



16 March 2016

TO: RAILS Member Libraries

FROM: Dee Brennan

SUBJECT: System Membership Standards Committee: draft standards

[System Membership Standards Committee – Overview and Update](#)

The System Membership Standards committee was established by the RAILS board in 2014 and held its first plenary session December 8, 2014. The current committee membership is 34 academic, public, school and special librarians from across Illinois.

The plenary session resulted in the creation of six subcommittees that have worked on six different categories of standards; content/collections, customers, facilities, funding, professional leadership, and training & certification.

All subcommittees met multiple times to review drafts. The drafts were based on existing standards in other states including Iowa, Indiana, Wisconsin, Michigan, New Jersey and Massachusetts, as well as existing standards documents: *Serving our Public* (ILA), *Linking for Learning* (ISLMA), *Standards for Libraries in Higher Education* (ACRL), and Australia's *Beyond a Quality Service: Strengthening the Social Fabric, Standards and Guidelines for Australia Public Libraries*. Carla Funk, the retired Executive Director of the Medical Library Association also provided valuable assistance in obtaining information about professional leadership requirements for medical librarians.

A second plenary session was held in July of 2015 for the entire committee to review the drafts.

The draft standards were discussed at the RAILS member update in June, 2015.

RAILS staff presented the standards at the RAILS board meeting in October, 2015.

A third plenary session was held on March 14 and the committee voted to share the drafts for general discussion among all RAILS member libraries. The first opportunity for general discussion is our Member Update on March 24.

Important points to remember:

1. It is very important that the library community in Illinois, understand that these standards do not and cannot cover all the needs or requirements for services in all types of libraries. In all cases, we recommend that individual libraries seek out standards for their particular type of library to ensure compliance with laws and achievement of best practices.
2. These are standards for multitype system membership, not designed to be standards for libraries in general.
3. These standards provide a pathway to excellence by delineating 3 tiers – basic, proficient and exemplary.
4. **These standards are not meant to be punitive or exclusionary; the goal is to assist libraries in serving their communities and to achieve greater levels of service according to their own needs and resources.**

Unresolved issues

There are still unresolved issues and unanswered questions; some are listed below. In many cases, the discussion and feedback from members will provide resolution and answers. Also, a RAILS staff implementation team will begin developing next steps and a timeline for testing and implementation of standards. The full committee and RAILS members will have opportunities to discuss and/or participate in next steps.

Some issues and questions:

1. Length of time for library administrator to complete required training
2. Number of standards that have to be met at each level for libraries to be certified at that level
3. Waiver policy and process for libraries that do not meet standards
4. Reporting and tracking compliance
5. Incentivize participation
6. Use of EAV (Equalized Assessed Valuation), population and library budgets to determine if public libraries meet standards
7. Trustee training
8. What are the teeth in the standards? What happens if libraries do not meet?
9. Should the standards be phased in?
10. What about libraries that do not meet minimum standards?
11. Should credit be given for years of service to current library administrators who do not have the required training or education?
12. How many standards does a library have to meet before it moves to the next level?

Some next steps

1. Gather general member input
2. Write supporting documents – definitions, bibliography
3. Eliminate redundancy in draft standards
4. Ensure terminology is consistent
5. Test standards with member libraries

I hope this memo is helpful in providing an overview of our process so far and giving some examples of work that still needs to be done. I look forward to our discussion on March 24.

If you have questions, comments, or feedback of any kind, please feel free to contact Veronda Pitchford, Director, Membership Development and Resource Sharing: 630.734.5119, veronda.pitchford@railslibraries.info.

Thank you.

Attachments:

- Current System Membership Standards
- System Membership Standards development guidelines
- Draft Standards:
 - Content/Collections
 - Customers
 - Facilities (2 pages)
 - Funding
 - Professional Leadership (3 pages)
 - Training & Certification
- Draft education and certification level requirements for public libraries

Current System Membership Standards

Full Membership Standards	Public	School	Special	Academic
Library meets taxing level (Public Only)	F			
Library follows ILLINET Interlibrary Loan Code	F	F	F	F
Library provides reciprocal borrowing to other libraries in system (Public Only)	F			
Library honors non-resident cards if does not opt out of program (Public Only)	F			
Library has bibliographically organized collection	F	F	F	F
Library has 1 employee who works at least 15 hours/week	F	F	F	F
Library collection has permanent financial support	F	F	F	F
Library is accessible centrally	F	F	F	F
Library occupies identifiable quarters in one principal location	F	F	F	F

Source: [23 ILAC 303.110 Illinois Administrative Code](#)

