

**CHILDREN'S LITERATURE ASSOCIATION
STRATEGIC PLAN 2007-2012
Fourth-year accountability report: September 2011**

ChLA Mission:

To encourage high standards of criticism, scholarship, research, and teaching in children's literature.

Goal 1: Planning for membership

Goal Statement: ChLA actively recruits members from a broad spectrum of professionals, valuing diversity, international involvement, and members new in their careers.

Strategic objectives:

- A. Identify ChLA's unique identity among various international academic organizations.

Action item: The Strategic Planning Committee will draft a statement by 2009, identifying ChLA's identity and relationship to other organizations internationally involved in children's literature.

Accountability: After considered discussion, the Strategic Planning Committee decided not to take further action on this objective.

Action item: The Strategic Planning Committee will communicate with the International Committee about its long-term goals. The SPC will then bring those goals to the Executive Board for discussion and will work with the President and the Board in communicating these goals to the ChLA membership.

Accountability: This task was accomplished in spring 2009.

Action item: The Strategic Planning Committee will communicate with the Publicity Committee about its long-term goals. The SPC will then bring those goals to the Executive Board for discussion and will work with the President and the Board in communicating these goals to the ChLA membership.

Accountability: This task was accomplished in spring 2009.

- B. Support the Diversity Committee's ongoing commitment to increasing diversity in ChLA.

Action item: The Strategic Planning Committee will communicate with the Diversity Committee about its long-term goals. The SPC will then bring those goals to the Executive Board for discussion and will work with the President and the Board in communicating these goals to the ChLA membership.

Accountability: This task was accomplished in spring 2009.

Action item: The Strategic Planning Committee will support the process to establish the Diversity Committee as a standing, elected committee by 2010.

Accountability: Two members were elected in 2009; two more were elected in 2010; the final two members were elected in 2011. By 2011, all current appointments on the Diversity Committee have rotated into 3-year elected terms.

- C. Maintain long-term relationship with Management Solutions to ensure that support of membership remains stable.

Action item: The Strategic Planning Committee will review and forward recommendations about Management Solutions' contract to the Executive Board by December 1, 2007.

Accountability: This task was completed as scheduled.

- D. Standardize conference planning so members can anticipate standard features of the annual conference.

Action item: The presidentially-reconvened Conference Planning Committee will submit its recommendations to the Executive Board for its consideration in 2008.

Accountability: This task was completed as scheduled. A draft of the conference planning manual was posted on the website in April 2009.

- E. Make available back issues of the *Children's Literature Association Newsletter* on the Website.

Action item: The *Newsletter* editors will post back issues on the website in 2008.

Accountability: All newsletters from 2008 forward are now being posted on the website.

- F. Create a "members-only" site of the website and/or a moderated listserv for announcements only.

Action item: The ChLA administrator, in consultation with the ChLA Executive Committee, will secure a contract with an external technology firm to provide these services.

Accountability: Through Johns Hopkins University Press, ChLA established a listserv in 2009. A service provider is currently being sought to provide additional member specific amenities accessible through the ChLA website.

G. Make available on-line renewal of memberships.

Action item: The ChLA administrator, in consultation with the ChLA Executive Committee, will secure a contract with an external technology firm to provide these services.

Accountability: This task was accomplished in 2008.

H. Make available on-line submissions of grants and awards.

Action item: The ChLA administrator, in consultation with the ChLA Executive Committee, will secure a contract with an external technology firm to provide these services.

Accountability: As of May 2010, grants are submitted as electronic email attachments.

Goal 2: Planning for scholarship

Goal Statement: ChLA will actively facilitate the pursuit of critical excellence in children's literature scholarship by its members.

Strategic objectives:

A. Make available all articles in back issues of *Children's Literature* through Project Muse.

Action item: ChLA will implement the November 2007 contract with Johns Hopkins University Press.

Accountability: This task was accomplished as scheduled.

B. Make available all articles in back issues of *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* through Project Muse.

Action item: ChLA will implement the November 2007 contract with Johns Hopkins University Press.

Accountability: This task was accomplished as scheduled.

C. Make back copies of paper issues more available by reducing their price and advertising their availability for purchase.

Action item: The newsletter editors and webmaster will advertise price and availability of back issues of *Children's Literature* and *ChLAQ* both in Spring 2008 *Newsletter* and on the website.

Accountability: Members have been notified via listserv of the availability of reduced price back issues in 2009, 2010 and 2011.

- D. Make available an electronic index of the *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*.

Action item: The *ChLA Quarterly* indexer will post complete index online by December 31, 2008.

Accountability: Ben Lefebvre compiled and posted online an index of *ChLAQ* from 1982 to 2007. (Note: As all issues are now online through JHUP's Project Muse, the index was not added to the ChLA website redesigned in summer 2011).

Goal 3: Planning for finances

Goal Statement: ChLA involves itself in long-term initiatives that invest in the future of the organization and scholarship in the field.

Strategic objectives:

- A. The Strategic Planning Committee will develop a dues adjustment strategy in consultation with the Treasurer and the Board.

Action item: The committee will explore standardized mechanisms and schedules for adjusting dues.

