

21 January 2022

TO: RAILS Board of Directors

FROM: Deirdre Brennan

SUBJECT: Executive Director Report – December – January, 2022

Promote, support, and expand resource sharing to optimize use of tax dollars and other funding and help libraries share resources to the fullest extent possible

Resource sharing

The LLSAP Sustainability Working Group continues to meet, and I think we are beginning to get some traction around this complex work as we have identified some priority next steps: investigate a statewide ILS platform, continue to work on access to OCLC records through Find More Illinois, talk with the FMI vendor Auto-Graphics about an interoperable circulation system for unautomated libraries, and develop criteria for libraries to join LLSAPs.

Universal service

We are awaiting legislative action on the statewide database funding and expansion of the Cards for Kids Act. I check in weekly with Senator Laura Murphy's chief of staff; today, he assured me that all is on track and they are "waiting to hear from the Legislative Research Bureau," the agency that drafts the bills to be filed. He also said they can't wait to get the bill "across the finish line."

As was discussed at the November meeting, we did submit the board resolution on universal service to the state library. We are awaiting information.

Chicago Public Library

Monica and I met with Commissioner Chris Brown on Friday, January 14. We had a great conversation about Chris's goals, RAILS services, the complex library landscape in Illinois and how we can help each other. We have set up monthly meetings between the three of us.

Find More Illinois updates

We have had a lot of interest lately in FMI. The Consortia Committee and LSWG are interested in the ability to use FMI to access OCLC cataloging records; we met with Skokie about them joining, we are meeting with the Pinnacle board on Friday, January 21 and the PrairieCat membership on January 26. We have also updated our outreach plan, so we have high hopes of building the membership.

Work with libraries of all types to tell the library story

Certification and schools

The annual certification process is underway. This year, we have included extra questions for school libraries in hopes of getting a complete and accurate picture of their funding and staffing situations. We know they have been hard hit by the pandemic. This is a collaborative project with AISLE, IHLS, ILA and the state library.

We have also interviewed and are in the process of hiring a temporary research assistant to assist us in the project, as we do not expect to be able to get all the information we need through certification alone.

Help libraries be the best they can be

Strategic planning for member libraries

We are very interested adding a new service at RAILS – assistance for libraries to develop a strategic plan. We are discussing what existing resources we have, human and otherwise, to implement this service. I believe that libraries should be required to have a strategic plan, no matter their type, size or budget, but many libraries will need assistance. We are investigating a variety of options, including online toolkits and will report more when we have some more concrete plans.

Member update

Our member update on January 19 was very well attended. We discussed challenges to materials in public and school libraries; heard from Anne Craig and Michelle Leigh about the CARLI grant to develop open educational resources; Karen Egan attended to present information about the new census-based map that the state library has developed; and we discussed our statewide databases and Cards for Kids expansion proposals. There was a lot of enthusiasm for the databases and questions about how to advocate with legislators for the funding.

Prepare libraries for the future

Equity Diversity and Inclusion

You will be hearing a full report about our EDI efforts at the January board meeting. I would only add for this report that we have also met with Diane Foote of ILA to ensure that our efforts are in sync and not duplicative. I think we are well aligned, as ILA is more focused on individuals and we are more focused on libraries; this is completely appropriate given our missions and will help us to supplement and complement our services.

Aim to be the best library system in the country

Staffing Changes

As you know, Jim Kregor is now retired. We have promoted Sharon Swanson to Finance Manager, and Sam Daly to Human Resources Manager. The revised Organization Chart is in the packet and on the agenda for your approval.

With the board's approval, potentially, of the new strategic plan we will turn our focus to implementation. The timing is excellent, as it will soon be time to prepare the APC grant operational plan and budget for FY 23.

This Month at RAILS – December 2021/January 2022

Spread the Word: The Top Three

In response to board member feedback, each month we will provide brief talking points on select This Month at RAILS items to help you spread the word about our programs/services. Here are this month's top three:

Need Help Cataloging Materials in World Languages?

RAILS' [World Language Cataloging Services Program](#) provides original and copy cataloging for materials in world languages that are considered part of the library's regular collection. The program is available to libraries statewide at no cost through a grant from the Illinois State Library.

Help Spread the Word about Certification

All RAILS libraries must complete the [online certification process](#) by March 31 to continue to be eligible to receive RAILS services (including delivery) and Illinois State Library grants. More information, including a [video demo](#), is available on the [L2 home page](#).

