA Board Election Ad-Hoc Committee was formed in March/April 2025 and is comprised of the following members:

1. Eboni Henry, School Library Media Specialist at District of Columbia Public Schools; Councilor-At-Large
2. April Hernandez, Director of Latah County Library District, ID; Councilor-At-Large
3. Leah Richardson, Director of Archives & Special Collections, George Washington University; Councilor-At-Large
4. Je Salvador, Research & Instruction Librarian, University of Washington Bothell & Cascadia Campus Library
5. Sarah Schroeder, Director of Library Development, South Carolina State Library; South Carolina Chapter Councilor
6. Nick Tepe, Director, Athens County Public Libraries; Ohio Chapter Councilor
7. Joseph Thompson, Director of Public Services, Carroll County Public Library; Maryland Chapter Councilor; Ad-hoc Committee Chair

ALA Board Election Ad-Hoc Committee has met on the following dates:

- April 22, 2025
- May 28, 2025
- June 30, 2025 [Note: This meeting took place during ALA Annual Conference and two committee members were unable to attend.]
- July 30, 2025
- August 26, 2025
- September 5, 2025
- September 23, 2025

The committee chair wishes to thank the members of the committee for all fully committing themselves to this important work. All members contributed their valuable knowledge and experience with enthusiasm.

Early in the process, a member of the committee developed a *Comparison Matrix of Executive Board Eligibility Options*. This matrix helped the committee to understand the strength of various options (high, mixed/moderate, or low) based on inclusivity, governance experience, and support for diversity goals. [See Appendix 1]

Also in the early stages of the work, a member of the committee compiled a spreadsheet summarizing the formal proposals for the composition of ALA Executive Board that have been put forward since 2019. These included the *Forward Together Initial Report* from SCOE (October 2019), the *Forward Together Resolutions for Annual 2021* from the Forward Together Resolutions Working Group (June 2021), *Transforming ALA Governance (TAG) Report and Models* from TAG (January 2022), and the *Transforming ALA Governance Final Report* from TAG (June 2022). This information helped the committee to understand what recommendations have come before for remaking the structure of ALA Executive Board. [See Appendix 2]

The members of the Ad-hoc Committee have collected input from a broad range of individuals across our networks, including new ALA members, those active in divisions, past and current members of ALA Council, past and current members of ALA Executive Board, and past ALA Presidents.

Consistent themes that emerged from interviews included the following:

- An acknowledgement of the power and importance of ALA Executive Board.
- Awareness that there is a steep learning curve to serve on ALA Executive Board and that a candidate for ALA Executive board, in order to be successful, must be fully trained and prepared to serve in that role.
- Membership on ALA Council is regarded as an essential component of the necessary experience for service on the Executive Board.
- ALA members need more opportunities to learn about the pathways that lead to serving on ALA Council and Executive Board and the responsibilities associated with serving on ALA Council and Executive Board.
- Formal opportunities for mentorship may also be developed and these resources should be documented and easy to find.

Additional ideas were also shared during interviews with members of the ALA Board Election Ad-Hoc Committee. These can be found in Appendix 3.

The members of the Ad-hoc committee have considered all of the feedback we received alongside our own experiences as ALA Councilors and member leaders. In accordance with the charge we were given, we offer the following options and recommendations for your consideration and action.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

Eligibility for nomination to Executive Board

- **Option A (*committee recommended*):** ALA Executive Board eligibility would be limited to members who have served on ALA Council in the past five (5) years.
 - Pro: This approach would ensure all Executive Board candidates have the important experience of serving on ALA Council and familiarity with current issues facing the organization, while expanding the pool of eligible candidates to allow more options to meet the needs of the organization.
 - Con: This still provides a relatively limited pool of candidates to draw from, and continues to run the risk of the Executive Board not being as responsive to membership as it could be.
- **Option B:** ALA Executive Board eligibility would include current or past members of ALA Council, without any time limitations.
 - Pro: This option would ensure experience serving on ALA Council, as well as significantly broadening the pool of candidates for Executive Board.
 - Con: As the situations ALA faces change more and more rapidly, it is important that nominees have awareness of current issues facing the organization so that they can step into the role and start working immediately. As distance from Council service increases, familiarity with current issues would lessen.
- **Option C:** ALA Executive Board eligibility would extend to all members of ALA Membership.
 - Pro: This approach would improve connection and responsiveness between the Executive Board and the Membership, as well as allowing members to feel they have more of a stake in the leadership of the organization. This was also the original recommendation of the Forward Together plan proposed in 2019 by the Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE).
 - Con: ALA is a massive and complex organization, and experience is needed to understand the role played by Executive Board members and what the organization needs in the moment.

