

# IHLS Advocacy and Education Committee

Version ~~1~~2

## Purpose

The IHLS Advocacy and Education Committee ~~is established to foster~~fosters communication between IHLS members, staff, and local, state, and national policymakers. ~~By aligning~~In alignment with the IHLS Strategic ~~Plan's~~Plan's goal to "Engage Members," the committee ~~will ensure~~ensures ~~that~~ libraries are ~~positioned~~recognized as essential ~~contributors to thriving communities while providing drivers of literacy, equity, economic development, and community vitality.~~ The committee ~~provides~~ members with clear opportunities to connect, communicate, and advocate ~~effectively through activities such as training, resource development, surveys, and legislative updates.~~

## Membership Composition

The committee consists of 9 voting members. Meetings will be open to all IHLS members to observe, with opportunities for public comment as time allows.

## Minimum Requirements

- At least two IHLS Board members
- At least one IHLS staff member (designated by the Executive Director; staff serve in an advisory, non-voting capacity)
- At least one IHLS member from a school library ~~(this may overlap with other roles)~~
- At least one IHLS member from a public library ~~(this may overlap with other roles)~~
- At least one public library trustee

## Additional Considerations

- Members may represent a diversity of library types (To avoid over-reliance on overlapping roles, distinct individuals should be recruited whenever possible.)
- The committee will strive for balanced representation across public, school, academic, and special)and libraries, as well as geographic areas to ensure broad representation diversity across the IHLS service area.
- Membership terms will be for two years, renewable, to allow for both continuity and fresh perspective.

## Leadership~~Leadership~~

- The committee will be chaired by an existing IHLS Board member, appointed annually by the IHLS Board President.

- The Chair will facilitate meetings, oversee the agenda, and coordinate closely with IHLS staff.
- A Vice Chair will be selected from the committee membership to assist the Chair and assume leadership duties in their absence.

## Meeting Schedule

- ~~Meetings~~ Regular meetings will be held virtually every other month (on odd-numbered months)
- ~~All meetings will be conducted virtually~~ to maximize participation and accessibility.
- Special meetings may be called by the Chair in consultation with IHLS staff to respond to urgent advocacy needs (e.g., legislative deadlines, budget actions).

## Committee Responsibilities

1. **Identify and Address Library Challenges:** ~~Recognize~~ Regularly assess issues affecting academic, public, school, and ~~specialized~~ special libraries through surveys, listening sessions, and coordinate member feedback, and recommend coordinated advocacy ~~efforts to resolve them.~~ responses.
2. **Collaborate with Partners:** ~~Work~~ Build alliances with library-focused organizations like (e.g., AISLE, IACRL, and ILA to advocate for and support various types of libraries.) as well as community, educational, and civic partners to amplify advocacy efforts.
3. **Promote Library Values and Funding:** ~~Advocate for core~~ Advance awareness of library values (resource sharing, net neutrality, intellectual freedom) ~~and support, equitable access) while supporting sustainable~~ funding initiatives for all library types.
4. **Develop and Share Advocacy Resources:** Create and disseminate messaging, talking points, training opportunities, and tools ~~for~~ to help library staff and trustees ~~to effectively~~ engage with funders, legislators, and stakeholders.
5. **Build Advocacy Capacity:** Support and mentor members interested in developing advocacy skills or pursuing leadership opportunities in the statewide library community.

## Expected Outcomes

- Increased member ~~engagement~~ participation in advocacy ~~initiatives~~ training, events, and campaigns.
- Stronger relationships between IHLS members and policymakers at all levels, demonstrated through documented outreach and engagement.

- Regular communication channels established between IHLS and policymakers (e.g., annual legislative briefings, policy updates).
- Measurable growth in the number of libraries reporting successful advocacy outcomes (such as funding wins, partnerships, or policy support).
- Enhanced member confidence and capacity to advocate effectively for library needs and priorities
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# Rollout & Implementation Procedures

IHLS Advocacy & Education Committee

## 1. Getting the Word Out

- **Announcement:** Launch an open call for committee members through multiple channels:
  - Direct email to all IHLS member libraries
  - IHLS newsletter feature
  - Posts on IHLS social media
  - IHLS website landing page with details & application form
- **Messaging:** Emphasize that this is a new initiative aligned with the IHLS Strategic Plan, highlighting opportunities for members to shape advocacy efforts and connect with policymakers.
- **Timeline:** Provide a clear application window (e.g., 3–4 weeks), with dates for application deadline, review, and notification of selection.

## 2. Application Process

- **Application Form:** Create a simple online application (Google Form or survey tool) that asks for:
  - Contact information
  - Library affiliation and role
  - Library type (public, school, academic, special)
  - Geographic area
  - Brief statement of interest/experience with advocacy
- **Eligibility Reminder:** State the minimum membership requirements (Board members, staff, trustee, etc.), and note that diversity of library types and geography will be considered.

## 3. Selection of Members

- **Reviewing Body:** Applications will be reviewed by the IHLS Board's **Executive Committee**, with IHLS staff available to advise.
- **Selection Priorities:**
  1. Ensure minimum requirements are filled.

2. Strive for diversity of library type and geography.
  3. Aim for a mix of seasoned advocates and newer voices interested in building capacity.
- **Final Approval:** Selections will be formally approved by the IHLS Board and announced to the membership.

## 4. Terms of Service (Inaugural Members)

- **Staggered Start:** To establish staggered terms:
  - Half of inaugural members will be appointed for **1 year**.
  - Half of inaugural members will be appointed for **2 years**.
- **Process:** The Executive Committee may assign terms randomly or by balancing experience and geography (ensuring continuity across both groups).
- **Ongoing Terms:** After inaugural appointments, all new members will serve 2-year renewable terms.

## 5. Orientation & Onboarding

- **Kick-off Session:** Hold a virtual orientation meeting for inaugural members to:
  - Review the committee charge and responsibilities
  - Clarify roles of members vs. staff
  - Share advocacy priorities and upcoming legislative timelines
  - Introduce members to one another to build cohesion
- **Onboarding Materials:** Provide members with a starter packet (charge document, roster, strategic plan highlights, advocacy talking points).

## 6. Implementation & Ongoing Processes

- **Meeting Launch:** Schedule the first official meeting within 1–2 months of member selection.
- **Regular Reports:** The Committee Chair will provide regular reports to the IHLS Board summarizing activities, outcomes, and recommendations.
- **Evaluation:** Each year, the Executive Committee will review committee composition to ensure balance and effectiveness, filling vacancies as needed through an additional open call.
- **Visibility:** Regular updates on the committee's work should be shared in newsletters and at IHLS membership meetings to keep members engaged.