Encourage All RAILS Members to Complete RAILS E-News Survey

With nearly 6,000 subscribers, the *RAILS E-News* reaches more members at one time than any other RAILS communication tool. [RAILS is conducting a survey](#) to determine what improvements we can make to the *E-News* to ensure that it remains a vital source of information for members from all types of libraries.

Library trustees and RAILS Board members are also invited to complete the survey. The deadline is Wednesday, February 2.

Promoting/Supporting/Expanding Resource Sharing

Leading/Working with Libraries to Expand Resource Sharing

RAILS World Language Cataloging Services Program Launches Statewide

RAILS' [World Language Cataloging Services Program](#) provides original and copy cataloging for materials in world languages that are part of the library's regular collection. Five libraries recently completed a pilot project to test-drive program procedures. We received very positive feedback, including: "Using the program was easy and efficient... and using the RAILS Delivery service was a secure/easy way to ship the materials. I would love to have the opportunity to send more materials."

We also met with Illinois Heartland Library System (IHLS) staff to clarify the difference between this service and IHLS' [Cataloging Maintenance Center](#) (CMC). Both programs are available statewide, funded by a grant from the Illinois State Library, and free to system members. While the RAILS program provides cataloging for materials that are part of the library's regular collection, the CMC provides cataloging of materials that are part of a special collection. We published a *RAILS E-News* article on January 12 clarifying these differences and launching the program statewide.

Providing Access to Digital Content/E-Resources/Other Innovative Projects

eRead Illinois Update

RAILS staff worked with Baker & Taylor (B&T), our [eRead Illinois](#) Axis 360 vendor, and BiblioBoard to transfer 5,000 titles from BiblioBoard to Axis 360. We expect to complete the transfer in January. We also created several lists of newly transferred content that eRead libraries can activate, including "Recovering the Classics," "Always Available E-Books for Kids," and "Always Available Nonfiction."



Anna Behm, E-Content Specialist, co-hosted a webinar with B&T on optimizing and customizing Axis 360 with a focus on school libraries. There were 31 registrants, six attended live, and the recording has been viewed 46 times at the time of this writing.

Use of RAILS E-Resources

The following tables show the use of [eRead Illinois](#) and [BiblioBoard](#) in November and December and for FY 2022 thus far.

eRead Illinois Axis 360 Checkouts

Time Period	E-books	Audiobooks	Total
November 2021	24,644	15,617	40, 261
December 2021	22,243	14,167	36,410
FY 2022 (July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022)	142,026	91,706	233,732

BiblioBoard Views

Time Period	Number of Views
November 2021	1,975
December 2021	1,108
FY 2022 (July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022)	7,609

Explore More Illinois Update



RAILS continues to recruit attractions for our [Explore More Illinois](#) online cultural pass program. North Suburban Library District recently added a discount for their book sale. Metropolis Performing Arts Center in Arlington Heights also joined. Several other attractions are in the process of joining and expect to finalize their offers in early 2022.

As of December 31, 402 Illinois libraries participate in the program (320 RAILS and 82 IHLS member libraries), and there are 37 attractions. See [complete list](#) of attractions.

Jessica Barnes, Special Projects Librarian, presented information about Explore More Illinois at the IHLS Member Day in November.

Providing Greater Purchasing Power

New RAILS Discounts

RAILS recently negotiated advantageous pricing for members for the following products. Members can find more information on all our deals and discounts by logging into the RAILS [Deals & Discounts](#) page on the RAILS website.

[Gale Presents: Udemy](#) is an online-learning resource with over 10,000 video-based courses in business, technology, software, and personal development. Over 4,000 courses are taught by instructors in their native language (French, German, Japanese, Portuguese, and Spanish). Libraries can request a trial via the link above.

[Gale Business: Plan Builder](#) is an online planning tool for starting, managing, and optimizing a business or nonprofit. The dashboard walks users through five areas of exploration to develop a business plan focused on long-term success.

[LOTE Online for Kids](#) is an online database of digital picture books in world languages that helps libraries engage multilingual families. The platform provides 1350+ titles in 45+ languages, along with English translations. New digital titles and languages are released every month. A webinar was offered in January and members can sign up for a free trial.

