

MINUTES

Oregon Public Library Standards Committee meeting

October 4, 2012

Oregon State Library

1. Call to order: Su Liudahl, chair of the Public Library Division Board, brought the meeting together at 10:00. In attendance were: Su Liudahl, Darci Hanning, Mo Cole, Pam North, Buzzy Nielsen, John Goodyear, Paul Lightcap, Sami Pierson, MaryKay Dahlgreen, Kevin Barclay, Kate Lasky, Gayle Weiss, Kirsten Brodbeck-Kenney, Taylor Worley, Dan White, Jane Tucker, Kathleen Schmidtgall, Ted Smith, Perry Stokes, and Karen Muller. Margaret Hazel and Amy Blossom were not available.
2. Introduction and committee logistics: As the first meeting of this group, some time was given to introductions of the participants and the history and task of the group.
 - a. Ground Rules: In order to make the most of the meeting time, the group reviewed proposed ground rules:
 - You are expected to come to each meeting, either in person or via *Go to Meeting*;
 - If you can't attend, please let us know a week in advance;
 - You have been invited to participate and your participation is essential. Please speak up and join the conversation;
 - Having said that, please share the floor with others. Attempts to dominate the conversation will be discouraged;
 - If your contribution is no more than a restatement of something someone else said, consider saving it until you can add something new or original.
 - We need to gently help each other stick to the guidelines we agree to.

An additional ground rule was proposed and accepted: Limit side conversations.
 - b. Decision making: The PLD Board is charged with reviewing the Standards so technically the Board is responsible for presenting the review product to the PLD membership. Therefore, the final decisions lie with the Board. However, there will be many decision points along the way which this group will be involved in. As yet, a single decision making process has not been determined. This is something to be discussed as we go.
 - c. Meeting dates: The proposed dates are:
 - November 16
 - January 11 (*go to meeting only*)
 - March 8
 - May 10
 - July 12All in-person meetings are planned for Salem.
All meetings following the initial meeting will have a Go To Meeting option.
 - d. Communication with membership: In order to allow for the broadest possible feedback on the process of reviewing/rewriting the Standards, minutes of the meetings will be posted to Libs-OR and OLA website. In addition a session for the annual conference, called "Fifty Shades of Library Standards" has been proposed and submitted to the Conference

Committee. The conference will also host the regular annual meeting of PLD, at which time this topic will be reviewed with attendees.

- e. Reimbursements: It is the Board's intention to support committee members attendance to the degree they need in order to be involved, When the invitation was extended, the Board pledged to reimburse attendees for costs to the degree the attendee requested. Both PLD and OLA have set aside funds for this purpose, but the outcome of the LSTA grant application which the Board made will not known until October 26. All attendees should save receipts for which they plan on requesting reimbursement in addition to tracking mileage. Forms for reimbursement are on the OLA website. A formal process for reimbursement will be announced soon.

3. Standards:

- a. Mission: What is the point of having Standards? Who is the audience? Can the Standards address more than one audience? What is the mission of this committee? In order to answer these question, participants stated how the Standards are used in their community:
 - the Standards are not used; they look to other states and use other comparisons states
 - since we owe the people of Oregon the best possible libraries, we are always striving to achieve the best possible product; this is a document to take to funders that says this document states that we believe as librarians this is what we need; like other departments, i.e. fire, the document is adopted by our professional group;
 - use the Standards a lot, and they have been a great tool to discuss library service with a neighboring community which does not provide a public library;
 - one community moved to strategic plan, with community leaders determining what the needs are in the community and they turned to those, which felt very customized; through the process of assembling a team of all community leaders, a plan is created which comes from the community rather than from the library; the community voted on which roles the library should select and they chose 'Create Young Readers'; the library director realizes that because of this, other standards may not be addressed at the same high level as meeting the needs of young readers;
 - it is a tool to guide the library, and it is both an inspiration and a frustration; it also helps her to inform and educate her board about what good quality service is;
 - used annually to report progress to a district advisory council as per terms of the district IGA as well as a report to the League of Women Voters;
 - used as a tool to report to the community how its library measures up to other libraries in the state;
 - used with Foundation and promoted to the public as a way to become excellent;
 - someone at the Public Libraries Directors meeting said they used the Standards for grants;
 - used in conversation with city manager;
 - one community has not used the Standards yet, but could use if start getting into a pickle, believes they are especially good for libraries which are groping for where to go;
 - in communities where there is a lot of friction between departments, it is very helpful to have a document to look to rather than personal opinions;
 - one community created 9 priorities of service, then used the Standards to help them when some detrimental funding proposals were made;

