The Wisconsin Public Library System Redesign Project (PLSR)
Summary of Final Recommendations

After over three years of meetings the PLSR Steering Committee has submitted their final report. Literally hundreds of library directors, trustees, and others have participated to a greater or lesser degree, from the dedicated Steering Committee and Workgroup members to those who only filled out surveys and commented on proposals.

Seven recommendations representing areas of consensus within the library community emerged from the workgroup reports, community input, and discussion:

1. **Develop Standards, Best Practices and Accountability Structures for Public Library Systems**
   Develop and implement an appropriate set of standards, best practices and accountability measures designed to support equity of access to high quality services by public libraries in all parts of Wisconsin. Identify standards requiring accountability measures. Structure any such measures in a manner that holds member libraries harmless.

2. **Enhance Collaboration by Creating Incentives and Removing Barriers**
   Accelerate collaboration among Wisconsin's public library systems by establishing incentives and removing barriers. Apply this approach to support voluntary consolidations of library systems. When prudent, seek statutory changes that would help systems achieve and sustain momentum in this area.

3. **Reduce the Number of Regional Systems**
   Apply the approaches of enhancing collaboration and reducing barriers to support voluntary changes in territory served by public library systems with the ultimate goal of reducing the current number of public library systems.

4. **Analyze the Current Funding Formula**
   Conduct a thorough analysis of the current funding formula for public library systems, including practices utilized to apportion state aid. Identify and propose alternative funding formulas, methods of apportionment, or other solutions with potential to improve equity of access to high-quality library services.

5. **Initiate Delivery Service Pilot Projects**
   Stimulate development within the resource-sharing environment by initiating one or more pilot projects relating to library delivery services.

6. **Create an Effective, Well-Managed, State-Scale Discovery Layer**
   Engage with topical experts, public library systems, and the library community at-large to expand access to collections from around the State.
   A "discovery layer" refers to the catalog used by library patrons to find, identify, select and obtain the various types of resources offered by the modern public library. This discovery layer would work like our current catalog but would allow access to other

library catalogs, as well as an ever-broadening variety of downloadable and streamable digital resources such as audiobooks, feature films, news and/or scholarly articles and other digital content.

7. **Implement a Learning Management System for Professional Development**
Oversee the design, deployment and operation of a learning management system capable of meeting the current and future needs of librarians in Wisconsin.
This learning management system would give library directors and staff access to a greater range of educational programs and would streamline the certification process for directors.

The Steering Committee also developed five principles to be followed in implementing these recommendations:

1. **Service improvements must benefit library users**
Any service improvements moving forward must fulfill a principle of the project related to equitable access for all and ultimately benefit the library user.

2. **Workgroup reports should be used as frameworks for specific service improvements**
The workgroup reports contain thoughtful and in-depth recommendations from public library system and library service area experts and provide a solid foundation for improving services across the state.

3. **Take action on recommendations with robust support**
Recommendations 5, 6, and 7 have been identified and are supported as service areas where improvement can provide immediate, positive outcomes through collaborative and organic change.

4. **Service improvements must be soundly-implemented**
Implementation of service improvements must be driven by effective research, planning, execution, and change-management, and supported by adequate resources.

5. **Potential unintended consequences should be anticipated and studied**
Any efforts to implement recommendations should be preceded by assessments to identify risk factors that could lead to unintended negative outcomes.

The report has been submitted to State Superintendent Carolyn Stanford Taylor and to the Council on Library and Network Development (COLAND). Implementing these recommendations will for the most part not require changes to Statute or Administrative Code but will require support and funding from the DPI. We can expect some lively discussion throughout the Wisconsin library community over the next few years.

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