

RAILS BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

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Committee/Subcommittee Name: Advocacy Committee

Meeting Date: 5/13/21

Summarize the meeting discussion:

1. School library advocacy and collaboration discussion with Beth Tepen, RAILS Board: Ms. Tepen shared her experiences as a school librarian and school library advocate. She also spoke about her high school's partnership with a local community college and university. Ms. Tepen emphasized the need to advocate for school library programs to both students and faculty/staff/administration.
2. Specialized library advocacy conversation with Laura Turner, Caterpillar: Ms. Turner offered specific examples of how RAILS can make specialized libraries more visible, such as creating a Sparks podcast, cultivating equitable presence on the RAILS website, and offering more engagement opportunities for specialized librarians to help shape future RAILS work/initiatives.
3. Brief update on American Rescue Plan Act funding for Illinois libraries with Deirdre Brennan, RAILS: Ms. Brennan informed the committee that no new details are available. She will keep the committee informed as conversations progress.

Note any next steps, activities, or follow up as a result of the meeting discussion:

1. School library advocacy and school-academic library partnerships: Ms. Tepen will be invited to join a working group to be convened by Jenna Nemec-Loise, RAILS Board with Sarah McHone-Chase, RAILS Board; Jennifer McIntosh, RAILS Board; and Carolyn Kinsella, AISLE.
2. Specialized library advocacy: Ms. Nemec-Loise, Ms. Turner, and Dan Bostrom, RAILS, will discuss opportunities for specialized librarian engagement as the committee works toward making specialized libraries more visible.

The next meeting of the Advocacy Committee will be 6/10/21 - 3pm

Submitted by: Jenna Nemec-Loise, Chair, RAILS Board Advocacy Committee