Other thoughts:

- are we going to create something that matches the outcomes we want? We don't want to just validate an unacceptable picture for our community
- the Standards need to supply a broader view of service and impact

- the Standards need to be a forward looking document that allows flexibility
- libraries may not always have books; can a document be flexible enough to accommodate that possible future
- it should not be a list of things
- we may need more experts to help us achieve the revised version we desire
- the Standards need to be adaptable to each community as well as the future
- the Standards need to accommodate all types of public libraries: district, consortial, city, county, big, small, rural, urban, geographic considerations, etc.
- can Standards acknowledge levels of funding received by different libraries, because in many situations this is not going to change
- can the Standards acknowledge the amazing work that people are doing without much money
- in states, achieving the Standards to one degree or another is tied to money; however, if the level of funding is never going to change, then it is beyond the control of the library director and can only be used on the governing institution as a reminder; some places are just too small for this ever to change
- Format: checklist very appealing

- b. Comments from MaryKay Dahlgreen, Oregon State Librarian: There are some libraries which are not following any portion of the Standards and she is discussing them with the State Library Board. They are looking at providing more strategic planning to libraries and talking about Standards, the old benchmark criteria and statute which defines a legally established library. Legally established library means that it is affiliated with governmental unit which provides some resource to the library. There is no funding tied to any state definition of legally established library except for Ready to Read and the statewide databases. The former benchmark was minimal but outlined adequate library service for all Oregonians including childrens programs, MLS librarian, and open hours. The benchmark was used for "underserved" as opposed to "unserved". The OLA Standards sit next to this legal requirement and is a document of the state professional organization, not the State Library.

A community with a volunteer library is still considered 'unserved'. OSL wants everyone to have adequate, tax supported library service. OSL believes Standards should come from professional association; OSL no power and no authority with the Standards. Accreditation is also being talked about. Other states attach money to standards. Oregon libraries and OSL are at a turning point; it is a good opportunity to look at the 21st century library and the according standards. But we should be careful the Standards are ever the only document we use to help us provide great library service: planning and community process important too.

- c. Accreditation: At that point we took a show of hands to learn how people generally feel about the Issue of accreditation, which could be as simple as getting a plaque for the window; most people were fine with this.

Then we asked how people felt about have accreditation (achievement of the Standards to an agreed upon level) tied to some kind of funding; most people were less enthusiastic about this option.

Also we could tie accreditation to progress, and there are some standards which create plan for progress. Other Standards allow a library to choose role(s). There are many options and that is all open to us.

What if we reward for cooperating libraries, people who are willing to join others?

How (and who) do we evaluate an accreditation process every year; it must be very simple or it will get heavy on the administrative end.

d. Goals:

- Outcomes are very important these days; if the outcomes area tied to funding then the group which holds the money also holds the power to determine standards
- Our primary outcome is to be relevant and the best for our community. Accreditation and funding are the means to the outcome of being the best for our community
- What money are we talking about? In Oregon right now it is only LSTA funding which comes through the state; otherwise there are only grants and funding from our governmental or funding institutions. One state which has grant program to help libraries meet standards, but Oregon does not have that.
- Sustainability might be an outcome
- Libraries need a target and the Standards provide that
- Do we want to provide inspiration or punishment-the old proverbial carrot or stick
- We are all pros, we know or can find out what makes a quality library; let's put together document that reflects that, be bold and mighty forces will come to our aid.
- we must put our stake in the ground somewhere. You might not like where it is but if you don't know where you are you won't get somewhere.
- Responsibility for assessment is ours; there is a place for standards, and adequate place for contextualization of community along with that. Can allow standards to be aspirational for small libraries, with a nod towards local community assessment in the document?
- However, we could use an assessment toolkit or a list of resources to assist in meeting the standards and taking it to the next level next level
- The Standards must be something to strive for, not to feel good, but to make progress

