

RAILS Report

RSC FY2021 Goal 1: Increase a Statewide Culture of Resource Sharing

Databases, Deals, and Discounts

RAILS Deals and Discounts News

Gale Presents: Udemy

[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

RAILS has negotiated advantageous pricing for [Gale Business: Plan Builder](#), 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 – Storytime PODs

[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 will be offered on March 22 at 2pm 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 Heights 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.

E-books and E-Content

eRead Illinois News

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.

RAILS staff have been analyzing the [eRead Illinois](#) fee structure. The results of this analysis will help inform future development opportunities.

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

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.

Current Status of RAILS Member Library Service

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.

RSC FY2021 Goal 2: Improve Awareness of Resource Sharing

Exciting Find More Illinois News for 2022

[Find More Illinois](#) connects participating standalone and shared online catalogs. Library patrons can quickly search all of these catalogs in a single search. Patrons and staff at participating libraries can also place interlibrary loan requests in the same search session. The more libraries that participate in Find More Illinois, the more robust and complete a resource it will be. For this reason, RAILS will be working to significantly grow the number of participating libraries over the next year.

We recently welcomed Skokie Public Library and Helen Plum Library in Lombard to the growing list of participants. We are also finalizing details for an incentive program where new libraries can join without paying the usual setup fee or any annual fees until July 2023. This program will include current library participants as well. Stay tuned for further details coming soon. In the meantime, visit the [Find More Illinois website](#) to see how this seamless discovery tool can benefit your library.

LLSAP Sustainability Working Group

The LLSAP Sustainability Working Group continues to meet and 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.

RAILS World Language Cataloging Services Program

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

RAILS 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.

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](#).

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](#)

AISLE Partnership

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 November, 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
- AISLE and ILA Conference Updates
- RAILS’ November 16 “[Stop, Look, Listen: Helping Students Spot the Fakes](#)” media literacy webinar

RAILS at AISLE Conference

RAILS had our first in-person booth since February 2020 at the AISLE conference in Champaign, November 8-9. Approximately 129 Illinois school library staff members visited the booth for a chance to spin our famous RAILS wheel and to hear more about the services we offer for schools. We also developed a special [online handout](#) highlighting those services.

Popular topics of conversation were [eRead Illinois](#), [inkie.org](#), and the [My Library Is... campaign](#), among others. Many booth visitors commented on how much they appreciate RAILS and all we are doing to reach out to school libraries.

Anna Behm, RAILS E-Content Specialist, also gave a demo about eRead Illinois and other RAILS programs/services for schools at the conference.

Several RAILS staff members attended the conference in person, including Deirdre Brennan, Executive Director; Anna Behm, E-Content Specialist; Joe Filapek, Director of Consulting & Continuing Education; Monica Harris, Associate Executive Director; Brian Smith, Applications & Web Developer; Mary Witt, Director of Marketing & Communications; and Nicole Zimmermann, Marketing & Public Relations Specialist.

RSC FY2021 Goal 3: Provide Services for the Unserved

Universal Service/Unserved

Help Support RAILS' Proposal for Statewide Access to Online Databases

RAILS is working on a [proposal for statewide access to online databases](#) for all Illinois libraries and residents. We are requesting a \$5 million annual appropriation that would be an addition to the Secretary of State/Illinois State Library budget and would supplement current library and library system funding. Thus far, we have received strong support for this proposal from Illinois Senator Laura Murphy.

We discussed the proposal at the January 19 RAILS Member Update. There were over 200 attendees and much enthusiasm for the proposal. Attendees also asked for talking points they could use when talking with their elected officials to ensure their support for this funding. RAILS has developed [talking points library staff](#) can use when speaking with Illinois legislators. We also have [information from other states](#) that may be helpful. Illinois is currently only one of two states that does not have a state-funded database program.