

17 July 2020

TO: RAILS Board of Directors

FROM: Deirdre Brennan

SUBJECT: Goals for FY 2021

Our strategic plan has 5 goals. Broadly speaking, the focus of each is:

Goal 1 support and promote resource sharing

Goal 2 tell the library story (advocacy, explain the value of libraries)

Goal 3 train librarians and library workers

Goal 4 provide leadership and support libraries as they deal with social change and difficult society issues

Goal 5 be member focused, accountable, transparent and careful stewards of tax dollars

My goals support the goals of the strategic plan, of course. I have attempted to organize them in priority order, but I will be interested in your view of priorities also, and any additional goals that are needed.

1. Implement the goals of the strategic plan.
2. Launch a major initiative focused on eliminating systemic racism and bias both within RAILS and in libraries and society at large. Pursue grant funding and explore possible partnerships to broaden the impact of our work.
3. Work to ensure financial sustainability of RAILS through examination of budget for efficiencies, cost/benefit analysis of services, management of expenditures in light of continuing cash flow difficulties and other means.
4. Continue to work with libraries and with partner agencies to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. Provide leadership and resources to help libraries make the safest and best decisions about how to navigate the pandemic.
5. Keep the focus on advocacy and the "My Library Is.." campaign, particularly in light of the probable budget cuts to libraries. Particular emphasis should be given to school libraries which are faced with even greater uncertainty because of the pandemic.

6. Continue board engagement activities.
7. Continue to work with the Universal Service committee to expand service to the unserved in Illinois. Continue to advocate for changes to the library district law that would make it easier for libraries to form districts and for legislative passage of a broader “Cards for Kids” law.
8. Expand support for multi-type library cooperation in order to broaden and enlarge the economies of scale that occur when libraries cooperate.

Of course, all of these goals are priorities!

Last year, I also had specific goals related to planning for delivery changes, assisting libraries with minimum wage increases, Simply E and expanding Explore More Illinois and Find More Illinois. At this point, I consider that these projects have been operationalized in the sense that they are part of the services that we continue to offer. If board member think that these, or other projects, should be specifically called out in my goals, I am happy to discuss this and make any agreed-to changes.