PLD Board provided a draft Mission statement which they had drafted when confronted with the same question about mission and goals of this project:

Mission/Goal:

- to guide the development of quality library service to all Oregonians
- to provide a tool to inform and advocate for quality library services
- to provide a relevant tool for evaluation, strategic planning and resource management

Guiding principles:

- public libraries are valuable community resources
- we recognize the diversity and uniqueness of libraries across the state; the strength this diversity creates and the adaptability it requires
- every library reflects the needs of their community
- adherence to standards (along with accrediting or certifying?) bestows a measure of professional merit on the library
- progress towards achieving standards will be acknowledged
- the standards document will be easy to use and accomplishment towards the standards will be documented on a statewide level annually

- Standard measures for comparing libraries; apples to apples, look for variability and remove those, i.e. space, staff-districts need space for their own HR etc. Really define well!

- Review standards regularly

e. Non-Negotiable: After lunch the group brainstormed on what they felt must be included in order to provide the best service to the public:

- Advisory citizens group, (meeting open to the public) annual plan, what did we do this year, look at strategic plan (process for annual review with the citizens group or whatever)

- Annual financial review

- Board bylaws

- Annual stats report

- Provide access (also phone)

- Curated collection

- Freedom to read

- Library bill of rights

- Open to general public

- Confidentiality of library records

- Freedom to view

- Free access to libraries for minors

- Regular hours/posted hours

- Policies: must have collection development policy, library card policy, who can get a card.

- Must circulate, provide access to materials, clarify what access is

- Internet wifi technology plan

- Strategic plan, facility planning: which policies are required, which ones are optional

- community meeting space, study space etc.

- Childrens services

- Early childhood literacy

- Staff/professional staff?

- Staff training/development

- Automation????

- Dedicated space; safe accessible, comply with ADA

- Adult services

- Teen services/collection

- Electricity

- Free, Community space, flexible space

- Free is good

- friends group

- community involvement/ by staff, director, and community involved in library/partnerships

- volunteers

- dedicated staff space

- sign-library for identification, also find

- technology: web presence

- get public feedback at some interval

- mission statement

- written job descriptions for staff and/or volunteer (if it's a position, then it needs a job description)
- core values: public interaction and response
- provide a safe environment (background check etc)
- ILL (belong to access)
- Branches thing
- Belong to professional organization

f. Current headings/categories and next steps

Some thoughts about revising the current headings or adding new headings which will be worked into next round of discussion:

Revise Access: does it need to be separate thing, is it already interwoven into standards

Add Wage

Revise Community involvement: use another word, redefine and reclassify

Add Finance

Add Hr

Add Marketing and advocacy

Add Community engagements for Community Involvement

Add Resource sharing

Add Programming (under materials and services)

Current Board leaders of each category:

Access: Pam (this will turning into advocacy and marketing once/if access is absorbed into other standards)

Facilities: Mo

Staff: Jane

Materials and service: Karen

Governance: Ted

Community involvement: Su

Technology: Kevin

Other/Cross connections between categories: Dan

The Board will send out an email to the entire group, which is not that big, so people will have to select more than one category.

- 1) Members will self select group(s)
- 2) Look at other states
- 3) Come back with format ideas
- 4) Online brainstorming for each section
- 5) Compile big list
- 6) Electronic voting to identify most important things in that list
- 7) Each leader will come back with copies for each person

Again, in order to communicate with all OLA, the minutes will be posted along with the committee members in case someone wants to contact an individual.

One final plea to the group: if you respond to the entire group, please change the heading if it is a new subject.

f. Adjournment: the meeting adjourned at 2:35