Election of Executive Board Members

- **Option A (*committee recommended*):** Maintain ALA Council's responsibility to elect Executive Board members.
 - Pro: Election by Council maintains the connection between Council as the policy-making body of ALA and Executive Board, as well as ensuring that Executive Board members are selected based on the needs of the organization as understood by the Council. Election by Council provides some assurance that the Executive Board members are focused on the needs of the organization. The President-elect remains elected by the general membership, and their agenda, as

approved by the membership through their election, will still steer the direction of the organization.

- Con: Election by Council creates an additional separation between the membership and the Executive Board, and could lessen the Executive Board's responsiveness to the needs of the membership.
- **Option B:** Grant ALA Membership at Large the responsibility to elect Executive Board members.
 - Pro: Direct election by the membership could improve the responsiveness of ALA Executive Board to the membership, as well as allowing members to feel like they have more of a stake in the leadership of the organization.
 - Con: Direct election by the membership runs the risk of a particularly popular or motivated candidate swinging the election to serve their own ends instead of the needs of the organization. While there is always a risk of a problematic Board member being elected, that risk is greater under direct election.

Per the options considered, the ALA Board Ad-Hoc Committee recommends the following motion:

Motion 1: *ALA Executive Board accepts this report as follow-up to the "Resolution on Elections to Executive Board" ([2024-2025 ALA CD#49](#); [2025 ALA LLX Meeting](#)) and take appropriate action to advance Recommendation Option A for both Eligibility and Election by directing the ALA Bylaws Committee, the ALA Committee on Organization, and the ALA Policy Monitoring Committee to take the necessary steps to propose and present Option A for Council approval by December 2025.*

Committee Recommendations

- **Discontinue the Committee on Committees and distribute its work to the Presidential Advisory Committee or the ALA Nominating Committee**
 - Currently, the Committee on Committees selects the Executive Board nominees, along with making recommendations to the President-Elect for committee members and chairs.
 - **Executive Board Nominees:** The considerations for nominating Executive Board members are similar to those for President or Treasurer. This alignment enables the committee to take a more holistic view in assembling a strong and balanced board. Therefore, it is recommended that nominations for the Executive Board be incorporated into the responsibilities of the ALA Nominating Committee.

- **Committee Appointments:** The role of advising the President-elect on committee appointments could be fulfilled by their Presidential Advisory Committee, which is well-positioned to collaborate with the President-elect in identifying committee members and chairs they wish to work with.
- **Amend the charge of the ALA Nominating Committee to include responsibility for nominating candidates to serve as members of the ALA Executive Board. Further, move to remove the existing restriction that limits ALA members to serving only one term on the Nominating Committee, thereby allowing members to be considered for future service.**
 - The current makeup of the Nominating Committee could make it difficult to ensure effective selections to the Executive Board. There is a steep learning curve to participating on the Nominating Committee, and only serving one year one time prevents previous members from passing on the experience necessary to be effective. Adding the nomination of Executive Board candidates would further stress that lack of institutional knowledge. However, it is important to note that the Committee on Committees also faces this same challenge, so staying with the current composition would not fix this issue.

