



Illinois Library Association

ILA Committee and Forum Reports

This form is to be completed by committee chairs/forum managers in collaboration with board liaisons. The ILA Executive Board will meet on the following dates in 2019-20: 11/21/19, 1/30/20, 4/30/20, and 6/11/20. Reports should be submitted **two weeks before each board meeting** to the board and staff liaison (liaisons are listed on rosters at <http://www.ila.org/about/committees> or <http://www.ila.org/forums>) and the ILA office (email: dfoote@ila.org).

Committee or Forum: Best Practices Committee

Report completed by: Laura Barnes

Date: November 5, 2019

Activities underway or completed since the last report:

The committee met twice during the reporting period: at ILA Orientation and at the annual conference.

We revised the committee charge and ask the Board to approve or make further suggestions for revision:

Promotes excellence in the Illinois library community by identifying and amplifying innovative services, community outreach initiatives, and management procedures both for the association and for the profession as a whole. Seeks out best practices for emerging trends and issues in the profession by surveying current practices in the library community, identifying techniques that work for diverse sizes and types of libraries, and sharing these practices with the library community through the ILA Reporter, social media, ILA's Committees and Forums, and other communication channels.

We developed and distributed two surveys. The first was to determine areas of importance in Illinois libraries. The three most popular topics identified were customer service, patron privacy, and communication. The complete results are available at <https://sway.office.com/7Ejp2stfM6iklgZY>. A PDF of the Sway document is attached. We discussed choosing one of these topics as a focus for the remainder of the year, but decided instead to turn our attention to developing a framework under which the committee will operate in future years. See the projected activities/initiatives section for the timeline.

The second survey was on the topic of self-service holds and patron privacy. We distributed the survey through the ILA newsletter, the RAILS and Heartland newsletters, the Library Think Tank Facebook group, and several ALA lists. The survey opened on October 1 and closed November 1.

We will submit a more detailed report before the next board meeting. Below are some initial takeaways:

Demographics

- Nearly 500 individuals throughout the nation completed the survey, with the majority of respondents (90%) from Illinois.
- Ninety-one percent of respondents work at public libraries (52% suburban, 30% rural, 9% urban).

Offering Self-Service Holds

- Roughly half of survey respondents reported offering self-service or open holds at their libraries, and of those offering the service, 98% have offered it for five years or longer. Ninety-one percent of respondents offering self-service or open holds consider the service successful.

How holds are labeled

- The majority of respondents label by partial last name (47%) and/or partial library barcode number (47%). Forty-one percent of respondents include patrons' full last names, and 15% included full first names.
- There was concern, based on comments, about creating alias labels that were so complicated patrons struggle to find their holds.
- Beyond labels, important privacy considerations regarding self-serve/open holds according to written comments were: proximity of the self-serve/open hold shelf to a staffed service desk to deter theft, placement of the label on the item, placement of the item on the shelf (spine-side down, for example), and procedure related to hold pickup for others (family or friend).

Other privacy concerns

- There were several themes for future consideration: patron privacy related to subscription databases and other third party vendors (Lynda.com, for example), library card registration requirements such as birth date and gender, and patron awareness of privacy issues in general.

The committee is also working on the appointment process task assigned to us by the Board. Although we've begun gathering information, we don't have recommendations yet. We wanted to complete the self-service holds survey first because that had a tighter timeline.

Finally, we began using some communication tools that will ensure continuity when the committee membership changes each year:

- Started a Google group (through ILA) for members to use to discuss committee work. The messages are archived so that future committee members can see what was discussed.
- Created a committee folder on Google Drive, which we will pass along to next year's committee.

Projected activities/initiatives during the upcoming months:

- Analyze and publish results from self-service holds survey, most likely as a *Reporter* article.
- Continue gathering information about the committee appointment process. We should have some information to report by the January meeting.
- Begin developing best practices for the committee so that next year's committee has a framework under which they can continue to make progress. Jennifer Hovanec and Alea Perez volunteered to lead this effort.

Intended outcome/goals of project(s):

- Goal of the self-service holds survey is to discover what libraries are currently doing and develop guidelines for Illinois libraries to follow.
- Goal of the committee appointment process task is to gather information to inform ILA's committee appointment process.
- Goal of the committee framework task is to provide guidance to future committee members about the role of the committee and how best to go about doing that work.

Anticipated timeline(s) and completion date(s) for each project:

- Survey results should be ready to publish in the March issue of the *Reporter* (deadline is January 20, 2020).
- Committee appointment process task should be completed by the January board meeting.
- Committee framework task will be started this year, but may not be completed by the current committee. We anticipate having something to pass off to next year's group by the end of June, but the framework will more than likely evolve over time.

Activities should be designed to advance the ILA Strategic Plan. Which strategic goal areas are best addressed by the activities above? Check all that apply and describe briefly how the activities will advance the goal(s). View the full plan at <http://www.ila.org/about/strategic-plan>.

Goal area: Advocacy—Legislative Advocacy

Goal area: Advocacy—Community Advocacy

Goal area: A Culture of Diversity and Inclusion—In the Profession

X Goal area: A Culture of Diversity and Inclusion—In the Association

The committee appointment task meets this goal by ensuring that all members of the organization have the opportunity to serve the association.

X Goal area: Delivery of Member Value

The committee framework task is designed to help future committees organize their work and set goals early in the year, so that their programming and communication activities can deliver value to ILA members.

X Goal area: Leadership

The self-service holds survey and recommendations is of interest both to libraries in Illinois and throughout the U.S. By publishing in the *Reporter*, we will be helping library professionals protect patron privacy while maintaining a popular service.

Questions or concerns that need to be addressed by the ILA Executive Board (please discuss with your board or staff liaison first. Board liaisons can help with strategic, programmatic, policy-related and content-related questions; staff liaisons can help with procedural or business-related questions):

At the Board's request, we revised the committee charge. We request that the Board approve or make further suggestions for revision:

Promotes excellence in the Illinois library community by identifying and amplifying innovative services, community outreach initiatives, and management procedures both for the association and for the profession as a whole. Seeks out best practices for emerging trends and issues in the profession by surveying current practices in the library community, identifying techniques that work for diverse sizes and types of libraries, and sharing these practices with the library community through the ILA Reporter, social media, ILA's Committees and Forums, and other communication channels.

THANK YOU for your service to ILA and Illinois librarianship!