

# OLA BEST BETS COMMITTEE

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

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### **Mandate:**

The goal of the “Best Bets” committee is to highlight excellence in Canadian literature for children and young adults, to assist in collection development for public and school libraries, and to build relationships with Canadian Publishers.

This committee is responsible for finding and evaluating as many eligible titles as possible for the given year. Each title is added to the reading list for the committee and members have the responsibility to read and evaluate as many titles as reasonably able. A single title needs to be read by at least 4 members for it to be considered for selection. The evaluation and selection of the ‘Best Bets’ is entirely under the direct authority of the committee, and is outside and apart from any other factions that may influence decisions.

At the end of the given year, the committee will narrow down their selections and create a Top Ten Best Bets list for Junior Picture Books, Junior Fiction<sup>1</sup>, Junior Non-Fiction, and Young Adult Fiction<sup>2</sup>. If there are not ten titles that meet the criteria to make the lists, the committee will not hold itself to all possible ten of the Top Ten. The committee, at their own discretion, may also include Honorable Mentions for each of the categories, in addition to the Top Ten.

The OPLA Council is responsible for the Committee and as such the Committee is required to report to Council committee activities and get approval for any budget needs. OPLA Council designates a Councilor to be liaison with the committee.

Council liaison will:

- Represent Council at Committee meetings

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<sup>1</sup> If there are enough Junior Graphic Novels that are worth highlighting, the committee may add a separate category, otherwise it falls under Junior Fiction

<sup>2</sup> The Young Adult category was added to the Best Bets lists as of 2006

- Report back to Council on important decisions and directions that the Committee is recommending
- Seek Council approval for annual budgets and major initiatives
- Conduct work on behalf of the Committee

**Responsibilities/Objectives:**

- All committee members will read and review as many Canadian<sup>3</sup> materials as possible for children and teens published in the current calendar year.
- And agenda and minutes are recorded for each committee meeting; there is also a shared document where members are expected to record their votes.
- The Chair and Vice-Chair are responsible for creating documents such as the final Best Bets lists and the vote recording document.
- The Chair and Vice-Chair are responsible for reporting committee activities to the OPLA liaison.
- The Chair, Vice-Chair, and assigned committee members are responsible for contacting publishers to request review copies of current and forthcoming publications for the current year.
- The Chair or Vice-Chair will notify the publishers of the selected titles if their title(s) has been selected for the list.
- The Chair or Vice-Chair will submit a proposal to the OLA Super Conference call for proposals.

**Deliverables:**

- The committee will have a finalized list of selected titles by the early January meeting.
- Members will volunteer to represent the Best Bets Committee and present at the OLA Super Conference session.
- A finalized listing of the Top Ten and any Honorable Mentions will be posted to the OLA website and distributed publicly at the OLA Super Conference.
- The committee will continue to brainstorm and work with publishers, libraries, and OLA to find new ways to promote the Best Bets titles.

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<sup>3</sup> Canadian materials are defined as works that have been written and/or illustrated by Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada.

**Composition:**

- Members of the committee must be either Librarians or Library Technicians who are employed by a library and belong to the OPLA division of the Ontario Library Association.
- It is expected that members of the committee be actively involved in the organization, management or provision of public library service to children and/or youth.
- The committee will have a Chair and an alternate (Vice Chair). Members will be selected from libraries across the province, although the majority of the members must be able to attend meetings in the Greater Toronto Area in person.
- Vacancies on the committee will be advertised through OLA

**Resources and budget:**

Identify the resources required to meet the various objectives of the committee/task force – equipment, materials, rooms, funds and administrative support.

- The committee requires the use of a suitable room for its monthly meetings; this room is often a board room or programming room in a library that one of the members belongs to as an employee.
- All of the materials (book titles) are provided by a combination of publishers, libraries, online galleys, and members' own collections.
- The committee uses a shared Google account for maintaining documents and files, and uses work or personal emails for communication between members.
- Members are expected to pay for their own travel expense to and from meetings.

**Timelines**

- The committee sends quarterly reports to the OPLA Council and is in email contact with an OPLA Council liaison for day-to-day communication.
- The Committee will meet no less than 5 times per year and most meetings will be in person in the Greater Toronto Area
- Committee members are required to be at all meetings if possible. Members missing more than 2 consecutive meetings may be required to vacate the Committee
- The committee does not meet in July and August.

**Type of Committee:**

The OLA Best Bets is a Standing Committee.

**Term of Appointment:**

- Committee members will serve for a minimum of one two-year term.
- The positions of Chair and Vice Chair are to be determined by the Committee and will serve a minimum two year term, with option to serve additional terms if the Committee approves it.
- It is not necessary for the Vice-Chair to assume the position of Chair at the end of the current Chair's term.

