
October 17, 2025

TO: RAILS Board of Directors

FROM: Monica Harris, Executive Director

SUBJECT: 8.1 eRead Illinois Update

Due to the sudden closure of vendor [Baker & Taylor](#), RAILS needs to immediately relocate our [eRead Illinois](#) cooperative program that offers access to e-books and audiobooks to Illinois residents. RAILS is committed to continuing to offer a high-quality e-book and audiobook collection for libraries across Illinois. Baker & Taylor plans to cease all operations by the end of 2025.

After a robust internal process, I am pleased to share with you that RAILS has selected the Palace Project managed by Lyrasis to be the new home of the eRead Illinois Boundless e-content collection. The eRead Illinois program will transition from the Boundless platform to the Palace platform in the coming weeks. It is essential that we move quickly in order to ensure as little disruption as possible for eRead members.

After lengthy discussions with e-book and audiobook vendors, RAILS determined that the Palace Project offers not only an e-content platform for the eRead Illinois program, but a unique opportunity to serve as a platform for other e-content programs across the state. The Palace Project offers benefits that will enhance library e-content collections, including the ability to aggregate e-books and audiobooks from other platforms into the Palace app. The Palace Marketplace includes more favorable e-content licensing terms for libraries and access to Audible audiobook titles.

We are very excited to strengthen our long-standing relationship with Lyrasis, an organization that shares our commitment to supporting libraries and strengthening our library community. We look forward to bringing The Palace Project to Illinois; this platform has already been successfully utilized by other large library systems and consortia in other states, representing a significant opportunity to enhance digital access for our members.

We are working on a timeline for transitioning the eRead Illinois shared collection and onboarding libraries to Palace. We will reach out directly to eRead Illinois member libraries with more information in the next few weeks. Currently, the Boundless platform remains intact. Although we are not able to purchase additional content for Boundless at this time, we will purchase e-content for eRead Illinois on the Palace Project platform as soon as we begin the transition.

RAILS staff managing the transition of the eRead Illinois program will be at our October meeting to explain the background of this project, the steps we took to select a replacement, and next steps for the program. We look forward to your questions and insights.