



Consortial Reports

July 13, 2026

Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI)/I-Share

CARLI Governance Board

- CARLI Governance Board meetings for the upcoming year are September 18, 2026, December 4, 2026, March 5, 2027, and June 11, 2027.
- Michelle Boule Smith at North Central College is the Governance Board chair for July 1, 2026-June 30, 2027.
- New CARLI Governance Board Members:
 - Term: July 1, 2026-June 30, 2027
 - Spencer Brayton, Waubensee Community College
 - Carolyn Ciesla, Elmhurst University
 - Steven Harris, Northeastern Illinois University
 - Term: July 1, 2026-June 30, 2027
 - Dennis Krieb, Lewis and Clark Community College
 - Geoff Pettys, Southern Illinois University School of Medicine
 - Amanda Pippitt, Millikin University

I-Share

- Chicago History Museum and the Field Museum of Natural History are now live on I-Share. They will be added to the automated fulfillment network by July 31 which allows their patrons to directly borrow from other I-Share members and allows other I-Share members to directly borrow from their lendable collections.
- I-Share still has 94 institutions with the addition of these two libraries and the closure of Trinity Christian College and Trinity International University.

CARLI Scholarship

- The CARLI Scholarship Committee has selected recipients for the 2026-2027 academic year. The recipients are: Kennedy Gerton, Greenville University and Levi Curtis, University of Chicago.
- The scholarship is funded by donors who have generously supported this important program, helping CARLI to grow the profession.

Continuing Education

- Throughout FY26, CARLI and the members of the Professional Development Alliance have shared 128 free continuing education webinars available to all CARLI Members.
- CARLI Annual Meeting will be November 10 in Champaign.

Collections

- The CARLI Member funded Ebook Program will include in its FY27 Access Collection titles from Wiley, Oxford University Press, and the University of Illinois Press. At the end of the Access Period, July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2027, CARLI selects titles for perpetual access for all CARLI Governing Members.
- CARLI Governance Board has allocated CARLI funds to provide additional access to ebooks for all CARLI Governing Members that will include Bloomsbury ebooks and ebooks on the Project MUSE platform.

Cooperative Computer Services (CCS)

Rolling Meadows and Wauconda Addition

Innovative completed the test data load using a new load process, which appears to have reduced the amount of time needed for record processing from last year's migration. Member Services began migration training in June. The libraries are currently working on initial BiblioCore configuration decisions. CCS shared Polaris logins and staff will test ahead of their first in-person training session.

Bibliocore Implementation

As of June 25, 18 libraries and CCS have formally launched their BiblioCore discovery layers. Member library staff shared feedback on the implementation project via a survey. CCS led two Core-focused webinars in June.

CCS will continue to review and respond to patron feedback submitted via Core. Survey responses will be analyzed for insight into how to improve future implementation projects. Libraries in Extended Preview will launch between now and October 20.

Find More Illinois

Mt. Prospect Public Library, RAILS, and CCS have begun their implementation. CCS plans to complete implementation for all recently added members this year.

Innovative and Polaris

LX Starter

CCSS led a webinar on LX Starter Audiences, which looked at notice analytics and troubleshooting. CCS collected feedback from Beta Librarians and compiled a Beta Rollout Analysis and draft a plan for general library rollouts.

CCS will finalize the LX Starter rollout plan and work with libraries to schedule rollout cohorts. CCS is also developing more how-to documentation for the website.

Member Engagement Analysis

D. Wischmeyer met with staff who requested follow-up on the Member Engagement survey to gather additional feedback on CCS support and services

M. Sum and D. Wischmeyer created an engagement rubric to help identify libraries to target for additional outreach or support. See below.

D. Wischmeyer drafted an initial FY26-27 engagement goals and action items based on the Member Engagement Survey report's findings and recommendations. Action items will support the following goals:

- Provide Clear, Updated Messaging on “Who is CCS?”: Increase staff awareness and understanding of CCS services to encourage greater use across all levels.
- Proactive Member Outreach and Staff Training: Increase high-touch engagement and direct support to libraries.
- Refresh Networking and Knowledge Sharing at CCS: Increase participation, consistency, and value across CCS groups and communication channels.
- Strengthen Policies & Procedures (Policies/Procedures): Ensure clarity, consistency, and alignment in database management policies and enforcement.
- Update CCS Website and Documentation (Website/Documentation): Make CCS resources easier to find, understand, and use.
- Strengthen Communication Tools & Reporting (Communication): Improve transparency, engagement with, and effectiveness of CCS communications.

CCS is working to Finalize FY25-26 engagement data and assign initial engagement score to members. Incorporate member engagement action items into FY26-27 staff goals.

Polaris and Innovative

PowerPAC Performance Issues

CCS and Innovative are pursuing three strategies to mitigate PowerPAC performance issues. Updates on each are below.