Swank Group Purchase Sign-Up Results

Nine libraries joined and 94 libraries renewed the RAILS [Swank Movie Licensing USA](#) public performance license group purchase on January 1. The annual license allows unlimited showings of thousands of movies, from classics to new releases. The total savings is \$43,000 this year, including the additional savings for the COVID one-year extension negotiated for the FY 2021 renewal group. The license is valid from January 1 - December 31, 2022.

Career Online High School (COHS) Update

[Career Online High School](#) is an 18-credit, vocation-based high school completion program that enables libraries to offer adult learners accredited high school diplomas and career certificates in one of 10 high-demand fields. RAILS subsidizes the cost of the platform. The following table provides the latest information on the program.

COHS Stats as of January 4, 2022

Scholarships Awarded	Total Graduates	Number of Students in Program	RAILS Graduation Rate/National Graduation Rate
280	137	34	60% / 53%

Chicago Height Public Library joined COHS in November.

Jessica Barnes, Special Projects Librarian, organized and co-hosted a [COHS webinar](#) in November. It was recorded and can be viewed on the COHS Deals and Discounts webpage.

Building Collaborative Relationships & Fostering Networking

RAILS Participates in Tri-County Directors Group Meeting

In November, RAILS Member Engagement Manager Dan Bostrom attended the Tri-County Directors Group meeting in Chatsworth. Approximately 10 RAILS members attended. Dan spoke about RAILS resources for trustees. The group also discussed recent library materials challenges, strategic planning resources, and circulating Roku.

Telling the Library Story

Helping Members Tell Their Story



Specialized Library Spotlights

Last November, RAILS started a new project to [spotlight specialized libraries](#). Through short video interviews, specialized libraries can showcase the valuable work they do. Other libraries can learn about services specialized libraries offer to the public. RAILS posts the videos to the My Library Is... [Sharing Showcase](#) and [blog](#) and promotes them via our weekly *E-News*.

Interviewees thus far include:

- [Halle Cox](#), Director, Kane County Law Library and Self Help Legal Center (and RAILS Board member!)
- [Cheryl A. Hansen](#), Research Librarian, ESi Library
- [Sarah Rice](#), Research & Knowledge Services Manager, Forefront Library
- [Brenda Stenger](#), Director, American Hospital Association Resource Center

Five additional interviews are scheduled to be recorded at the time of this writing. Other specialized libraries can join the fun by contacting communications@railslibraries.info.

My Library Is... Survey Results

In November 2021, RAILS conducted four separate surveys targeted at our four types of libraries (academic, public, school, and specialized) to measure awareness of the [My Library Is... campaign](#) and to determine what changes we could make to help libraries more effectively demonstrate their value to different stakeholders.

We invited all interested staff members at all RAILS libraries to complete the survey and invited IHLS to distribute the surveys to their member libraries as well. A summary of the survey results appears at the end of this report.

Advocating for Libraries

December and January Meetings with AISLE, IHLS, and ILA

RAILS staff meet monthly with representatives from the Association of Illinois School Library Educators (AISLE), Illinois Heartland Library System (IHLS), and the Illinois Library Association (ILA) to discuss ways we can work collaboratively to support school libraries. Topics discussed in December and January included:

- School libraries and book challenges, including [AISLE’s statement on censorship](#) and collaborative efforts to develop a CE program for school libraries
- Updates on library legislation from ILA
- Continuing discussion of the need for more complete/accurate data on Illinois schools and school libraries
- Results of My Library Is... survey for school libraries

The next meeting of the group is February 1.

Helping Libraries Be the Best They Can Be

Helping All Libraries Provide the Best Possible Service

All RAILS Libraries Required to Complete Online Certification Process

All RAILS libraries must complete the [online certification process](#) by March 31 to continue to be eligible to receive RAILS services (including delivery) and Illinois State Library grants. Libraries must complete the FY 2021 [interlibrary loan statistical survey](#) before starting the certification form. View a [video demonstration](#) of how to complete certification.

The table below shows the number of RAILS libraries of all types that have completed the entire certification process thus far (including completing the ILL survey).

Library Type	Total #	# Completing Certification
Academic	117	30
Public	412	173
School	558	159
Special	178	38

Preparing Libraries for the Future

Helping Libraries Respond to Change

Current Status of RAILS Member Library Services

RAILS is encouraging members to update our [Current Library Reopening Status Survey](#) on the [COVID-19 Pulse Page](#) with the services they are currently offering during the latest phase of the pandemic. The [results dashboard](#) lists results for all libraries. Members can fill out the survey each time their plans change. Only the most up-to-date information will display in the results. There is also a [service area map](#) to view results from neighboring libraries.

