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November 15, 2024

TO: RAILS Board of Directors

FROM: Monica Harris, Executive Director

SUBJECT: 8.2 Leadership Training Illinois Libraries

Since I started in my role as Executive Director of RAILS in 2023, I have been hearing from RAILS member libraries about their concerns for the development of leaders in libraries across Illinois. This has led to many great discussions about what leadership development opportunities exist across Illinois already, and what RAILS can do to effectively support a need that has been consistently identified by our members.

In our FY2025 budget, we have identified a modest amount dedicated to the development of a leadership program for RAILS members. Because our RAILS Board of Directors represents a wide range of library types, geographies, and experiences, we thought it would be valuable to bring a discussion around leadership development to you all as part of our November meeting.

We'd like to address the following questions as part of our discussion:

- What are the challenges to becoming a library leader in Illinois?
- What do you think is the most pressing issue related to leadership development in our state?
- What skills are necessary to learn to be an effective library leader?
- As a library leader, what was most impactful in your own development?
- Most of our requests related to leadership training come from public libraries. Is it important that this program cover a multitype (school, academic, special) focus?

I look forward to your thoughts and perspective.