

## RAILS BOARD ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

December 8, 2022 | 4:00 p.m.  
125 Tower Drive, Burr Ridge, IL 60527

### Minutes

1. Welcome and Call to Order  
Robin Helenthal, Advocacy Committee chairperson, called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. Helenthal read the following statement: In accordance with the Governor's Emergency Proclamation, the RAILS Board of Directors finds an in-person meeting is not practical or prudent and believes it is in the best interest of RAILS to hold a virtual meeting to perform essential business.
2. Roll Call of Committee Members  
Goyer called the roll of Committee members.  
Zoom/Telephone: Monica Caldicott, Alice Creason, Juanita Harrell, Robin Helenthal, Sarah McHone-Chase, Thomas Stagg, Amy Walsh (4:03pm)  
Absent: Kara Thorstenson
3. Recognition of Guests and Announcements  
Guests in attendance at RAILS Burr Ridge: Karen Goyer (minute taker), Monica Harris (*ex-officio*)  
Guests in attendance via Zoom: Ryan Hebel, Mary Witt (*ex-officio*)
4. Public Comments  
There were no public comments.
5. Consent Agenda
  - 5.1. Adoption of the Agenda
  - 5.2. Approval of the RAILS Board Advocacy Committee Minutes of November 10, 2022  
Creason moved for the approval of the consent agenda. Caldicott seconded and a roll call vote was taken: Ayes: Monica Caldicott, Alice Creason, Juanita Harrell, Robin Helenthal, Sarah McHone-Chase, Thomas Stagg, Amy Walsh. Nays: none.
6. Unfinished Business
  - 6.1. Legislative and Advocacy Update  
ILA will hold three virtual Legislative Meetups by region. Newly elected legislators will be invited to the meetups. ILA will encourage members to contact current legislators directly. RAILS offered to assist by helping to connect people to their legislators and pulling together stories to share with legislators. RAILS would appreciate receiving more stories, especially from school librarians. ILA has identified their priorities as the statewide online resources and the amendment to the local records act but will wait until January to move them forward. The House Bill 4073 section concerning library board vacancies has been amended to be retroactive. This act is awaiting the Governor's signature. The incoming Secretary of State released the list of members of the [Library Enhancements Committee](#) transition team. Harris has been in contact with some members to discuss statewide priorities with a focus on ILA's priorities, the unserved, and the need for certified librarians in every school.

ILA is now a member of Unite Against Book Bans. ALA organized a thank you card sent to Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) and Representative Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ-03) for reintroducing a bill (Right to Read Act) to support school libraries and librarians. An historic investment to build libraries and modernize facilities has the support of over 50 senators. The funding, already included in the Senate budget proposal but not yet in the House's, would be the first of its kind in over 25 years. Federal funding is available through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs act to get community members online through the library.

#### 6.2. Advocacy Committee Goal – Find More Illinois Talking Points

Caldicott shared her experience of joining Find More Illinois (FMI) in the recent AISLE newsletter. Harris will find out more about what materials UIC is willing to lend through FMI. Schools hoped that FMI would be a direct path to accessing articles, however Creason explained articles are sent through OCLC, not I-Share.

### 7. New Business

#### 7.1. Advocacy Committee Goal - School Library Issues and Talking Points

Caldicott, Thorstensen and Walsh wrote a presentation on How RAILS Can Help School Libraries. The challenges are school librarians struggle to be seen, school librarians work alone and are often responsible for multiple schools, they are scheduled with classes the entire day not allowing for professional development and other library work. These challenges demonstrate why there is a need for a librarian in each school.

Walsh explained AISLE is taking a larger advocacy role. AISLE is working to advocate for school librarians by contacting school administrators and boards with letters, data, and links to research supporting school librarians. AISLE appreciates RAILS' help with the goal of advocating for a school librarian in every building.

Walsh noted the school code states an adequately funded school should have 1 librarian for every 600 students, every district should have a school library and if not, they should be working with their public library to provide weekly access to a library. Some important questions to ask about school library service are how do students have access to the library, how many libraries are staffed by a certified librarian, are students instructed in media literacy, how does the library purchase books, what is the budget? Harris went over the My Library Is. . School Library talking points.

### 8. Meeting Recap and Agenda Building for the Next RAILS Board Advocacy Committee Meeting

The next Advocacy Committee meeting will be held on January 12, 2022 at 4 pm.

Topics for the next meeting are: Legislative and Advocacy Update, Find More Illinois, School Library Issues and Talking Points, Advocacy on the Cards for Kids Act changes.

### 9. Adjournment

Helenthal adjourned the meeting at 5:05 p.m.