RAILS Staff EDI Training Update

RAILS staff completed a fall round of EDI training. We are developing a survey to send to staff focusing on their EDI training experiences over the last two years and will use staff feedback to design future training sessions.

Fall 2021 RAILS EDI Member Training

The following is a list of EDI-related training offered to members last fall and now available in the [RAILS CE Archives](#). All these events were made possible by funding from a RAILS EDI Training Grant. Over 1,000 RAILS members attended the live trainings.

- [Auditing Your Collection for Diversity and Inclusion](#)
- [Authentic Voices in Children’s and Teen Literature: What’s Socioeconomics Got to Do with It?](#)
- [Building Accessible Library Collections for Individuals with Disabilities](#)
- [Building African American, African, and Caribbean Collections](#)
- [Developing Responsive Collections for LGBTQ+ Patrons of All Ages](#)
- [EDI Elements: Cultural Competence](#)
- [EDI Elements: Identifying Microaggressions](#)
- [EDI Elements: Implicit Bias](#)
- [Trauma Informed Services for Spanish-Speaking Patrons](#)

Aiming to Be the Best Library System

Member Communication/Engagement

January 19 RAILS Member Update

Over 200 people attended our latest member update on January 19. Topics included:

- Latest developments with RAILS’ new strategic plan
- Update on RAILS’ Statewide Database Proposal
- Efforts to expand the Cards for Kids Act
- 2020 Census for Municipalities and the Library Services Map
- CARLI Open Textbook Grant, including RAILS’ role in the grant
- Advice on handling library materials challenges

A recording of the session will be posted to the [RAILS YouTube page](#) when available.

First Steps in RAILS Website Upgrade/Redesign

RAILS has begun work on the development of an upgraded and redesigned RAILS website. The site requires a software upgrade from Drupal 7 to Drupal 9/10 this year. The initial development work involves configuring the site’s core functionality in the upgrade. The new strategic plan will inform the redesign, and as the project progresses, additional input will be sought from RAILS members, staff, and board members regarding specific needs.

We anticipate issuing an RFP in March for outsourcing the site design, and for development of complex features. The support sites for eRead Illinois, Explore More Illinois, and Find More Illinois are also included in this upgrade/redesign, but will retain their own web addresses.

RAILS Booth at IDEAcon

The [Illinois Digital Educators Alliance Conference](#) (IDEAcon) will be February 14 – 17 at the Renaissance Schaumburg Convention Center Hotel. This annual event is one of the Midwest’s largest ed tech conferences for educators from Illinois and across the U.S.

RAILS will have an exhibit booth at the conference, and exhibit hours are:

- Tuesday, February 15, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
- Wednesday, February 16, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

RAILS last exhibited at the conference in 2020, our only in-person booth that year! We had the opportunity to engage with 126 teachers, administrators, librarians, and technology directors from schools across Illinois. We are hoping for even more visitors this year.

Virtual One-on-One Meetings with RAILS Members

RAILS conducted three virtual meetings with RAILS members in January, including one school district and two academic libraries. These meetings are designed to discuss RAILS services of interest to the libraries involved, and how they can better utilize those services. Any RAILS member can request a one-on-one meeting by [completing a brief form](#) on the RAILS website.

Evaluating the Impact of RAILS Programs/Services

RAILS Board Members Invited to Complete *RAILS E-News* Survey

With nearly 6,000 subscribers, the *RAILS E-News* reaches more members at one time than any other RAILS communication tool. [RAILS is conducting a survey](#) to determine what improvements we can make to the newsletter to ensure that it remains a vital source of information for members from all types of libraries. Library trustees and RAILS Board members are also invited to complete the survey. The deadline is Wednesday, February 2.

RAILS Staff News

Interview on RAILS’ Pandemic Experiences

RAILS Associate Executive Director Monica Harris was interviewed by OCLC-REALM about [Pandemic Challenges and Learning Outcomes at RAILS](#). The article is available on the WebJunction and REALM Project websites.

