

## LLSAP Sustainability Working Group Report

1/10/2022

In January the discussion focused on criteria for libraries joining LLSAP membership. Key takeaways from the discussion: 1) identify an alternate solution for libraries that cannot afford to join a LLSAP or for whom long-term sustainability of membership is not possible and 2) planning for LLSAP sustainability. Find More Illinois is a viable option as an alternate resource sharing solution for libraries that cannot afford to participate in a consortium, but nonautomated libraries will still need to implement a separate circulation system. It was agreed that publishing a Request for Information (RFI) to an investigation of potential statewide solutions would be beneficial in planning for LLSAP sustainability. The scope of the RFI would be exploratory, meant to provide insight into the possibilities that may exist for ILS cost savings for a statewide catalog or possible smaller LLSAP mergers.

3/21/2022

RAILS staff reported at the March meeting on a series of discussions with IHLS, CPL, RAILS, and LLSAP managers that were held to collect thoughts on what a statewide ILS solution might look like. The discussions were convened by IHLS representatives Leslie Bednar and Cassie Thompson.

RAILS received three strong proposals in response to the RFI. RAILS staff will assess proposals and select a consultant.

The group continued to further discuss criteria for LLSAP membership. It was shared RAILS staff are in discussions with Auto-Graphics, the Find More Illinois vendor, about a free to low-cost ILS solution for nonautomated or underautomated libraries. Grant Halter reviewed data sets previously presented and made a recommendation to develop a RAILS-wide data collection instrument with the working title RAILCAR. RAILCAR would capture consortium information not collected through other reports, in order to tell a bigger story and indicate metrics that would help illuminate LLSAP costs, affordability, and value to libraries. This may include information on staffing composition, ticket volume, training, cataloging, and database management. It was agreed that a tool alone cannot be the only factor in determining the most automation solution for individual libraries but could augment direct input from the LLSAP director and RAILS to guide the conversation. From another perspective, schools would need a different set of measurements and tool to determine their best automation solutions.

Find More Illinois participation is growing including the six libraries from the Pinnacle consortium. The first round of promotions focused on standalone libraries, with considerable success in growing interest and recruiting new participating libraries, and broader promotion will occur in the coming months. Search functionality and user experience will improve significantly with the in-progress transition to a union catalog from Z39.50 connections to the ILS for collection information. A free and optional Enhanced Borrowing service is now being offered to fill unfilled requests through the RAILS OCLC account.

Next meeting is Monday, May 16.