Dear Steering Committee,

First, I want to thank you for your hard work on the PLSR project. I understand this is a complicated project, and I appreciate you being open to questions and comments. My questions are about some of the ‘big picture’ issues with library systems:

- Governance: Who will oversee library systems in the end? In other words, who will be the authority making sure that library systems are fulfilling their duties and pulling their weight? If one of the possibilities is WiLS, I have serious concerns. While WiLS is staffed by committed, honest, and hardworking professionals, it would be a serious legal and ethical issue if WiLS found itself in a position to win a state contract to oversee library systems, due to their management of the PLSR project from its beginning. My second concern with the possibility of WiLS (or any other private entity) overseeing library systems is the issue of privatization. I am wholeheartedly against a private entity having authority over library systems. Whichever body ends up overseeing library systems, they must have the tools necessary to hold library systems accountable for offering high levels of service. To provide those tools, we need to clarify the statute. Part of that clarification ought to be defining what makes a good library system. Another part is to quantify that definition with key performance indicators (KPI) with which one could measure systems’ effort and effectiveness. Some examples of KPI might be "all library system trustees receive orientation," or "system board meets monthly." As I understand it, DPI can only 'enforce' what is in Chapter 43. In order to hold library systems accountable, the statute must have more clearly defined teeth. If it would be too cumbersome to need to change the statute every time we need a new KPI, perhaps the statute could say something like, "library systems must meet standards as determined by administrative rules," which would give DPI the ability (and flexibility) to adjust KPI while preserving DPI's authority to enforce expectations of library systems.

- Accountability: I am curious to hear ideas for other tools we can give DPI or system trustees to empower them to hold library systems to high standards. Beyond checking the 'I'm not satisfied' box on the annual report, what new tools will member libraries have if their library system is not meeting their needs? And if 'checking the box' remains one method of monitoring library satisfaction with systems, what consequences are there for an underperforming library system? Perhaps just as important as consequences, what support and tools for improvement can we provide systems that are struggling?

- Training and Resources for System Trustees: What training resources are available to system trustees, so they understand the standards to which they must hold their library system staff? Are system trustees required to participate in an orientation process that clarifies their roles and responsibilities and those of the library system? As I mentioned above, requiring this in the statute (or administrative rules) would be helpful.

- Funding: How can we adjust the funding formula to offer more adequate funding to those systems that are struggling, while maintaining funding levels for systems that are functioning well? Again, thank you for your work on this project. I hope the ideas above are helpful, and if I
can clarify anything I’ve said, please do let me know. I must say, I feel thankful every day for the wisdom and support I receive from the wonderful team at my library system (Bridges). I hope PLSR results in every public library director in Wisconsin feeling the same about their library system.

Sincerely,

Betsy Bleck
MLIS Director Oconomowoc Public Library

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Good afternoon,

I have a few questions I wasn't able to ask at the focus group last week.

1. I see that the delivery workgroup has proposed overnight delivery statewide. I think this is great and something people in big cities are accustomed to, but not realistic when there are library systems who currently have 3 day a week delivery. When will the dots be connected between what the workgroups have proposed and what is affordable/attainable.

2. If Wisconsin were to no longer have library systems or the boards that oversee them, where do you see library advocacy coming from?

3. How do you see collaborations working between libraries if there isn’t a local system to facilitate? ex. Memory Cafes between Bridges, Monarch, and MCFLS.

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