

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Annual Conference, Washington DC
June 24 – 29, 2010**

Topic: Mega Issue Discussion

Background: In order to ensure that topics of strategic importance get regularly addressed by the Board, in 2008 the Board agreed to set aside time at each face-to-face Board meeting for strategic dialogue about the issues facing the association and/or profession.

Action Required: Exploration

Mega Issue: What are the top five challenges for nonprofit boards?

BoardSource defines the top five challenges as:

1. Confusing Tactics with Strategy

During difficult times, it is easy to slip away from strategic thinking and become bogged down in the details of the organization. This common board mistake can negatively affect staff morale and significantly impact the direction and success of an organization.

2. Losing Track of the Mission

Boards are responsible for enforcing the mission throughout the entire organization. Now is the time to focus on what your nonprofit does best. It's more important than ever to rethink programs that fall outside the mission of your nonprofit.

3. Overcoming Budget Restraints

With increasing budget difficulties, nonprofits can sometimes fall into a survival mentality. Boards must avoid this trap and continue focusing on innovation and the future of the organization. Attention should be on serving your mission in new ways that better use your existing budget.

4. Maintaining Passion and Commitment

Even during challenging times, organizations must continue to share their successes. It's the stories of your success that help motivate your board, staff, donors and volunteers. Ensure that everyone involved with your organization knows their purpose and understands the difference their efforts will make.

5. Preparing Future Leaders

One of the most difficult tasks facing any nonprofit organization is identifying, cultivating and recruiting new talent. From hiring your chief executive's successor to adding strength and depth to your existing board, the challenge of developing future leaders is significant.

