

TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: Implementation Plan/Progress, ALA Strategic Direction: Advocacy

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT: Discussion

ACTION REQUESTED BY:

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FY16 Progress and Plans

STRATEGY 1: Develop a sustained national advocacy campaign to increase public awareness of the value, impact, and services provided by librarians and libraries of all types

Libraries Transform is the theme of National Library Week (NLW) this year and ALA Graphics reports that the printed bookmarks and posters proved very popular and have sold out. They have added a special [bookmark download](#) and other digital items. The [NLW website](#) also provides free promotional tools, audio PSAs, and digital graphics.

Since the launch of Libraries Transform in October, more than 1,500 libraries have registered to participate in the campaign. As libraries join the campaign, they are receiving a welcome package that includes a Libraries Transform window cling and Because statement postcards and bookmarks. They also have access to a myriad of resources on the online toolkit, including downloadable marketing collaterals, key messaging, and tips on how to use the campaign.

New messages about the campaign are being posted weekly and well over one million people have been reached by Libraries Transform-related posts on the ALA and I Love Libraries Facebook pages. There have been more than 80,000 views of the Libraries Transform website and more than 106,000 pageviews. The #librariestransform hashtag has been used more than 8,000 times.

Libraries and library associations across the nation are incorporating the campaign into their marketing and advocacy efforts in many different ways. The Topeka-Shawnee Library is integrating the campaign into its branding initiatives, while several state associations and library groups, including Maine and New Mexico, are using it as their state conference themes. The Ohio Library Council and Minnesota Library Association are using the Libraries Transform campaign as part of their legislative days.

STRATEGY 2: Provide coordinated resources and training to keep library advocates informed and engaged

OLA is working with Julie Todaro's Presidential Subcommittee on Advocacy to determine the focus of training efforts, in concert with Libraries Transform. The proposed charge of the committee, led by Patricia Glass Schuman and Mario Ascencio, is to "consult on, adapt, and develop advocacy/ leadership materials and training for librarians as "transformers".

For the FY17 LSTA & IAL budget, OGR put out two blogs, multiple email alerts and twitter announcements, several grassroots alerts, and targeted state appeals made in conjunction with state chapters. This produced more than 14,000 confirmed individual emails by ALA members and other library supporters, at least 725 tweets, and a significant volume of non-logged phone calls. These contacts resulted in: 34 and 31 signatures on the Senate LSTA and IAL letters respectively (+2 and +2 over 2016) and; 88 and 124 signatures on the House LSTA and IAL letters. In sum, 529 of a total 535 Members of the Senate and House have been contacted at least once thus far by ALA's grassroots in support of FY2017 LSTA and IAL funding.

STRATEGY 3: Recruit, mobilize, and inspire a growing network of library advocates at the local, state, national and international levels

With added staffing in OLA, the Crisis Intervention Team was reactivated this winter to provide stronger, coordinated response to crisis situations occurring at the state and local level. The team is led by OLA and participants include Chapter Relations, PAO, OIF, *American Libraries* and division staff members as appropriate. Since Midwinter, the team assisted in a variety of state and local issues, including: Nebraska LB969, which would mandate that library boards become advisory instead of independent library boards; Kansas HB2719, that would allow tax payers to determine if they want tax dollars to support the library via a yearly vote; cuts to librarians in South Orange/Maplewood, NJ Schools; cuts to librarian positions in Cleveland Metro Schools; a vote to place a certified school librarian in every school in the Houston Independent School District; and proposed budget cuts across the state of Arkansas. In addition, OLA is issuing press releases about these actions to increase member awareness through web and social media channels.

STRATEGY 5: Explore funding, organizational and governance structures and their impact on libraries of all types in order to ensure the sustainability and future of libraries

Anecdotal evidence shows a growing trend of anti-library legislation to focus on taxing, as well as an undermining of current library structure, e.g., legislation against independent library boards. As such, OLA and the Committee on Library Advocacy will begin creating issues briefs on these areas, similar to "Keeping Public Libraries Public," an issues brief on privatization created in 2011.

OLA, working with executive directors of PLA and United for Libraries, is co-convening a group of "Public Library Advocates," or external groups focused on advocacy efforts. Developed from a meeting that OCLC held at the close of the Geek the Library initiative, the group includes representatives from The Aspen Institute, COSLA, EveryLibrary, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Library Strategies Inc., OCLC, Pew Research, Urban Librarians Unite, and Urban Libraries Council. At the 2016 MW Meeting, the group agreed to address Strategy 5 of the Advocacy Implementation Plan. Recognizing that this is a long-term project, the group has begun with the intent of creating a brief one-page synopsis of the project. Next steps include an environmental scan of existing work and research in this area. The group will meet at the 2016 PLA conference, as well as at 2016 ALA Annual Conference.