Accountability: approved June 9, 2010. Modified motion approved June 22, 2011. (See appendix below)

- B. The Strategic Planning Committee will draft a long-term expenditure plan in consultation with the Treasurer and the Board.

Action item: The committee will, based upon decisions about the Association's identity, scholarship, publicity, and goals that have resulted from the strategic objectives stated in this document, account for new and future expenditures.

Accountability: approved June 9, 2010. (See appendix below)

- C. The Strategic Planning Committee will draft a long-term plan for investments in consultation with the Treasurer and the Board.

Action item: The committee will examine the history of ChLA investments and decide whether a change in investment strategy is warranted based on new decisions about the long-term expenditure plan.

Accountability: approved June 9, 2010. (See appendix below)

- D. The Strategic Planning Committee will draft a policy for philanthropic gifts in consultation with the Treasurer and the Board.

Action item: The Strategic Planning Committee will develop a policy on public recognition of philanthropic gifts by 2009.

Accountability: approved June 9, 2010. (see website for full statement)

Goal 4: Planning for technology

Goal Statement: ChLA's technology facilitates membership involvement and scholarship in the field.

Strategic objectives:

- A. The Strategic Planning Committee will recommend a routine for annual website design updating.

Action item: The Strategic Planning Committee will work with the Publicity Committee to develop strategies for long-term website review.

Accountability: The Publicity Committee's 2009 Strategic Plan addresses this issue.

- B. ChLA will redesign its website by 2012.

Action item: The Strategic Planning Committee will work with the Publicity Committee to implement a process for examining website design and implement any needed or desired changes that make the site more aesthetically appealing, easier to use, and easier to update.

Accountability: ChLA website redesign began in 2009

- C. The ChLA administrator, in consultation with the ChLA Executive Committee, will secure ongoing services of an outsourced technology firm in support of the following objectives:

- a. Objective 1.F: "members-only" or moderated listserv
- b. Objective 1.G: on-line renewal of memberships

c. Objective 1.H: on-line submissions of grants and awards

Accountability: Goals a and b were accomplished in 2009.

Action item: By the end of 2008, the appropriate committee of the ChLA will draft a Request For Proposals to secure the services of a technology support firm. In 2011, ChLA contracted for web services with Slabmedia, LLC.

Strategic Planning Committee members:

Mike Cadden

Lisa Rowe Fraustino

Martha Hixon

Adrienne Kertzer

Carole Scott

J.D. Stahl

Jackie Stallcup

Roberta Seelinger Trites

APPENDIX

REPORT ON FINANCES

May 14, 2010

Rev. 7/15/10, per Board review

Motions from the Financial Subcommittee of the Strategic Planning Committee, approved at the June 9, 2010, Board Meeting

ITEMS 1 and 2: Reserves and Investments

As a general rule of thumb, non-profit organizations should keep a minimum of six months of expenses in reserve. In 2008, ChLA's expenses were approximately \$130,000 (not counting the annual conference, which currently is mainly self-supporting). Six months of expense, thus, would be approximately \$65,000. Because of years of careful money management and conservative spending, and—more recently—an influx of income from royalties, ChLA currently has \$235,000 in reserve, or more than 18 months of expenses. In other words, we have approximately \$160,000 more in reserve than we currently require.

First, in order to regularize the status of the reserves and to make things clear for future Board members and officers, we present the following motion:

Motion 1: Reserves

The Financial Subcommittee of the SPC recommends that ChLA keep between 9-12 months of expenses accounted for in its reserves. If/when the reserves rise above or fall below this range, a review of the overall income/expense structure should be undertaken and steps taken to bring the reserves back into this range. This should include—but not be limited to—re-examining the following income and spending motions.

Second, the original Strategic Plan calls for the Board to create policy on long-term investments. Having weighed all possible investment strategies—and in light of the current national economic situation—we recommend a fiscally conservative long-term investment strategy.

Motion 2: Investments

The Financial Subcommittee of the SPC recommends that each year, the Treasurer and the Association Administrator decide whether to invest a portion of the Association's unrestricted funds in insured certificates of deposit. The amount to be invested will be reviewed annually and a recommendation will be made to the Executive Board for review and approval.

ITEM 3: DUES

Third, the fact that we currently have a large reserve does not mean that we should stop charging membership dues. A dues structure is vital for maintaining a steady and predictable source of income and for keeping track of membership. Further, while a dues cut might be popular in the short term, it would set a problematic precedent and make it difficult to reinstate a dues increase in years when it will be required (as is inevitable). In order to regularize dues and make it simpler to address potential increases each year, we present the following motion:

Motion 3: Dues

The Financial Subcommittee of the SPC recommends that ChLA institute a policy by which automatic annual dues adjustments are calculated based on the previous year's CPI, with the Board having the option to vote against a dues increase each year.

This recommendation is intended to give the Board a rational method for instituting dues increases. In years when the Board feels dues need to be raised, having an automatic system in place alleviates the need to discuss how much the dues should be raised. In years when ChLA is running a comfortable profit from publications and conferences, the Board can vote against the annual dues raises. In years in which the CPI decreases, no dues adjustment will be made.