Staff Leadership Development

Samantha Daly, Human Resources Manager; Erica Laughlin, RSA NFP Cataloging and Database Supervisor; and Sharon Swanson, Finance Manager; will participate in the 2022 session of the [Charmm'd Leadership Academy](#). This virtual program is for those new to leadership positions and offers opportunities to build strong partnerships and networks in nonprofit leadership.

New RAILS LIRA Representative

Monica Harris, Associate Executive Director, was elected to the [LIRA \(Libraries of Risk Agency\)](#) Executive Committee, replacing Jim Kregor as a representative of RAILS. Her term runs through December 2024.

My Library Is... Survey Results & Next Steps January 2022

Introduction/Background

In November 2021, RAILS conducted four separate surveys targeted at our four types of libraries (academic, public, school, and specialized) to measure awareness of the [My Library Is... campaign](#) and to determine what changes we could make to help libraries more effectively demonstrate their value to different stakeholders, justify the need for continued/increase library funding, and more.

We invited all interested staff members at all RAILS libraries to complete the survey and invited IHLS to distribute the surveys to their member libraries as well. RAILS publicized the survey via our home page; repeated articles in the weekly *RAILS E-News*; individual encounters with members; and targeted, repeated messages to the following mailing lists:

- RAILS Directors Only list
- RAILS Academic Libraries list
- RAILS Public Libraries list
- RAILS School Libraries list
- RAILS Special Libraries list
- AISLE (Association of Illinois School Library Educators) statewide list
- IACRL (Illinois Association of College and Research Libraries) list
- Special Libraries Association – Illinois chapter list

We also asked RAILS Board members and AISLE Board members to help spread the word.

The following table shows the number of respondents from each library type and system. (The unidentified respondents did not complete the survey or did not indicate their library system.)

Type of Library	RAILS	IHLS	Unidentified	Total
Academic	18	1	4	23
Public	180	1	64	245
School	86	12	20	118
Specialized	14	0	4	18

Awareness/Purpose of Campaign and Campaign Website

Survey respondents were asked if they were aware of the My Library Is... campaign. The following table reflects awareness of the campaign by library type.

Type of Library	Aware of Campaign	Unaware	Number of Respondents
Academic	78.26%	21.74%	23
Public	84.77%	15.23%	243
School	50%	50%	118
Specialized	66.67%	33.33%	18

Many respondents were aware of the campaign but were unclear about the purpose or the target audience (i.e., all staff at all type of libraries). Interestingly, smaller libraries thought the campaign was aimed at larger libraries, and larger libraries thought the campaign was aimed at smaller libraries. Some thought the campaign was only aimed at staff holding marketing-related positions. Some academic, school, and specialized library respondents thought the campaign was aimed at public libraries.

Next Steps

To ensure that as many Illinois libraries as possible are aware of the campaign and how it can help them, RAILS will:

- Continue to publicize the campaign via regular *RAILS E-News* articles. Currently, most *E-News* articles promote My Library Is... blog posts. We will expand this coverage to promote additional campaign activities and tools as well.
- Clarify the purpose of the campaign on the My Library Is... website and look for every opportunity to make it clear that the campaign is designed to help staff at all levels and all types and sizes of Illinois libraries.
- Continue to work with the My Library Is... Advisory Group to promote the campaign to staff at different types and sizes of libraries.
- Work with AISLE, IACRL, and SLA-Illinois to promote awareness of the campaign to nonpublic libraries. Provide specific examples of how the campaign can help these different types of libraries.
- Review all content on the campaign website; determine what additional content is needed, what content is no longer relevant, etc. Ensure that the website includes content of relevance to all types and sizes of Illinois libraries.

Campaign Offerings

Survey respondents were given a list of campaign offerings and asked to identify which ones they had used. Offerings included:

- Used the talking points for one of the four library types
- Used the *Elders of the Internet* video featuring Nick Offerman to promote the library
- Viewed a webinar available on the My Library Is... website
- Viewed special campaign website section for one of the four types of libraries

- Read at least one My Library Is... blog entry
- Contributed a blog post
- Posted a best practice or successful promotional tool to Sharing Showcase on campaign website
- Implemented or adapted another library's Sharing Showcase contribution
- Applied for a My Library Is... grant or a My Library Is... grant for school libraries

“Read at least one blog post” was the only offering selected by over 50% of respondents from each library type. This may be because RAILS regularly publicizes new blog posts on our home page and in the weekly *RAILS E-News* as indicated above.

