Steering Committee Pre-retreat Survey

Below is a summary of the responses of the Steering Committee to a brief pre-committee survey. 9 committee members completed the survey, and results were aggregated and summarized for the purposes of discussion.

Reflecting on your contributions to the Steering Committee, what strengths do you feel you bring to the group?

- Representation from various regions of the state and both small and large libraries
- Wide variety of professional experience in both libraries and systems – provides awareness of strengths, differences, and deficiencies in and between systems
- Current “time in the trenches” providing services directly to patrons
- Knowledge of state law relating to libraries and systems, as well as DPI roles, duties, and responsibilities – including limitations on DPI power / authority
- Open minded, willingness to embrace change & envision new possibilities / think outside the box
- Commitment to completing the process and moving forward
- Practical, to the point
- Can organize & communicate information clearly
- Good listener

What would help you with your role as a Steering Committee member? (education, tools, etc.)

- More time – reminders to schedule time for PLSR tasks
- “Who is doing what” list; summaries of weekly activity/decisions/questions
- Reaffirmation of what has been done to this point, the reasons why, etc.
- Focus on the duty given to the committee by the Superintendent, particularly as we see more negative from those that are change resistant
- Talking points on major FAQs
- Specific tasks with deadlines
- In-person meetings may be more effective. More in-person meetings, one-on-one conversations and check-ins with steering committee members outside of web meetings
- Better understanding of the day-to-day experiences libraries have. Visiting other systems/libraries to understand another point of view.
- More financial data on what libraries spend on the services we’ve identified with the workgroups
- Tools for crafting final recommendations and managing negative feedback

What have you learned from the input and feedback received from the community in the past few months?

- It is nice to see that the community is engaging with us and helping to shape our path.
- The community feels the stakes are high. There is anxiety and fear in the community (change and then unknown). The unknown can cause concern even if the process is open. The fear and emotions surrounding change emerged earlier than anticipated
• There is still the perception among some of a preconceived outcome
• Equitable funding is a top concern for rural regions, people want reassurance that this will be prioritized
• Libraries are still not convinced that the process will be beneficial to them.
• System staff feel that we are determined to get rid of systems rather than consider what is working well already and building on that
• Sometimes a little information causes people to speculate
• The amount of information being posted/shared is overwhelming to people – there is some need for summaries or some way to highlight important facts
• There is a lack of trust in the process, Steering Committee, and project managers – not sure what this is based on.
• There are concerns about WiLS facilitating the process
• Continued communication including more in-person is needed
• The idea of creating a more concrete model is becoming more “real”
• All the feedback is good, even though it sometimes feels pretty crummy. People are starting to pay attention to things they see as a threat. When people feel out of control and threatened, they are going to fight to maintain the status quo. We need to give other voices a chance to be heard.

What specific changes in activities or process would you like to see?
• Maybe more check-ins by steering members – though not sure how to do that within open meetings context
• It would be interesting to take a topic or two that are further along and talk about them a bit
• Improvements in communication with invested people (e.g. system staff & ?) – how can we be respectful of the fear / concerns they have while keeping momentum going?
• Specific deadlines
• Break some work into smaller groups (like the Events and Human Resources subcommittees) to keep momentum and forward progress and possibly remove some burden from the Chair and Vice Chair?
• Can we start testing some of the workgroup models to have concrete examples to show success (or failure)?
• More in-person meetings for the Steering Committee to encourage more discussion and active participation – perhaps additional work days / retreats?
• I like that the workgroups are reporting to us monthly.
• Some concerns about workgroups being too focused on detail.
• I’m concerned about surveys being developed that won’t lead to actionable data

During the retreat, there will be a general check-in with the Steering Committee. What topics do you want included in this discussion?
• How steering can be more effective communicators on project progress, as well as more receptive sounding rods for concerns/complaints
• Comfort level of steering committee members with presenting to groups or participation in Q&A sessions
• How are committee members feeling about the input being received? What stands out in it?
• What are the barriers we are finding to participating in meetings, Q&A sessions, conferences, etc. and how can we remove these barriers as much as possible moving forward?
• The time members of the committee are spending on PLSR tasks
• Reasons people wanted to get involved in the process
• How the process is impacting us (what we’re learning)
• Our role as leaders, and that leaders make change
• Some things mentioned that are more general goals for outcomes from the retreat:
  o Update on workgroup models
  o Communication strategies for connecting to Wisconsin libraries
  o A more cohesive roadmap that helps the libraries understand the process thus far, and where we are going

Please complete this sentence: “For me, the retreat will be a success if…”

• ...I get directions and know how long the trip will take, even if I do not yet know the destination
• ...I know what will be happening for the rest of this year.
• ...a shared vision for the Phase 3 process timeline and communication plan is developed with active Steering Committee participation.
• ...we recharge our batteries, reconfirm why the committee was formed and what the end goal will be, and hopefully get that last bit of energy needed to complete Phase 3 of this project.
• ...we end the retreat with a positive, tangible game plan for the coming months that everyone is committed to supporting.
• ...I’m updated well on the current models of the different workgroups as well as how the workgroup models may influence/interact with one another.
• ...I leave feeling that I can fluently explain all that has been done thus far, and what the revised timeline will mean for the library community.
• ...we can gather better support and trust from Wisconsin libraries so that we can move forward.
• ...the members of the steering team develop a real sense of team, mission, and purpose.