ITEM 4: EXPENDITURES

Because we are a non-profit, it is important that we use the money that the organization earns for our mission and not simply hang onto it. On the other hand, we are not going to suggest throwing caution to the wind and spending money far and wide! Caution has served us well so far. Below, we offer motions that we hope will spend our funds to stimulate and support scholarship in the field in ways that will benefit the maximum number of ChLA members while serving our mission effectively.

Awards

First, we'd like to suggest that our awards be put on a schedule of organized increases. Prior to this year, the book and article awards and the awards for student papers have been at the same amount for quite some time, while inflation has chipped away at actual dollar value. Instead of making haphazard increases in the awards, we suggest the following motion:

Motion 4: Regular increases for awards:

The Financial Subcommittee of the SPC recommends that ChLA institute a policy by which automatic increases once every five years be instituted for each of the following awards:

Book award: raise to \$800 in 2010 and raise by \$100 every five years (currently \$750; plus ChLA pays for recipient's registration and banquet, approximately \$200)

Article award: raise to \$400 in 2010 and raise by \$50 every five years (currently \$375; plus ChLA pays for recipient's registration and banquet, approximately \$200)

Carol Gay: raise by \$50 every five years (currently \$200; plus ChLA pays for recipient's registration and banquet, approximately \$150)

Graduate student: raise by \$50 every five years (currently \$200 each for two students, one at the MA level and one at the PhD level; plus ChLA pays for both recipients' registration and banquet, approximately \$300)

The initial raise for all four awards would be \$75, and the total raise for all four awards would then be \$250 every five years, starting in 2015 (given that we just instituted a raise at the 2009 teleconference).

To give a sense of how that will multiply over time, here's what the total awards will cost (not including banquet and registration, which will vary each year and which will rise with inflation without our intervention) for the next ten years:

2010-2014: \$1800 per year

2015-2019: \$2050 per year

Conferences and Grants

Next, we suggest spending a bit more money in two areas that really benefit membership and further the mission of ChLA: our annual conference and the grants that ChLA administers.

We want to be cautious not to implement lump sum spending that is not tied to our annual income in some way; simply trying to spend down the reserves by instituting spending increases could place the organization in a situation in the future in which we are locked into spending money that we no longer have.

Therefore, we suggest that we consider spending each year at least 10% of the annual membership dues from the previous year on the conference and grants, specifically according to the following two motions. We used membership dues for the baseline because royalty income tends to fluctuate far more wildly than membership dues and because dues directly reflect the number of members and hence the potential number of people who actually will come to the conference in any particular year. Based on an average of membership dues from 2005-2008, 10% equals a total amount available of approximately \$8,600.

Were we to divide that approximately \$8,600 between the conference and grants, we could underwrite the conference by about \$4,300 every year and provide an additional \$4,300 in grants, above and beyond what we already award. Given that both grants and the annual conference are a vital part of our mission, stimulating scholarship and bringing together our membership, we suggest the following two motions:

Motion 5: Conference Funding

The Financial Subcommittee of the SPC recommends that each year, ChLA provide to the conference organizer(s) a lump sum equal to at least 5% of the previous year's annual membership dues. The conference organizer(s) must consult with the ChLA administrator, officers, and/or Board members to determine the most appropriate way to use this funding to make the conference more accessible (financially or otherwise) for the membership. This allocation may also be used to fund speakers. If the amount is more than \$5,000 or less than \$3,500, the Board may revisit this recommendation.

We recognize that each site will have different needs and thus would prefer not to specify exactly how the funds should be spent. Some examples of how the funds might be spent include:

1. Speakers: some conferences may wish to expend the money on honoraria and travel funds for the keynote speakers or additional speakers.
2. Food: organizers may wish to ensure that there are morning and afternoon breakouts each day instead of skimping on the afternoons or the last day, or they may need to subsidize the banquet.
3. A/V: organizers may not be able to secure help from their universities as so many have had to do recently, or may simply wish to ensure that projectors are available in every breakout room.
4. Registration costs: organizers may wish to reduce registration costs for either graduate students or all participants.
5. Local ground transportation: some sites might require ground transportation, such as shuttles.

Motion 6: Conference Fee Waiver

The Financial Subcommittee of the SPC recommends that any member of ChLA who is officially invited to attend the Board meeting by virtue of being specifically listed on the agenda, and who thus arrives to attend the conference a day early, will have his or her registration fee waived.

Motion 7: Grants and awards

The Financial Subcommittee of the SPC recommends that at least 5% of the previous year's annual membership dues be given for funding Grants above the amount already budgeted for that year. If the amount is more than \$10,000 or less than \$7,000, the Board may revisit this recommendation.

Respectfully submitted by the Financial Subcommittee of the Strategic Planning Committee:
Mike Cadden, Jackie Stallcup, and Roberta Trites (Chair)

Approved at the June 22, 2011, ChLA Executive Board Meeting

Motion Board Meeting 11.03. It was motioned that we change the wording from last year's motion that we calculate a raise in dues based on the CPI to add the words "rounded to the nearest dollar." Jackie Stallcup motioned, and Jackie Horne seconded. Motion carried unanimously.