Geofence Implemented

A geofence was implemented on the PowerPAC server on June 29th. This blocks international traffic (except Canada). Since the geofence was applied, there has been a noticeable reduction in traffic, log file size (which is an indication of activity), and server warning events. This indicates the geofence has had an immediate, positive impact.

API Server

Earlier this year, Polaris Support set up a new, dedicated API server to handle API requests coming from known vendors. The existing API server shared resources with the PowerPAC server.

As of July 1, vendors that have moved to the new server are:

- Bibliocommons
- Communico

- PatronPoint
- Library Market
- My Libro App

CCS is communicating with vendors to request the change in traffic. In some cases, library staff will have to update configurations in their third-party service. Information will be shared with the IT and PAS lists when applicable.

CloudFlare Coming Soon

Clarivate has signed an agreement with CloudFlare, a service that provides enhanced security and performance to websites. We are waiting for details on implementation.

Pinnacle Library Cooperative (PLC)

Pinnacle Staff In-Service Day

On August 7, Pinnacle will host a combined staff in-service day for all member libraries. We expect approximately 350 staff members to attend as all six Pinnacle libraries will be closed for the day. Staff will gather at the Renaissance Center in downtown Joliet for a full day of professional development featuring 25 different breakout sessions and a keynote presentation by outgoing ALA President, Sam Helmick.

Vega Discover

After five years as a development partner on Vega Discover, Pinnacle is nearing the launch of its new online catalog. Early in the process, we identified the ability to place OCLC requests directly from the catalog as a key feature that we wanted to retain from PowerPAC. After an extended wait for development, Innovative has added the feature to its product roadmap, with an anticipated release date of October 6.

Once implemented and configured, this feature would allow patrons to search Worldcat through the Vega Discover interface and submit interlibrary loan requests. Submitted requests would then follow the existing interlibrary loan workflow.

ILS Server Issues

Last month, our catalog has been experiencing significant increase in automated web traffic, likely generated by bots and AI agents. The volume of requests overwhelms the server causing the catalog and other related servers to crash.

To improve server stability, Innovative Support implemented geofencing that blocks connections from outside of North America, which has significantly reduced traffic volume and kept the server stable. Innovative is also planning to implement Cloudflare in the coming months to provide additional security against other automated traffic.

Rock River Library Consortium (RRLC)

Nothing to Report.

Resource Sharing Alliance (RSA)

Independence – Done

RSA's independence project is complete. RSA was given a deadline of June 30, 2026, to complete the establishment of new governance and separation of staffing, as well as moving off from RAILS provided information technology. RSA is now an Illinois Intergovernmental Instrumentality as of July 1, 2024. We became staff independent on January 1, 2026, with 9 RAILS staff transferring to RSA direct employment status that day. Four days later we brought on three new staff. And having bought our own laptops and monitors and various software solutions, and after removing our firewall and other obsolete equipment from the data center in Springfield we are now IT independent as well (with the small exception of using the RAILS network in the EP office as part of our building rent).

Now that we are done with the Independence project we are looking ahead at some longer term projects which we can now put our focus on.

Environmental Scan

The first of these is completing an environment scan of the ILS market. We are currently in the second year of a 2+5-year contract with SirsiDynix. At the end of this year, we could choose to migrate to a new vendor or remain with SirsiDynix. If we stay with SirsiDynix we would affect an in-place migration from our current Symphony system to a new, clean, uncluttered Symphony database. The environment scan is set for this fall. We will invite vendors to show current offerings and to describe their plans for development.

In preparation for either a migration to a new ILS or an in-place migration, we are doing extensive work on our existing ILS database.

Bibliographic Data Clean up

Working alongside SirsiDynix, we are just starting a major data update in our bibliographic data. With approximately 58,000 brief records currently in WorkFlows (or about 5.5% of the approximately 1,054,000 total bibliographic records), RSA seeks to improve the bibliographic quality of our database to improve discoverability not just in WorkFlows but also for patrons in RSAcat.

The backlog of nearly 58,000 brief records would take the RSA Bibliographic Services Department approximately 30 years to upgrade to OCLC records with full bibliographic description, and that timeline would only be true if no new brief records were created. Because manually upgrading each of these brief records is impossible, RSA is working with SirsiDynix this summer to develop and conduct four phases of brief record cleanup:

1. One-time project: SirsiDynix will add the equivalent 13-digit ISBN to OCLC records that currently only have the 10-digit ISBN. Nearly 242,000 OCLC records need to be updated to include the 13-digit ISBN.
2. Routine monthly project: Batch convert 10-digit ISBNs to their 13-digit equivalents on brief records, both in the title control number and 020 fields. The 10-digit ISBN will be removed in both fields. Editing the 10-digit ISBN to the 13-digit equivalent will increase the likelihood of that brief record matching an OCLC record. Using the 13-digit ISBN will

also allow the brief record to be overlaid if a matching OCLC record is imported into WorkFlows at some point.