Other resources frequently used by different library types included:

- *Elders of the Internet* video (academic and public library respondents)
- Talking points for specific library types (public, school, and specialized library respondents)
- Special website sections for different library types (academic and specialized library respondents)
- My Library Is... grants for school libraries (school library respondents)

Next Steps

- RAILS will take advantage of the number of people looking at My Library Is... blog posts. In addition to inviting libraries of all types to post to the blog, we will actively recruit posts on specific challenges members are facing and best practices members share via our different mailing lists.
- Survey feedback also included calls for help compiling blog posts for those who are not natural writers. RAILS will offer the option of interviewing members and either posting a video of the interview or writing a blog post based on the interview.
- Due to the overwhelming number of positive comments RAILS received when we released the *Elders of the Internet* video, we will explore the option of producing another video, perhaps to address the need for increased/continued library funding since this is a challenge for all types and sizes of libraries (see below).

Major Challenges

Survey respondents were given a list of challenges targeted to their type of library and asked to rank how much each challenge affected their library specifically. They also had the option of noting additional challenges. Funding was the only major challenge identified by over 50% of respondents from all types of libraries.

Other major challenges identified by many respondents from different library types included:

- Communicating the value of the library to administrators (academic and school library respondents)
- Attracting non-library users, including specific age groups such as teens and young adults (public library respondents)
- Staffing shortages and justifying the need for additional staffing (public, school, and specialized library respondents)
- Low staff morale, apathy, or getting staff to accept promoting the library as part of their daily responsibilities (public library respondents)
- Difficulty getting patrons back into the library following COVID-19 related closures or patrons being angry about COVID-19 restrictions such as requiring masks (public library respondents)
- Communicating the different services the library has to offer in addition to lending books (public library respondents)
- Modernizing library buildings or spaces, including adopting current technology and the need for all libraries to have broadband access (public and school library respondents)
- Ensuring that I am at the decision-making table when something related to my library is being discussed (school library respondents)
- Demonstrating the library's impact on student success (school library respondents)
- Increasing the library's visibility in the organization (specialized library respondents)

Next Steps

- RAILS will develop toolkits on the My Library Is... website focusing on some of the major challenges identified by survey respondents, including funding, staffing issues, attracting new customers, and modernizing library buildings/library spaces. Each toolkit may include:
 - Examples of library best practices
 - CE webinars
 - Relevant My Library Is... blog posts
 - Specific talking points on the issue that staff from different types of libraries can use
 - Links to other helpful information/resources
- RAILS will explore the possibility of producing a video showing the importance of funding/supporting all types of libraries.
- RAILS will identify ways to address some of the other challenges identified via the survey, including producing/recruiting blog posts, and adding other relevant content to the My Library Is... website.

How RAILS & IHLS Can Help

Respondents were given a list of possible ways that RAILS and IHLS could help them via the campaign and asked to identify their top three choices.

- Respondents from all types of libraries chose “provide talking points to use with specific stakeholder groups” as one of their top three choices.
- Academic, public, and specialized libraries ranked “offering more CE to help libraries show their value” in their top three.
- Academic, school, and specialized libraries selected “share best practices from libraries that have successfully dealt with funding and other challenges” in their top three.
- Public and school libraries chose “provide templates of promotional materials I can customize to promote the library” in their top three.

Next Steps

- RAILS will examine existing talking points to see how they might be recast to deal with specific situations and develop additional talking points as well. We will include talking points to address specific challenges in the toolkits mentioned above.
- As mentioned above, RAILS will more actively recruit blog posts and will help library staff develop posts as needed to encourage the general sharing of best practices. We will also include best practices in the toolkits mentioned above.
- RAILS will share the survey results with the RAILS CE team and continue to post existing CE webinars from other organizations on the My Library Is... website as appropriate.
- RAILS will investigate the possibility of contracting with a graphic designer to develop templates to use to help libraries with major challenges, for example, a customizable piece to show the return-on-investment users get for the small percentage of their tax dollars that goes to public libraries and a piece showing how use of academic and school libraries contributes directly to students’ success. A template for a marketing plan could help all types of libraries.
- Though we have not had much luck recruiting libraries to post templates to the Sharing Showcase on the campaign website thus far, we will continue to ask them to do so.