System Membership Standards development guidelines

- Standards should include philosophical elements of the profession that support building strong libraries of all types
- Standards should be aspirational yet realistic
- Standards should include quantitative specifics and formulas when possible
- Standards should make it possible for all types of libraries, budget sizes and populations served to participate in all three categories
- Standards should be manageable and achievable
- Standards should have concrete language
- Standards should not be one size fits all
- Libraries should have the opportunity to meet a set number of standards in a specific category and not all of the standards listed in a specific category to be considered for membership in that category
- Standards should reference the Illinois Interlibrary Loan Code and Illinois Library Laws and Rules whenever relevant
- Standards should reference accrediting body's guidelines for the library whenever possible

System Membership Standards Committee
Draft Standards-Content/ Collections

To qualify for system membership, libraries must meet the membership standards established by the system board.

Basic	Proficient	Exemplary
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A minimum of 8% of the library's operating budget is spent on collections and content. 2. The library has an intellectual freedom policy. 3. The collection meets customer needs & provides materials for all ages and abilities served by the library. 4. The library conducts ongoing evaluation and weeding of collection. 5. The library participates in resource sharing by making collections discoverable and available to other Illinois library system members. 6. The library follows professional association guidelines related to collections. 7. The library has written policies on circulation/borrowing/use of materials and collection development. 8. The library abides by the Illinois Library Laws and Administrative Rules, Illinois and ILLINET Interlibrary Loan Codes. 9. The library has a basic online catalog available to customers. 10. The library organizes information for effective discovery and access. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A minimum of 12% of the library's operating budget is spent on collections and content. 2. The library has the ability to make virtual collections and electronic resources available to library customers across Illinois. 3. The library has policies to support the use of virtual collections and electronic resources. 4. Collection development includes the planning, selecting, and building of collections in all formats appropriate to the library's mission 5. The library has a written collection management policy based on community needs and interests, the diversity of society, and on professional standards. The Library's collection development policy may address the following issues: materials selection; request for reconsideration of materials; collections specialties and purchase priorities; and evaluation and weeding of the collection. 6. The library develops resources to provide guidance and multiple points of entry to information. 7. The library provides one-on-one assistance virtually and in person to help customers find information. 8. The library has technological infrastructure that supports changing modes of information deliveries and resource discovery. 9. Resources are available in multiple languages according to community need. 10. The library has developed a weeding schedule. 11. Staff responsible for collection management are professionally trained in general principles of selection and weeding as well as in their specific areas of responsibilities. 12. Collection analysis occurs regularly to assure appropriate materials for the community served 13. The library encourages customer suggestions for acquisitions. 14. All formats are available to all customers. 15. The library creates partnerships with other agencies to make materials more available to community served. 16. The library publicizes and promotes interlibrary loan to patrons. 17. The library develops procedures that ensure that interlibrary loan is simple and effective way for patrons to receive materials and information after all local resources have been exhausted. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A minimum of 16% of the library's operating budget is spent on collections and content. 2. The library reviews/utilizes diagnostic tools such as percentage withdrawn and/or turnover rate regularly. 3. The library is an early adopter of innovative content delivery and shares strategies with others in the system and state. 4. The library builds and ensures access to unique materials, including digital collections. 5. The library has mobile access to online catalog and other discovery methods to the collections. 6. The library has the ability for customers to create content and provides access to customer created content.

System Membership Standards Committee

Draft Standards-Customers

To qualify for system membership, libraries must meet the membership standards established by the system board.

