

# RAILS Report

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## RAILS budget

We are currently in the process of developing the FY2023 budget, due to the Illinois State Library on June 1. We will be discussing it with the RAILS board at the April 22 meeting, and they will be approving it for submission to ISL at their meeting in May.

Our draft budget includes the additional funding that Secretary White proposed in his budget. This is very good news, as it means we can cover rising expenses that member libraries are also facing, especially in the area of salaries, and add some new services that were recommended in our strategic planning process.

## RAILS strategic plan

The new RAILS strategic plan has been finalized and approved by the RAILS Board. We welcome you to review it here: <https://www.railslibraries.info/about/strategic-plan>.

## Catalog membership grants

The final application deadline of FY2022 is April 15, 2022, and we anticipate receiving at least one application. We intend to include this grant program in the FY2023 RAILS budget.

## Cards for Kids Act extension

[Senate Bill 3497](#) has passed in both the Illinois House of Representatives and the Illinois Senate. The bill allows a public library board to choose to waive the nonresident fee for all persons under the age of 18. The bill will go to Governor Pritzker next. If he signs it, the Illinois State Library will develop rules to guide the implementation of the legislation and the bill will become law.

RAILS has been working on this initiative with our RAILS Board Universal Services Committee for about two years, and considers the bill passing both houses to be a major accomplishment. Universal service and the importance of children having access to library service also frequently came up as a priority for members from all types of libraries during the development of the new RAILS strategic plan. The legislation will help get library cards into the hands of many more kids in Illinois, no matter where they live or the income level of their parents. It will encourage kids to read and to use the public library. If these children see the benefits of public library service early on, they will be more likely to advocate for and support libraries as adults.

RAILS will keep members informed of the continued progress of this bill via this *E-News*.