Continuing Education Webinar Topics

Respondents were asked to identify how likely they would be to attend webinars on assorted topics related to the campaign. The following results indicate the top three webinars respondents from each library type would be very likely to attend.

- Academic library respondents chose “outreach activities to promote the library to others in the college/university” as their top choice. This was the third top choice for school library respondents.

- Public, school, and specialized library respondents chose “Using data to demonstrate the impact of the library” as their top choice. This was the third ranked choice for academic libraries.
- Academic, school, and specialized library respondents chose “Advocacy tips for speaking with administrators/funders about the library” as their second choice.
- Public library respondents chose “How staff at any level can advocate for the library” as their second choice and “Using social media to promote the library” as their third choice.
- Specialized library respondents chose “Graphic design tips and tricks” as their third choice.
- Public library respondents were the only library type to add write-in suggestions for CE webinars. Topics mentioned by multiple respondents included:
 - Topics related to EDI, including inclusive marketing, signage and marketing audits for diversity, and effective ways to reach multiple demographic groups and attract their attention
 - Marketing and promotion to teenagers and young adults
 - How small libraries with limited funds can promote the library, including free and inexpensive tools they can use

Next Steps

- As mentioned above, we will share these results with the RAILS CE Team.
- We will also look for CE webinars on these topics by outside organizations for inclusion on the campaign website.
- RAILS will arrange podcast interviews with “experts” on the topics above as appropriate.

TO: RAILS Board members

FROM: Deirdre Brennan

RE: Delivery update

DATE: January 19, 2022

As you know, last summer we issued an RFP for our delivery services. We asked for bids from vendors for the entire book of business and also pieces of it, broken down by hubs. Vendors could bid on all or some of the work, including individual hubs or more than one hub.

We received two responsive bids, and we spent several months trying to be sure we understood exactly the services and pricing being offered.

At the same time, COVID was continuing to upend the delivery/courier business in major ways, especially salaries. We began to experience newly hired delivery staff quitting after a week or even after one day because they got a better job – higher salary, better benefits, signing bonus, etc. Of course, the onset of the Omicron variant only intensified this disruption.

We are now, finally, close to decisions and recommendations to the board related to the RFP. We plan to make a full report to the board at the February meeting. I apologize that this has taken so long, but it was a complicated RFP that produced complicated responses and then we had to stop and redo a lot of work based on potential changes to our own delivery salaries as well as the changing landscape of the industry. We are focused on finding a solution that offers the best for our members, both in terms of efficiencies and quality.

RAILS Board Calendar of Events

<https://librarylearning.org/events>

Month	Agenda Items/Topics
January	RAILS Quarterly Consortial Reports
	Filing for SEIs Due – (admin staff -submit list of those who need to file)
	ALA midwinter meeting (end of January)
	ILA Legislative Meet-ups
February	ILA Legislative Meet-ups
	Appoint Nominating Committee for March Board Election
	Public Library Association (PLA) Annual Conference (end of February)
March	Executive Director evaluation process starts
	SEI notice email from Cook County in March
	ILA Trustee Workshop
April	Draft of System Area and Per Capita Grant Application + List of Membership
	Certification Membership Status Changes (if warranted)
	Notification of All systems Board meeting date
	Board members complete evaluation of Executive Director for May
	Statement of Economic Interest (SEI) – (filed by Board members)
	RAILS Quarterly Consortial Reports
	ILA Reaching Forward Illinois conference
May	Six-Month Review of Closed Session Minutes 5ILCS 120/2(c)(21)
	President or designee compiles Executive Director evaluations for June Meeting
	Approval of APC
June	Plaques: goodbye to retiring and non-returning board members
	Preliminary Board Meeting Fiscal Year Calendar
	Nominating committee presents slate of officers
	Closed session to discuss the findings and recommendations of Executive Director evaluation
	ALA annual conference (end of June)
July	Board Orientation
	RAILS Board Officers Signatures for Bank
	Swearing in of newly elected members with Oath of Office
	Election of Board Officers
	Committee Appointments by new President
	OMA certification for new board members
	Annual filing of conflict of interest form
	RAILS Quarterly Consortial Reports
	Board Meeting Fiscal Year Calendar Approval
August	
September	Annual Report Acceptance
	Audit Report Acceptance
October	RAILS Quarterly Consortial Reports
	ILA annual conference
November	Six-Month Review of Closed Session Minutes 5ILCS 120/2(c)(21)
December	No meeting