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## RAILS Board Committee Reports

### *Advocacy Committee Report- Chair Robin Helenthal*

#### **The committee met on Thursday, February 10, 2022/ Next meeting Thursday, March 10, 2022**

The committee members reported on the Central Illinois, South Suburban, and West Suburban & Chicago ILA Legislative Meet-Ups. Due to the virtual format, guests do not have the ability to comment. The RAILS staff and committee members were unable to respond when a representative posed questions about the statewide database proposal at the South Suburban meeting. Legislators at the West Suburban & Chicago Meetup expressed support for the St. Charles Public Library closure that was due to staff harassment over face mask requirements.

Dan Bostrom gave a presentation on specialized library advocacy. The Specialized Libraries Association (SLA) is facing many challenges such as declining enrollment, loss of revenue, increasing expenses, and loss of local chapters. RAILS currently supports specialized libraries through site visits, networking, collaboration, continuing education, and the My Library Is. . campaign called Specialized Library Spotlight. Feedback gathered from specialized librarians outlines ways RAILS could support them: develop best practices for demonstrating ROI, offer more continuing education for specialized libraries, offer funding through grants, post more specialized library jobs on the RAILS job board, and continue to partner with SLA Illinois and SLA National.

Deirdre Brennan highlighted the goals in the RAILS Strategic Plan relating to the Advocacy Committee. Advocacy work relates to Goal 3 - assist libraries in preparing for the future by leveraging influence, help libraries demonstrate their value and Goal 4 - strengthen the library community and expand services to all with collaborative relationships related to advocacy, information sharing, and universal service.

School data is an important tool for advocating for school libraries. RAILS worked with AISLE (Association of Illinois School Library Educators) to formulate the data gathering questions. School libraries are asked to provide job title, education level and FTE of school library staff on the annual library certification form. Additional information may be gathered by the RAILS research assistant.

There was discussion about school districts using the school district library grant money for expenses that are not library related. This committee plans to look at ways to determine how grant money is used in school districts. It was suggested committee or board members contact the schools in their district to inquire how the money was spent.

The committee received an update on the status of the Cards for Kids expansion sponsored by Illinois Senator Laura Murphy. The bill is expected to come up for a vote soon. The committee learned that ILA is working on equitable eBook pricing for libraries, which has support in the legislature, and funding broadband for libraries that are not able to provide good broadband access to their public.

#### Next steps for March meeting:

- Reports on ILA Legislative Meetups
- Legislative update
- Research into how school library grant funds have been used

## ***Consortia Committee Report-Chair Paul Mills***

LLSAP Sustainability Working Group will meet March 21 at 10 a.m.

## ***EDI Committee Report - Chair Dianne Hollister***

Next meeting Wednesday, March 30 at 1 p.m.

## ***Resource Sharing Committee Report - Chair Charm Ruhnke***

**The committee met on Monday, February 14 2022/ Next meeting Monday, May 9, 2022**

The RAILS Report topics related to resource sharing were noted. Find More Illinois is currently offering an incentive program to encourage libraries to join. Set up fees are waived, and libraries are not billed until July 2023. Members learned about potential improvements to FMI including the Verso circulation module offered at no cost to libraries, the Enhanced Borrowing module for RAILS to identify and purchase items that are not in FMI, and interstate borrowing. Members were updated on status of legislation to benefit the unserved. The RAILS Strategic Plan for 2022-2025 was reviewed. The next Resource Sharing Committee meeting will look at the committee's future focus in relation to the strategic plan goals.

Joe Filapek spoke about RAILS grants and announced the Spring 2022 CE Event Grant for libraries, networking groups, or library consortia. Applications for the grant are due April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Agenda Items for the May meeting are:

- FY2023 meeting schedule
- Update committee priorities
- Replacement of committee members as terms expire
- Challenges to materials

The next Resource Sharing Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 9th at 10 am.

## ***Universal Service Committee Report - Chair Susan Busenbark***

Next meeting Thursday, March 10 at 1 p.m.