The ALA Board Election Ad-Hoc Committee recommends the above committee changes, and thus presents the following motion:

Motion 2: *The ALA Executive Board directs the ALA Bylaws Committee, the ALA Committee on Organization, and the ALA Policy Monitoring Committee to advance the Committee Recommendations as outlined in EBD 10.4 and present a proposal to the ALA Council by December 2025.*

Other Observations and Considerations

- How do we make a stronger connection between the work of Division executive leadership and ALA Executive Board, to prepare Division Leaders for Organizational Leadership, and to improve connections and communication between the overall Organization and Divisions?
 - The committee considered including current and past Division leadership who had not served on Council in the pool of candidates for Executive Board, however, the observation was made that Divisions operate very differently from the organization as a whole, and the issues facing the organization as a whole are often different from the issues facing the Divisions. While we did not believe we

could recommend including Division leadership without Council experience in the candidate pool for Executive Board, we believe that this gap could begin to be closed by formally including Division Presidents in Executive Board meetings, even if only to make a report and take questions virtually.

- How do we ensure more member involvement in Organizational Leadership?
 - The Ad-hoc Committee discussed at length the need for experience and training in order to be effective as an Executive Board member. Without that experience and training, there is a very steep learning curve to being an effective Executive Board member. However, the Committee also recognized that short of serving on Council, there are few ways for the general membership to gain the experience needed to serve on the Executive Board. The Committee discussed many ways that this issue might be addressed, including:
 - Provide regular, frequent opportunities for in-person and virtual training on the structure of ALA, current issues facing the organization, and opportunities for involvement. While this is already happening in a variety of ways, the many different current approaches could be organized, presented, and promoted to better attract the general membership to attend.
 - Create term limits for elected positions. One of the barriers to members gaining the experience needed to be a good candidate for the Executive Board is that many people have been members of Council or other organizational leadership for decades, and their name recognition is often sufficient for them to be elected over newer candidates. While the institutional knowledge that these members provide is valuable, and all of them continue to hold these positions out of a genuine desire to continue to serve the organization, it is a barrier to new members participating. One way to solve this would be to limit the number of times an individual can be elected to Council or other leadership positions. However, balancing institutional knowledge and opportunities for new voices will be difficult. Another option would be to create elected or appointed ex officio advisory or emeritus roles for individuals who can provide needed perspective to Council and/or the Executive Board.
 - In a situation where Executive Board Candidates came from the membership at large, they would serve one year as a non-voting member on the Executive Board prior to beginning a full term. While this could be an interesting solution, in the current fiscal environment, we believe it would be impractical.

REFERENCES:

American Library Association (ALA) Council. (2025, January 24). *ALA Council Document #49 Resolution on Elections to Executive Board*.
https://www.ala.org/sites/default/files/2025-01/ALA%20CD%2049%20Resolution%20on%20Elections%20to%20Executive%20Board_LLX25.pdf

ALA Forward Together Resolutions Working Group (FTRWG). (2021, June 18). *Resolutions Overview & Final Report*.
https://www.ala.org/sites/default/files/aboutala/content/ALA%20CD%2046.1%20FTRW%20Resolutions%20to%20Council_FINAL.pdf

ALA Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE). (2019, October). *Forward Together: Recommendations for a reimagined American Library Association governance model*.
<https://forwardtogether.ala.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Forward-Together-Nov-2019.pdf>

ALA Transforming ALA Governance Task Force (TAG). (2022, January). *Transforming ALA Governance Task Force Report*.
https://www.ala.org/sites/default/files/aboutala/content/ALA%20CD%2035-35a%20Transforming%20ALA%20Governance%20Task%20Force%20Report%20and%20Models_1.pdf

ALA Transforming ALA Governance Task Force (TAG). (2022, June). *Transforming ALA Governance Task Force Report*. [Final Report].
<https://www.ala.org/sites/default/files/aboutala/content/ALA%20CD%2036%20Transforming%20ALA%20Governance%20Task%20Force%20Report%20-%20Final%20%282%29.pdf>

APPENDICES:

- [Comparison Matrix of Executive Board Eligibility Options](#) [Appendix 1]
- [History of Executive Board Proposals](#) [Appendix 2]
- [Additional Ideas Shared During Interviews with ALA Board Election Ad-Hoc Committee](#) [Appendix 3]