Basic	Proficient	Exemplary
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The library ensures the safety of customers and staff. 2. The library provides consistent, courteous and equitable customer service. 3. The library follows professional association guidelines related to customers. 4. The library is knowledgeable about its customer base and seeks out potential users. 5. The library has identified decision makers in the community served and has ongoing communication with them. 6. The library administrator attends continuing education on customer service and other library staff are encouraged to attend customer service training. 7. The library responds to evolving customer needs. 8. The library makes reasonable accommodations in order to provide access to its collections and services to persons with disabilities and meets relevant requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. 9. The library staff and governing body seek input from community on customer service needs. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Library services are designed to meet the needs of a diverse customer base. 2. The library has an online presence to serve customers. 3. Customers have access to internet, Wi-Fi, other relevant technologies, and computers. 4. The library has integrity in customer service (ethical, fiscal, professional, exercising judgement and empathy). 5. The library provides resources to support use, synthesis, and evaluation of information. 6. The library cultivates relationships with library decision makers and participates in outreach to communities served. 7. The library develops strategies to attract new customers. 8. The library provides one-on-one assistance through multiple platforms to help customers find information. 9. The library has the ability to meet customer needs virtually beyond the physical walls of the building. 10. The library has adequate staffing to serve customers. 11. The library provides remote access to library services. 12. The library understands and leverages decision making structures for additional resources to better serve customers. 13. The library has online and in person opportunities for feedback. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The library demonstrates intergovernmental cooperation between library types to better serve customers. 2. The library shows leadership in the community or organization as a model of customer service. 3. The library meets regularly with library decision makers to strategically discuss customer needs and allocation of funding to meet those needs. 4. Customer satisfaction surveys and other mechanisms are in place to continually gather customer feedback and to continually evolve the library's ability to meet customer needs. 5. The library provides trainings on customer service for staff. 6. The library actively works to engage non-users in library usage. 7. The library openly shares customer service strategies with other libraries in the system. 8. The library provides delivery of services 24/7 to customers. 9. Discovery and learning are seamlessly enriched by technology for both academic and personal needs. 10. The library's customer base extends beyond residential and geographic borders through collaboration and resource sharing. 11. The makeup of the governing body of the library reflects the community it serves.

System Membership Standards Committee

Draft Standards - Facilities

To qualify for system membership, libraries must meet the membership standards established by the system board.

Basic

1. The facility is designed for user efficiency and comfort and to encourage extensive use and staff efficiency.
2. The facility provides clean, inviting and adequate physical space with suitable environmental conditions, appropriate furnishings and convenient hours for all user types.
3. The facility has written policies and provides staff training to ensure a safe and secure environment.
4. The facility is compliant with all applicable local, state and federal requirements.
5. The facility's physical space provides adequate connectivity, and up-to-date and well maintained technology and equipment for staff and public.
6. The facility has a presence in its community beyond its physical walls.
7. A virtual facility provides seamless access to services and resources.
8. The location of the facility is easily accessible.
9. The facility accommodates growing collections in a variety of formats.

PUBLICS ONLY:

Minimum Hours Open Requirement
 (per week, Labor Day to Memorial Day)
 (agency wide – unique hours in multi branch organization)

Population Size	Number of Hours	Number of Days	Portion of Day
Under 2,000	15	not specified	including some evening and weekend hours
2,000 - 4,999	20	not specified	including some evening and weekend hours
5,000 - 9,999	30	not specified	including some evening and weekend hours
10,000 - 14,999	40	5	including some evening and weekend hours
15,000 - 24,999	50	5	including some evening and weekend hours
25,000 - 49,999	59	6	including some morning, afternoon, evening and weekend hours
50,000 and over	63	6	including some morning, afternoon, evening and weekend hours

System Membership Standards Committee

Draft Standards - Facilities

To qualify for system membership, libraries must meet the membership standards established by the system board.

Proficient	Exemplary
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The facility provides meeting space for the community it serves if applicable. 2. The facility provides 24/7 access to e- content. 3. The facility provides outreach for those who cannot get to the facility. 4. The facility has an online presence. 5. The facility provides the right amount and type of space of the right kind to meet the provisions of its long range/strategic plan. 6. At least once every five years, the governing authority of the facility directs a review of the facility’s long term space needs. 7. The facility develops a plan and annual budget for the maintenance of buildings and grounds and asset replacement. 8. The facility provides flexible space for collaboration by customers. 9. The facility is environmentally conscious and undertakes such activities as recycling, energy audits, purchase of “green supplies.” 10. The facility provides access to technology. 11. The facility has a capital budget for facility maintenance and improvement. 12. The facility provides study rooms. 13. The facility provides free Wi-Fi. 14. The facility has a disaster plan. 15. The facility has access to back up generator power. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All facility services are available physically and virtually. 2. The facility provides flexible space for creative activities such as maker-space. 3. The facility provides enough space for multiple programs to occur simultaneously. 4. Up-to-date and innovative technologies are available to use and borrow. 5. The facility regularly surveys its community to discover new and changing needs, plans and implements services to meet community needs and makes necessary facility changes. 6. The facility provides self-service options for customers. 7. The facility may provide multiple locations to serve a diverse or widespread population.

System Membership Standards Committee

Draft Standards- Funding

To qualify for system membership, libraries must meet the membership standards established by the system board.

