Action Item 1: Default Patron Password

Proposed Change to Policy:

Submitted by: Beth McIntyre, Director of Piedmont Regional Library System

Piedmont Regional Library System requests that new patron passwords not default to the last 4 digits of the phone number because of security concerns, since the last 4 digits, as a default, makes it too easy for someone to guess a password and gain access to another person's account. Also, as a library system that has electronic resources that use SIP verification, we try to be proactive when it comes to setting passwords for patrons so they can begin using our resources immediately and don't lose access the first time they log into PINES. As a library system that is proactive, this feature is a problem because if staff sets a password and then sets a phone number, the default password feature will change the requested password.

Piedmont Regional would like the PINES Subcommittee to discuss a more secure alternative to this feature and if this feature something PINES would like to continue.

See also: Attached email transcript (patron identifying information has been redacted).

Survey Results:

The following summary is based on survey results from 39 PINES Subcommittee members and Directors representing 27 library systems. One question was asked:

Should PINES use the last four digits of the patron's phone number or use a random number as the default password?

Summary of All Responses:

	Responses	Percentage
Random number	22	56%
Phone number	14	36%
Other	3	8%

Responses from Circulation Subcommittee Members:

	Responses	Percentage
Random number	8	62%
Phone number	5	38%
Other	0	0%

Responses from Other Subcommittee Members:

	Responses	Percentage
Random number	9	75%
Phone number	2	17%
Other	1	8%

Responses from Directors who are not Subcommittee Members:

	Responses	Percentage
Random number	5	36%
Phone number	7	50%
Other	2	14%

Comments in Favor of Moving to Random Number

- As an employee of the system that suggested this change, I support staff members proactively setting the patron's password for them. However, a random 4-digit number would satisfy our need to be able to set the password without it defaulting to another number further on in the form, which can be frustrating and frequently results in us forgetting to go back and reset the password at the end.
- I'm assuming that this includes changing the wording of the Log In screen to remove the prompt of "Last four digits.." but want to verify that this would occur should this proposal pass.
- I do not have a strong opinion on this.
- Most staff didn't have a strong opinion either way. The prevailing thought was if patrons are going to change it anyway, a random number generated by PINES saved a step for staff. Otherwise they have to go in and change it to the phone number.
- The random four-digit number worked well prior to the instituting of the initial/default PIN automatically updating to the last four digits of the phone number. And continues to work regardless even with the initial PIN being the last four digits of the phone number. Staff

can always manually update at the request of the patron during a reset or initial account creation (ex. ensuring that the PIN is the same for parent and all additional children accounts for easy first time logging in).
- The purpose of the 4-digit number should be stressed more that it is just a starting number until a patron changes it to an alphanumeric password of his/her choosing.
- Their is a fine balance between privacy/security and convenience. I support the slightly more secure method of a random number, then requesting the patron to go online to update the password to their preference. For the same security reasons, I do not think staff should be setting the patron's passwords. Instead, they could help them locate how to update their password on gapines.org before accessing electronic resources.
- Due to some patrons possibly not paying attention to the importance of the security of their accounts, I think the default should be random numeric or alphabetical letters to make it difficult for others to unlock these accounts

Comments in Favor of Keeping Current Behavior

- I do not feel a change is required. After entering the phone number it is easy enough to click generate password and change it to something random. I feel the convenience of the last 4 of the phone number out way any risk.
- When we did this in the past it was a mess. It is much harder for the patrons to remember the random password. Stealing a pin requires knowing who's card you have, their number, and the possibility that they have not changed it.
- If patrons are concerned about using the last 4 digits of their phone number, they have the right to change that password when logging into their account. Are your patrons aware that they can do this?
- Advise staff to make setting chosen PIN as last step in registration process.
- It is the consensus of our library managers that the patrons like the ease of the automatic phone number password, and that it may be more a training issue than a policy change, so that the staff are taught to enter the password last if they don't want to use the phone number.
- It's far easier for patrons to be reminded the password is their last 4 of their phone number than having to recreate another password for them if they forget/lose the random number between the library and home.

Other Comments

- If this is to change make it a required field so we can have the patron select a number they are more likely to remember
- Asking the patron to choose a password that is ready to use for our electronic resources does not require additional programming. Just training.
- This default password is a real barrier to patrons using our electronic resources. It adds another step for them. If they choose their password at registration, like MANY businesses and organizations require, then they can go home and log in directly to electronic resources. With the 4 digits, they have to login to PINES first and change their

number to one that they can use online. I know with our resources they must choose at least seven characters including at least one number. This is pretty common in 2018. Can we at least look like we are a current, vibrant organization in this one aspect?

- Have it default to a random four-digit number, but give staff the option to set the password of the patron at the time the library card is issued.
- Often a patron's online use of their PINES card is limited to GADD or eBook/digital access, where the temporary password will work as long as it isn't changed by Staff or by logging into the PINES catalog. If we want secure online accounts, we will need to do something different. Use the last four digits of the patron's phone number was never a PINES decision, but a feature imposed on PINES with the deployment of Evergreen 1.6.

Addendum: Email Transcript Provided by Piedmont Regional

Excellent! Happy eReading!

George
Information Technology Librarian

From:
Sent: Tuesday, March 13, 2018 2:18 PM
To: George Tuttle
Subject: Re: Changing Passwords

Logged in with the new password. Thanks again,

Bob

On Mar 13, 2018, at 1:52 PM, George Tuttle <gtuttle@prlib.org> wrote:

Bob,

I set your password as

Let me know if you are able to login.

George
Information Technology Librarian

From:
Sent: Tuesday, March 13, 2018 1:32 PM
To: George Tuttle
Subject: Re: Changing Passwords

The one I sent is easy to remember using wedding information (I had better not forget it.) Another possible one is my street address – . This is also OK with me.

Thanks,

Bob

On Mar 13, 2018, at 1:25 PM, George Tuttle <gtuttle@prlib.org> wrote:

And pick a password that will be easy to remember. Some use a street address or date.

George
Information Technology Librarian

From:
Sent: Tuesday, March 13, 2018 1:19 PM
To: George Tuttle
Subject: Re: Changing Passwords

Ooops my library card number is

On Mar 13, 2018, at 1:12 PM, George Tuttle <gtuttle@prlib.org> wrote:

Hi Bob,

I can set your password for you. Your password needs to be at least 7 digits long and alphanumeric (a combination of numbers and letters). I will also need your library card number.

George
Information Technology Librarian

From:
Sent: Tuesday, March 13, 2018 1:07 PM
To: ebooks@prlib.org
Subject: Changing Passwords

I am new to e-books & other choices from my local library. They gave me a temporary password so I can log in. I do not know how to change it for my own password.

Please help me to continue learning using my own password.

p.s.: I am using it on an iMac computer.