



New Frontiers for Friends

Friends of Libraries Section / New York Library Association

Long-Range Plan, 2021-2023

Executive Summary

Adopted by the FLS Executive Board
July 10, 2020

Mission Statement: FLS creates a network to connect and inspire Friends groups in all types of libraries to support the New York library community. (Adopted May 2020)

The plan is intended to guide the actions of the FLS Board through 2023. The document addresses each of the Guiding Principles in turn, providing further clarification for each principle and listing specific goals and action steps. In this summary, some action steps have been combined. See the full plan for the Action Steps individually itemized under each goal.

Guiding Principle #1: FLS educates and supports its members

Goal A. Continuing education activities presented by FLS are excellent quality, relevant, and effective for its members and the library community.

- Create position of FLS Coordinator for Professional Development
- Provide professional development opportunities (e.g., conference programs, webinars, regional workshops)
- Offer member forums, some with virtual participation
- Market and promote Section-sponsored educational activities as a benefit of membership
- Work cooperatively with other NYLA units

Goal B. FLS develops resources that meet the needs of and reflect the interests of its members and the library community.

- Disseminate information about the Section and its activities and provide access to reliable resources on timely topics on the Section's webpage
- Offer curated examples of Friends policies and procedures in NYLA's policy database
- Establish a publications committee to develop a NYS Handbook for Friends Organizations

Goal C. The FLS Board hosts regional events in geographically diverse areas to connect with members and recruit potential members, both individuals and organizations.

- Promote membership in NYLA to Friends of Libraries groups, especially those near the NYLA Annual Conference
- Work with public library systems to establish Friends Councils
- Develop short workshops that can be facilitated by FLS Board members at regional meetings
- Present regional meet-ups (in person or virtually) with Friends Councils or groups in conjunction with an FLS Board meeting

Guiding Principle #2: FLS strengthens the library community through membership and advocacy

Goal D. FLS creates multiple opportunities and pathways for member involvement in the work of the Section.

- Encourage Friends groups to join FLS as part of their library systems' bundled NYLA memberships
- Develop a marketing effort to urge NYLA members to include FLS as an added Section to their existing membership
- Increase efforts to retain current FLS members
- Promote FLS listserv as a member benefit and platform for information sharing
- Identify and support Friends groups in academia
- Secure member input for future planning via a survey

Goal E. FLS influences legislation that has an impact on libraries and library funding by communicating regularly with elected officials at the state and federal levels.

- Enroll the general public and Friends of the Library groups as “library champions” in NYLA’s online advocacy center.
- Provide members with a variety of advocacy actions that will support NYLA’s legislative initiatives

Guiding Principle #3: FLS recognizes and encourages member excellence

Goal F. Awards given by FLS are perceived as prestigious and a benefit of membership, attracting nominations for highly qualified individuals or groups.

- Promote FLS awards with systematic and wide-ranging marketing
- Explore the possibility of including a monetary component to the FLS Daniel W. Casey Library Advocacy Award
- Review the FLS Randall Enos Conference Scholarship Procedure following the second award cycle

Guiding Principle #4: FLS fosters growth through engagement, collaboration, and leadership

Goal G. The library community regards FLS and NYLA as approachable for resources and sources of guidance on issues concerning Friends organizations in libraries of all types.

- Support FLS members with useful and authoritative content published in a quarterly newsletter and on the FLS webpage
- Establish Rural Friends Interest Group for FLS members
- Observe the 30th anniversary of the founding of NYLA’s Empire Friends Roundtable in 1992, now the Friends of Libraries Section
- Request NYLA Council to pass a resolution to honor FLS during its 30th anniversary year (2022)

Goal H. Section governance and structure encourages member engagement with opportunities for involvement at a variety of levels.

- Encourage members to volunteer for committee participation and other FLS activities as a pathway to future Board service and leadership positions
- Provide orientation, mentoring, training, and written transition statements for those new to the Board
- Recruit outstanding individuals to serve on the FLS Executive Board
- Feature more members' activities in the newsletter
- Identify ways a team approach could provide additional avenues of engagement for volunteers
- Create and adopt an Emergency Leadership Transition Plan and a model for succession of Section leadership
- Review governance and Board structure to improve configuration of leadership positions
- Based on recommendations from the Ad Hoc Committee on Governance, examine and amend the FLS by-laws (2015 version)

Goal I. Section members consider FLS Board volunteers as knowledgeable, helpful, and above all, Friendly.

- Maintain and regularly update an online leadership manual for all FLS Board positions
- Educate FLS Board members on needs and interests of Friends groups to provide knowledgeable and consistent messages, along with referrals to Section resources
- Encourage FLS Board members to participate in Friends activities within their regions (e.g., meet-ups, system-sponsored advocacy events) to connect with current and potential Section members
- Maintain an archive of Board documents (electronic and/or paper), with an index and a document retention policy

The Long-Range Plan includes four appendices. **Appendix A**, completed in April 2020, outlines the current and near-future activities and initiatives of the Section, arranged by the goal statements in the 2021-2023 Long-Range Plan.

Appendix B is an Executive Summary of the FLS Member Survey (March 17 – April 30, 2020) which had 119 responses by both FLS members and non-members.

Appendix C provides a list of Ad Hoc Committees and Task Forces mentioned in action steps of the plan. It indicates which FLS President is responsible to establish the task force or committee, the year of appointment, estimated duration/timeline of each group, and a list of the general responsibilities of the group. Although several tasks are noted, the charge to group is to be written by President when the members are appointed.

Appendix D is a suggested template to outline the work for a task force.

The plan was prepared by these Task Force members: Lisa C. Wemett, President 2020, chair; Karen Sperrazza, First Vice President/ President Elect; Marie Bindeman, Coordinator of the FLS Daniel W. Casey Library Advocacy Award; Amy Discenza, FLS Representative to the NYLA Continuing Education Committee (served from November 2019 through May 2020).