Basic	Proficient	Exemplary
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The library budget provides appropriate financial support for the library to meet other relevant system membership standards at the basic level. 2. The library is a prudent steward of funds. 3. The library has adequate, dedicated funding to provide services and resources that meet the reasonable expectations of library customers. 4. The library has a written annual budget approved by the governing authority. 5. The budget is developed annually by the library administrator with input from staff and other appropriate individuals or bodies. 6. The library board or governing authority has legal authority over the library's budget. 7. The library is funded by its governing authority on a permanent basis. 8. A community without public library service investigates affiliation with an existing library before establishing a new library. Established libraries contact surrounding or nearby communities without public library service for expansion of services to unserved residents. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The library seeks out additional revenue through grants and fundraising. 2. The library practices good stewardship and is accountable to its funders through regular budget monitoring, evaluation and reporting. 3. The library has a reserve fund equal to at least six months of operating expenditures, and regularly adds to the reserve as possible if allowed by funding agency. 4. The library has a long range or strategic plan which includes goals for gaining alternative revenues. 5. The library budget provides appropriate financial support for the library to meet other relevant system membership standards at the proficient level. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The library budget provides appropriate financial support for the library to meet other relevant system membership standards at the exemplary level. <u>School and Special Libraries</u> 2. School and special librarians define the budgetary needs and manage the annual program budget to maximize impact. 3. Budget supports a collection of resources in multiple formats and access to resources outside the school/special library. 4. Funding ensures upgrades of resources, equipment, and facilities. 5. School and special librarians regularly consult with administrators about budgetary needs and are proactive in seeking additional funding sources for library program enhancements.

System Membership Standards Committee

Draft Standards – Professional Leadership

To qualify for system membership, libraries must meet the membership standards established by the system board.

Basic

1. Library staff are able to explain the library mission and library policies to customers.
2. Library staff are well trained in the procedures required by their jobs.
3. Library staff provide guidance in the use of library resources and services and seek resources outside the library to meet customer needs.
4. The library has a permanent paid library administrator who meets the qualifications for its population group or library type.
5. A new administrator has two years after starting as administrator to become certified through system training.
6. The library has written job descriptions that include educational and experience requirements and has a written salary schedule for each position.
7. Library staff meet the minimum education and training requirements for their position.
8. Library staff are sufficient in quantity to meet the needs of customers.
9. Library staff demonstrate commitment to ongoing professional development and maintaining and enhancing knowledge and skills for themselves and their coworkers.
10. The library staff is diverse and reflects its community.
11. The library staff is fairly and appropriately compensated according to applicable data
12. Library staff manage library services in a wide variety of constantly changing environments.
13. Library staff assess, select, and apply current and emerging information tools.
14. The library holds regular staff meetings

System Membership Standards Committee

Draft Standards – Professional Leadership

To qualify for system membership, libraries must meet the membership standards established by the system board.

Proficient

1. The library has a planned orientation program for all new staff. The program introduces staff to the mission, philosophy, goals and services of the library in addition to their job responsibilities.
2. The library administrator's performance is evaluated at least annually by the appropriate body or individual. Other library staff are evaluated by their supervisor.
3. The library encourages all staff to participate in continuing education programs offered by the system or other providers and funds their attendance.
4. The library employs sufficient number and quality of staff to ensure service excellence and to function successfully in an environment of continuous change.
5. The library has a strategic plan and implements it.
6. Library staff and public library trustees are active advocates for the library.
7. Library staff market services and products effectively and are able to demonstrate a return on investment/value of information offerings to the community served.
8. Library staff manage services and resources aligned with the strategic direction of the organization and community served.
9. Staff attend required system training and at least 6 continuing education programs annually.
10. Management staff attend required system training and at least 10 continuing education programs annually.
11. Library staff share knowledge and expertise by taking and teaching continuing education courses and participate in professional associations to stay abreast of and make contributions to innovations and developments in information products and services.

PUBLICS ONLY:

- a) Public Library meets established staffing level in *Serving our Public*.
- b) Public Library has staff trained in adult, children's, teen and elder services.
- c) Public Library trustees attend at least two continuing education programs in person or online annually (in addition to required OMA, FOIA or other state mandated training).
- d) Public Library trustees have written bylaws and evaluate their performance as a board annually.

SCHOOLS ONLY:

- a) The district employs the equivalent of one or more full-time, certified school library information specialists per attendance center. Each school library information specialist is a member of the school's instructional staff and participates fully in the planning and delivery of instruction and in the assessment of student learning.
- b) The school library information specialist provides input into the training, supervision, and evaluation of library staff members.
- c) One clerical staff person per attendance center provides support to implement nonprofessional library operations.
- d) Technical support is readily available.