3. Routine monthly project: Merge duplicate brief records together that match based on title, author, and standard number (i.e., ISBN, ISSN, or UPC).
4. Routine monthly project: Transfer brief items to the fuller OCLC records where the titles, authors, and standard numbers match.

We will see the full impact of these steps once all four steps have been completed for the first time. Steps 2-4 will then be completed monthly to maintain the improvements made. We are in the early stages of looking into other possible tools to tackle whatever brief record backlog remains and I will report what we discover.

Standardization and Design

We are planning for the migration to a new database in two other ways. The first is by facilitating and encouraging discussions around standardization.

We are especially focused on helping our libraries find common ground in the areas of item types, circulation rules, and bill types. A good example of the benefits of this is that our current database includes 271 overdue fine structures, but as so many libraries have gone fine the benefits that only 35 are now used. We will be working with member libraries to see if we can agree to an even smaller set.

In developing the design for the elements of the new database we have followed these fundamental principles.

1. The design language must be system neutral
 - Examples are based on Symphony constraints, but the overall principles should apply in the event we migrate to a different vendor
2. Codes should be human readable
 - Codes should be designed consistently to allow RSA staff and others to easily interpret them
 - When abbreviating codes such as Library System Codes to fit digit constraints vowels are cut first as this leaves the abbreviated code human readable
3. Ensuring a future proof design where possible
 - Codes should be designed to allow for addition of library branches, new circulation rules, new item types, and so on
 - RSA has learned through past experience that no design can be future proofed against a library changing its official name

Member Visits

As mentioned in earlier reports, RSA has a policy that we'll visit every RSA member and branch once every 18 months. That means we have to visit about 30 individual buildings every quarter. This does not include training, new directors' visits, meetings, and other visit reasons. As of 30 June, we'll have visited almost all 175 RSA library buildings in the previous 18 months. Then we start again.

- April – 14 in person visits

- May – 6 in person visits
- June – 4 in person visits

Firewall

We have completed our transition away from the Cisco firewall that gave us so much trouble last autumn. We have implemented a new virtualized firewall in the cloud along with a backup physical firewall. All our remaining equipment held at the Springfield data site was removed and recycled.

System Wide Automated Network (SWAN)

Official RFP search for ILS & analytics

The SWAN Board approved by unanimous vote at its June meeting to begin a search for an ILS and analytics platform. The timing of the approval allowed the SWAN management team to use the 2026 ALA Conference for meetings with vendors, including the current ILS and analytics provider SirsiDynix. We estimate that the RFP process will take about a full year to complete, which will include software demonstrations and membership involvement. SWAN will not be seeking replacement solutions for Aspen Discover and other third-party solutions such as MessageBee.

AI Bot impact on SWAN

The general impact of generative AI in the library technology space is that we are seeing huge increases in network traffic to SWAN's websites, which includes our hosted Aspen Discovery. Our DNS provider is reflecting a huge, steady increase in SWAN website lookups, which has increased the monthly cost of the service to SWAN. Our Aspen Discovery is supported and hosted by Grove for Libraries, and is utilizing Google hosting and Cloud Armor. There are occasions where Aspen has become unresponsive due to AI bots harvesting catalog artwork. We are discussing the use of a Content Delivery Network (CDN) as a cache of the artwork. The CDN is preferred rather than a CAPTCHA solution for Aspen as it will allow the server to remain responsive during bot attacks.

Strategic Planning updates

SWAN has completed four strategic planning events retreats with SWAN membership. We are now working on revisions to our Mission, Vision, and Value statements, along with a new plan of objectives and goals.

SWAN Expo Planning

The annual event will be held at NIU Naperville on Friday, August 22nd. Each year we solicit proposals for sessions at the membership meeting and this year we received a larger than usual number of session proposals. The session titles are listed below.

- Beyond Books: Launching, Expanding, and Marketing a Successful Library of Things
- Bringing Joy to Adult Seasonal Reading Programs
- Building your Dream Team
- Discovery Disconnect: Auditing Your E-Resource Access and Fixing What's Broken
- How to Become an Illinois Approved Professional Development Provider
- It Takes a Village: Building a Collaborative Collection Committee
- Making the Most of Purchase Suggestions in Aspen Discovery

- Mindfulness: It's Good for Your Core!
- Modernize Your ILL: Streamlined Processes Using Spreadsheets and Reports
- Pre-built Reports and How People Use Them
- Preparing for Web Accessibility and Conducting a Manual Audit
- The Watercooler Gang: Why Fun is Essential
- More Than Checkouts: Expanding Community Reach Through Circulation Outreach (Roundtable discussion)
- Tracking Patron Payments at the Circulation Desk: What's Working at Your Library? (Roundtable discussion)