TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: Implementation Plan/Progress, ALA Strategic Direction: Information Policy

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT: Discussion

ACTION REQUESTED BY:
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BACKGROUND:
The previous report and discussion about the information policy strategic direction took place at the October 2015 Executive Board meeting. The current report and discussion provide a summary of progress since that meeting and solicits input from the Board for future directions.

PROGRESS REPORT ON INFORMATION POLICY

Since the October 2015 report to the Executive Board, we’ve made progress on several of ALA’s information policy strategies as articulated in the Strategic Directions. The developments below are keyed to these strategies, which are reproduced in the addendum for convenience.

Strategies 1 and 2: Release of New Report on 3D Printing
ALA issued a new report on 3D printing that is targeted to the policy community. In *Toward a More Printed Union: Library 3D Printing Democratizes Creation*, author Charlie Wapner explains how 3D printing in libraries advances important societal goals such as greater entrepreneurship, creative learning opportunities for youth, and technological literacy—thus arguing that decision makers should embrace libraries to advance their objectives.

Strategies 2, 4, and 5: Research Project on Computational Thinking Initiated
At the end of December 2015 we launched a new project that focuses on how libraries advance computational thinking for youth. Best practices will be identified and disseminated, with particular emphasis on groups underrepresented in computer science and related careers. Though the primary impetus for this effort is to raise the awareness and profile of libraries in informal learning in this area, library practice also will benefit. Partial funding is provided by Google, Inc.

Strategy 4: New Collaboration with National Foundation for Credit Counseling (NFCC)
In January 2016, ALA launched a collaborative effort with NFCC to provide financial counseling to military families through libraries. Approximately 30 libraries are taking part in the pilot program.

Strategies 4 and 5: Information Policy Workshop for ALA Leaders
On the Thursday before the 2016 ALA Midwinter Meeting, we held an information policy workshop for approximately 90 library leaders, chaired by ALA President Sari Feldman. Speakers from the federal government and other outside groups as well as selected library leaders and ALA staff provided diverse perspectives on the nature of information policy and effective advocacy, at the national level.
Strategies 2, 3, and 4: Banned Books Week, 2015 and 2016
In 2015, research by Malinda Lo on the past twenty years of challenged books revealed a previously unremarked focus on titles by and about diversity. That theme continues in 2016 with our publishing partners in the Banned Books Week Coalition. Together, the 2015 Top Ten Most Challenged Books list (announced on April 11, 2016) and Banned Books Week (Sept. 25-Oct. 1, 2016) remain one of ALA’s most popular and influential public initiatives.

Strategies 1-5: eRate and Filtering
Representatives of the Office for Information Technology Policy and the Intellectual Freedom Committee met at Midwinter to craft a joint statement on eRate and Filtering. The intent was to combine the opportunity of increased funding to libraries through eRate reimbursements with a careful articulation of ALA positions on filtering.

FORTHCOMING (as of April 1st)

Strategies 1 and 4: Positioning for the Next Administration
We are developing proposals for the next Administration for transition team consideration. Also, ALA is engaging with other stakeholders to encourage them to incorporate libraries and library goals in their proposals and cultivate possibilities for collaborations or joint proposals.

Strategy 2: Production and Dissemination of a Video for Policy Advocacy
In a collaboration between the Public Library Association and the Office for Information Technology Policy, a series of short videos are being produced and were released at the 2016 PLA National Conference. These videos are based on The E’s of Libraries®, focusing on how libraries advance entrepreneurship, education, engagement, and empowerment through their expert staffs.

Strategies 2 and 3: National Policy Convening
Our first National Policy Convening is scheduled for April 12-13 in Washington, D.C., chaired by ALA President Sari Feldman. Three sessions are being planned—Youth Engagement with Technology, Advancing Economic Opportunity in Communities, and Future Directions for the Library of Congress.

Strategies 1, 2, and 4: Choose Privacy Week
ALA will again sponsor Choose Privacy Week (May 1-7, 2016), which coordinates a variety of blogs, webinars, workshops, and other outreach efforts to highlight the values of confidentiality and privacy, and to highlight new guidelines and NISO documents.

ADDENDUM
ALA Strategic Directions – Information Policy Strategies

1. Develop and revise positions and strategies for each information policy issue based on ALA values and priorities and substantive (facts and data) and analysis of threats and politics.
2. Develop and maintain information policy messaging and mechanisms to communicate with all relevant audiences.
3. Lead and participate in effective coalitions, with member participation, to take action in addressing information policy issues.
4. Initiate policy advocacy (including research) towards the attainment of ALA information policy goals.
5. Develop and maintain a process for coordinating information policy activities across policy topics and ALA units.