SPECIALS & ACADEMICS ONLY: Library administrator must be able to:

- a) Understand curricular design and instruction to teach others information retrieval and/or manage educational services.
- b) Understand research methods and critically evaluate and filter literature from many related disciplines.
- c) Use research and best practice standards to ensure evidence-based practice.
- d) Strategically use information to advance mission and goals of the organization/institution/ community served.

System Membership Standards Committee

Draft Standards – Professional Leadership

To qualify for system membership, libraries must meet the membership standards established by the system board.

Exemplary

1. Professional association memberships are paid for all senior staff.
2. The library contracts with or employs trained IT staff.
3. The library provides tuition reimbursement support for work related coursework for staff.

PUBLICS ONLY:

- a) Public library meets advanced staffing level in Serving our Public
- b) Professional association memberships are paid for public library trustees.
- c) Staff attend required system training and at least 12 continuing education programs annually.
- d) Management Staff attend required system training and at least 20 continuing education programs annually.
- e) Trustees attend required system training and at least 6 continuing education programs annually. (# of hours).

SCHOOLS ONLY:

- a) The school library information specialist works with administrators to support and implement a collaborative culture. The school library information specialist and other teachers collaboratively plan curricular units and share responsibility for teaching and for resource reelection and use.
- b) The school library information specialist regularly reflects on teaching effectiveness. Assessment involves observation of student progress and success during units of study. Feedback from the classroom teacher assists in planning for future collaboration.
- c) The school library information specialist works with other teachers to collaboratively plan lessons and assessments that integrate current learning standards.
- d) The school library information specialist partners with the local public library to plan and deliver collaborative services.
- e) The school library media program is guided by a strategic plan that is regularly reviewed.
- f) The school library information specialist collaborates fully with the classroom teacher
- g) The school library information specialist meets regularly with other stakeholders to communicate the role of the library in meeting current learning standards.

System Membership Standards Committee

Draft Standards – Training & Certification

To qualify for system membership, libraries must meet the membership standards established by the system board.

Basic	Proficient	Exemplary
<p>1. The library must meet accrediting body’s requirements for training and certification when appropriate.</p> <p>2. The library has a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities of leadership, staff and trustees to meet the needs of library customers.</p> <p><u>Potential competencies/ training areas</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Foundations of Library Services b) Cataloging & Classification c) Reference & Readers Advisory d) Collection Development (electronic & print) e) Technology f) Communications g) Library Administration h) Resource Sharing i) Teamwork j) Trustee Training (as applicable) 	<p>1. The library is committed to strategies to effectively plan, implement and assess the library’s service to customers.</p> <p>2. Library is committed to ongoing professional development, maintaining and enhancing knowledge and skills for staff to better serve customers.</p> <p><u>Potential competencies/ training areas</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Foundations of Library Services b) Cataloging & classification c) Reference & Readers Advisory d) Collection Development e) Technology f) Communications/Marketing g) Library Administration h) Resource Sharing i) Teamwork j) Trustee Training k) Advocacy 	<p>1. The library demonstrates commitment to lifelong learning, collaboration and innovation for library customers and staff.</p> <p><u>Potential competencies/ training areas</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Foundations of Library Services b) Cataloging & Classification c) Reference & Readers Advisory d) Collection Development e) Technology f) Communications/Marketing g) Library Administration h) Resource Sharing i) Teamwork j) Trustee Training k) Advocacy

System Membership Standards Committee
Education and certification level requirements for public libraries*
Every level beyond “core competencies” requires completion of prior level

Level 1-Core competencies

- High school diploma or equivalent
- Completion of training courses in the following areas:
foundations of library services, cataloging and classification, library administration, reference and information services; human resources training or access to human resource department or expertise, technology
- Attendance at Statewide Public Library Management Institute (SPLMI) or equivalent for public library administrators
- Training to understand Illinois library laws relevant to the library organization
- Applies to public libraries with populations under 2,500

Level 2

- Completion of core competencies (Level 1)
- Library Technical Assistant (LTA) Certificate, or related associates degree from an accredited institution
- Completion of training courses in the following areas: Collection Development, Technology
- Five years of library work experience
- Applies to public libraries with populations from 2,501-7,500

Level 3

- Completion of Level 2 education/training requirements
- Bachelor’s Degree from an accredited program
- Minimum of five years of library work experience
- Completion of training courses in the following areas: Communications, Teamwork
- Applies to public libraries with populations from 7,501-14,999

Level 4

- Completion of Level 3 education/training requirements
- Graduate degree in library or information science from an ALA accredited program
- Applies to public libraries with populations from 15,000 and above

***All training will be provided by the system or other approved programs or institutions.**