Budget request for the Department of Public Instruction

Public libraries play a crucial role in Wisconsin by providing support for job seekers; access to technology and e-government; and tools to help with economic development.

Ensuring equitable and quality library service to all of Wisconsin by providing cost effective and efficient assistance to Wisconsin’s public libraries is a major goal of the system redesign process. Transforming these services may reallocate some resources from one service area to other areas but the need to have adequate funding still exists.

The Steering Committee requests support for the final phases of the redesign process in two ways. First, we would request that the definition of use for the DPI WISE funds be expanded to include use by public libraries and systems in addition to the current use of these fund by public schools.

Second, we would request an increase in system funding from the Universal Service Fund to support a 2-4% increase in base funding to help library systems provide services during this process, along with a flexible pool of funds for system transformation/implementation. Ideally, this flexible pool would contain $500,000 in Year 1 and $1,000,000 in Year 2, and would be used for developing and implementing new service models, including reconfiguration costs and implementation of enhanced services.