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RAILS Report – Resource Sharing Committee

CARLI, IHLS, and RAILS Announce ILDS Change

CARLI, IHLS, and RAILS announced a change to the Illinois Library Delivery Service (ILDS) turnaround time, moving from a 24-hour to a 48-hour expectation between delivery hubs in order to support long-term sustainability, operational efficiency, and safety across the statewide delivery network.

CTL Acquired by Best Courier

RAILS outsourced delivery service provider, Continental Transportation Services (CTS), has been acquired by Best Courier of Vernon Hills. At this time, no operational changes are expected, and the company has indicated it will continue meeting all service obligations under the contract signed in 2025. Members of the new leadership team recently visited the RAILS Bolingbrook delivery hub to receive an overview of our delivery operation.

RAILS Staff Attend Automated Material Handler Demonstration

RAILS Associate Executive Director Joe Filapek, Director of Facilities and Delivery Mark Hatch, and Delivery Services Manager Demond Warfield met with staff at the Chicago Public Library – Harold Washington Library Center on March 20 to observe a demonstration of the library’s automated material handler and learn more about how automation supports high-volume materials processing.

Illinois Legislative Updates

Joe Filapek attended the Illinois Library Association (ILA) Public Policy Committee (PPC) meeting as Monica Harris’ designee for Ex Officio on Monday, May 4. As you know, the ILA Executive Board has approved the following legislative priorities for this year:

- Increase Library System Area & Per Capita Grants and Public Per Capita & School District Grants by 20%
- Require Public Library Trustee Training
- Open Educational Resources funding grant
- Make eBooks Equitable and Accessible

The following bills have made the move to be considered by the Senate:

[HB4261](#) would increase annual grants for public libraries in the state, school library grants, and the library system grants in order to reflect inflationary pressures since the last time the grant amount was



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raised. The library system grant is what funds operations at RAILS and the other two systems in Illinois. The bill, which was filed by Rep. Martha Deuter, has bipartisan support with nineteen additional cosponsors as of the time of this writing. If passed, this bill would be effective immediately. This bill passed the House 107-0 and now is in the Senate Appropriations committee.

[HB5236](#) (filed by Rep. Tracy Katz Muhl) would amend the Digital Library Protection Act to include more reasonable terms for libraries as it relates to eBook licenses. These provisions closely reflect those made in the 2025 legislation passed in Connecticut. The bill passed the House on April 17, 99-0. This bill is now under legal review in the Senate.

RAILS facilitated an E-Content Expenditure Survey to support a statewide analysis of spending on eBooks, digital audiobooks, and other electronic materials. The survey results will help inform advocacy efforts related to e-content, including support for HB5236.

ILA has published [a list of the bills](#) they are supporting, opposing, and monitoring on their website.

Find More Illinois Update

Find More Illinois recently welcomed two new academic library participants, Millikin University and Olivet Nazarene University. Together, the institutions have added more than 145,000 items to the shared catalog, expanding access to a diverse range of academic and specialized resources for library users across the state.

RAILS Strategic Planning

As part of our strategic plan refresh process, RAILS recently completed a significant phase of member engagement and information gathering. The member survey concluded on April 22 and generated nearly 500 responses from across the membership, providing valuable feedback on member priorities. In addition, strategic planning consultant Cindy Fesemeyer conducted interviews and focus groups with a broad range of stakeholders, including leaders from 12 Illinois library partner organizations, representatives from public, academic, school, and special libraries, and former RAILS committee and board members.

The findings from the survey, interviews, and focus groups are now being reviewed and will help inform the next phase of the strategic planning process. The Strategic Planning Steering Committee discussed the results in May, and the RAILS Board will have an opportunity to review the findings in advance of the Board Strategic Planning Workshop on June 30.

eRead Illinois & Inkie.org Update

RAILS Director of Library Resources and Programs Leila Heath and RAILS E-Content Specialist Anna Behm met regularly with the team from Palace Project to discuss progress with onboarding libraries and transferring the eRead Illinois collection to the Palace Project. They are working collaboratively to identify and support shared catalog solutions and expand resource sharing.



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Anna Behm gave a presentation to Plainfield CCSD 202 school library professionals about eRead Illinois and the transition from Boundless to The Palace Project. Thirty school buildings in the district participate in eRead Illinois.

Introducing RAILS Academy

RAILS Academy is a new online learning platform designed to support the professional development of staff at RAILS member libraries. Powered by Niche Academy, RAILS Academy provides free, on-demand access to hundreds of tutorials on topics ranging from the ethics of artificial intelligence to youth readers' advisory, customer service, intellectual freedom, and technology. RAILS Academy allows users to learn anytime, track their progress, and earn certificates for selected courses. New content, including recently recorded webinars, is added regularly. Getting started is simple. Staff can learn more and create an account at <https://railslibraries.org/education/academy> or find RAILS Academy in the Education menu on the RAILS website.