February 2017 PLSR Project Update

Communications from the community:
- The following was shared with the committee via email on January 3, 2017. From Martha Van Pelt, SCLS Director: The following comments were collected at the 12/22/2016 SCLS Board of Trustees meeting in response to the request to complete this survey. We are supportive of the goal to provide equal access to all system services for all libraries. We value the local expertise housed in our public libraries. We ask the work groups and committees not to be tied to the past. Please be open to new ways of doing things. Take a holistic view. Keep the needs of the libraries priority one. The current structure and number of systems was not based on logic or efficiency – let the old ways go. If we are standardizing services across the state, doesn’t this mean some systems will have to offer fewer services to meet the lowest common denominator? The SCLS Board feels the work groups and committees need to gain input directly from libraries and patrons and ask them what do they want? Thank you for offering this opportunity for feedback.

Workgroups & Topic Teams
- Except for Chapter 43, which will meet in early March, all workgroups have had their first meeting since the workgroup leadership meeting on January 20, 2017. The focus of these meetings was to review the work plan and establish next steps and assignments.
- We have the Topic Teams established and all of their meetings scheduled.

Conferences
- WAPL: The project managers have submitted two program proposals for PLSR at WAPL in Stevens Point on April 27th & 28th. The first program will be a general PLSR update program with a focus on the outcomes from the Topic Teams. Based on the discussion on January 20th, a proposal for a Thursday evening event was also submitted. Exactly what this event will look like is to be determined, but it is an opportunity to have a discussion with the community around some of the challenges we discussed with workgroup leaders on January 20th.
- PLA: PLA 2018 is accepting proposals for programs. The conference begins March 20, which is right around when we will be finalizing the PLSR recommendations. It could be an opportunity for us to share our PLSR journey with our colleagues around the country. The project managers would like to know if this is something that the Steering Committee is interested in pursuing. Due to limitations of project funds, unless the committee can identify other funds for this, the project could not cover the expense of anyone to attend and present. If there is interest, proposals are due in April, so the project managers, with input from the Steering chair and vice chair and DPI, will develop a draft of a program description to bring back to the March Steering Committee meeting.
Communication review/update - decision makers/politicians

- Martha Berninger, John DeBacher, Kurt Kiefer, and Ben Miller from DPI along with John Thompson (Steering Committee Chair) and Stef Morrill and Bruce Smith from the PLSR project management team met with State Superintendent Evers and three of his staff on January 23, 2017 to provide an overview of the current status of the project and discuss the next steps. The Superintendent is very supportive of the work of the PLSR project and had positive feedback about the process, including the discussion he heard at the WLA Conference program. Going forward, the Superintendent is happy to provide support the process including helping with any project communication when appropriate.

- COLAND was open to having Steering Committee members attend their March 10, 2017 meeting in Janesville at the Hedberg Public Library. The COLAND Chair, DPI staff, John Thompson and PLSR project managers are coordinating what PLSR information we will be sharing and what topics we will discuss with them to begin to establish how the Steering Committee can work with COLAND as the process moves forward over the next 15 months.

- John Thompson sent a message to SRLAAW to encourage them to have their staff and board members sign up for the PLSR survey panel. John will be sharing a project update with SRLAAW at their Feb. 20th meeting.

- DPI Assistant State Superintendent Kurt Kiefer has been keeping COSLA (Chief Officers of State Library Agencies) up-to-date about the PLSR project, along with being a liaison to help connect to other states. As part of this effort, Kurt has arranged for a short presentation to COSLA on March 2nd about PLSR, which is also an opportunity for us to connect with out-of-state experts for review panels for the workgroups and Steering Committee.

- John Thompson sent the following PLSR report to LD&L for their last meeting. In addition to this report, Kurt Kiefer mentioned to LD&L how important the process is to Dr. Evers as part of his DPI update.

*LD&L Written Report—*

*On January 20th, workgroup leadership, with their respective liaisons from the Steering Committee and DPI, reviewed and began implementation of the workgroup timeline for the next 12-15 months for the next phase of the PLSR process.*

*While the workgroups will continue to develop their models, and will have, by the end of the process, a well-defined model that includes recommendations related to services, staffing, and costs, the next phase also includes other activities:*  

*Topic teams, developed from several workgroups, will address specific topics that reach across workgroups, including defining of regions, resource sharing, and getting help.*  

*The Chapter 43 workgroup will be gathering data from other states and from other types of organizations in Wisconsin to provide background information for the Steering Committee.*  

*The Steering Committee will take up the topics of administration, governance, and funding. In order to do this, each workgroup is being asked to consider how coordinated administrative services will be, if there is a need for regional presence for the service, and how autonomous that regional presence will be.*
Throughout this phase, refined models will be reviewed by individuals/experts from outside the workgroups and topic teams as well as by the entire library community.

On January 23rd, the project managers and myself met with Dr. Evers and members of his cabinet to provide a 2nd project update. Dr. Evers was pleased with the work done so far in the process and recognized the importance of this project. He encouraged us to continue to build our legislative support for libraries and promote excellence for all.

If you or your state legislator have questions about the process, please refer their questions or concerns to the PLSR project managers or Steering Committee chair.