

WLS CENTRAL LIBRARY STUDY COMMITTEE – 6/8/2017 MEETING

1. What is your view of the purpose of the CL?
2. How do you see CL functions evolving in the near term? Long term?
3. Have any library systems implemented innovative solutions/approaches to their CL operation that have improved the contribution of their CL to their member libraries? How so?
4. What recommendations does DLD have on how a library system should support their CL? Is there a best of breed example?
5. How does DLD recommend that performance of a CL be measured? Is there a best of breed example?
6. What role does DLD play in CL selection? Use of funds?
7. Should we choose to do so, how can WLS change the designated CL for the system?
8. Is a brick and mortar CL required? If so, why?
9. How does the status of MVPL registration affect its designation as CL? When can we expect that issue to be resolved?
10. Under current MVPL status, what potential exists for another maintenance of effort problem to arise?

CENTRAL LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT AID IN NEW YORK STATE

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Among the major recommendations of the Board of Regents for legislative action in 1970 is a proposal that would increase State aid for the central libraries in New York's 22 public library systems from the present 5¢ per capita for the system's population to 12¢. The measure would be one part of a three-part bill, including also an increase of 5¢ per capita to the systems themselves and raising the maximum of aid to The Research Libraries of The New York Public Library from \$525,000 to \$1.5 million. While all three parts are urgently needed, what follows relates only to Central Library Development (CLD) aid.

In support of the recommended increase in CLD aid the Regents stated:

A major share of the service and resource functions of the State's 22 public library systems is borne by the officially designated central libraries. Evaluation by the Department's Division of Research and Evaluation has confirmed serious inadequacies in these central libraries resulting principally from inequities between patterns of support and use. It is not possible for central libraries to fulfill their new and growing role as area library centers throughout one or more counties solely through local support. Because of their service beyond municipal boundaries, a limited amount of State aid has been channeled to them through their library systems since 1966. The present level is token, and most inadequate. Raising it by \$.07 per capita and producing a more realistic and meaningful reimbursement for services rendered beyond municipal boundaries is needed.¹

Major Recommendations of the Regents for Legislative Action 1970. Albany: The University of the State of New York. The State Education Department, November 1969, p. 20.

To understand the need for this proposed increase and the rationale behind the recommendation, some further background and perspective is needed.

1950 LEGISLATION

Prior to 1950, New York State had six systems with broad-base taxation as the primary source of support - that is either county or, in New York City, the five-county citywide budget. In each of these systems, the main library had a major or moderate degree of centralized authority and administration and provided the large measure of backstopping strength in collection and professional staff expertise for both direct service and advisory or consultant services to other outlets in the area. With the 1950 legislation and minor reorganization, they qualified for greatly increased State aid. Between 1950 and 1956, two multicounty federated systems, involving five counties, were formed. By 1957, these eight library systems, serving 13 of New York's 62 counties, were the only ones in existence in the State. The law required that they extend service to previously unserved areas in their counties, but there was a great difference in the levels of strength in their main libraries.

CENTRAL LIBRARY CONCEPT

In 1956 and 1957, the Commissioner of Education's Committee on Public Library Service studied the situation. It reported:

...it appears that in county systems operating under the 1950 law the greatest advantages accrue to the unserved or poorly served areas, chiefly because at the existing level of State aid a disproportionate share must be used to meet the requirement of extending service to previously unserved areas of the county and because the services tend to flow from the larger to the smaller library - a situation of no special benefit to the large

library unless it is properly compensated, which generally has not been the case thus far.... In general, the quality of service the system can offer is no better than that of the best library in the system, so that strong county systems cannot be formed without a strong central library. Federations of weak libraries give no promise of developing strong central libraries under the present program.²

The committee accepted as basic the concept that the extension of service should be through the instrumentality of cooperative systems. It also agreed that there should be wider alternatives in the form that systems of libraries might assume, and that every system should include a strong central library with a large and widely diversified collection of books and other material. The committee was obviously much influenced by the results it had observed where there was main library strength within the existing systems. Quoting again from a section of the report dealing with the vision the committee had of future system development:

The core of all systemwide services will be the central library...to it, readers will come for special reference services and involved information searches. In it will be housed the largest book collection, the reservoir, which all the community libraries may tap to meet the needs of their readers....³

The committee recognized, however, that in some areas of the State there were no strong central libraries. Since it believed a strong collection to be essential, it recommended a program of book grants from the State to bring approved central libraries up to not less than 100,000 volumes selected for adult reference and information use. For

²*Report of the Commissioner of Education's Committee on Public Library Service - 1957.* Albany: The University of the State of New York. The State Education Department, 1958, p. 64.

³*Ibid.*, p. 29.

reasons of economics, it advocated building on what strength existed, rather than developing completely new resource centers. The committee envisioned this type of aid as a form of equalization since it would be offered only to the smaller central libraries in those areas of the State where the population and financial resources had been insufficient to develop strong ones.

1958 AND 1960 LEGISLATION

The outcome was the legislation of 1958 and 1960 which implemented the flexibility and permissiveness advised by the committee. Co-operative associations of libraries interested in joining forces became possible without action by county government. The principle of building on strength was adopted. What must at that time have seemed like a massive injection of State aid was provided as an incentive to organization and as a help in the development of central library collections. The latter took the form of the State financing, over a 10-year period, four-fifths of the additional adult nonfiction volumes needed to bring each central library's resources in that category up to 100,000 volumes. This program is variously known as Central Book Aid, or CBA, or four-to-one. The largest member library in each system was designated as the central library. It earns Central Book Aid by financing one-fifth of the adult nonfiction volumes needed to achieve 100,000 volumes in 10 years and serving as the primary direct access, reference, and interlibrary loan back-up resource for the system program. In a few cases, two cocentral libraries may have shared this responsibility within their system.

The spectacular outcome, of course, was the rapid establishment of cooperative systems after 1958 until the structure for the State was completed by 1962. Today, only 16 of New York State's libraries and less than 1 percent of the State's population and geographic area are outside the service area of some system. In the process, however, inevitable growing pains and problems of success have been experienced.

Massive as the 1958 and 1960 State aid formulae may have appeared, they did not prove to provide enough money to do the job that was and is needed. The more response the systems generated, the thinner they and their support were stretched. As the true role and

responsibility of the central libraries began to emerge - literally coming home to roost on the shoulders of the, relatively speaking, "big brothers" (most of which were still inadequate in resources and local tax support) - there was not sufficient State aid coming to the systems to enable them to compensate these libraries fairly. Most systems' funds were already committed to other programs and to meeting the minimum requirements for the systems' full approval by the Commissioner of Education.

SYSTEM EVALUATION

The 1963-66 systems evaluation report, *Emerging Library Systems*, took note of this and concluded in general that: for the most part, the central library responsibility overextends the designated library's collection, staff, and facilities; extra costs in staff time and duplicate copies of books are involved in fulfilling that responsibility; and most of the central libraries need extra support to offset the drain on their regular resources, help them perform as they should as the core of a regional service, and compensate them realistically for the increased load they carry.⁴

The New York State Library agency, the Division of Library Development, had not been blind to this problem. Well before the system evaluation was yielding data about it, the division saw that it was a mistake to emphasize larger book collections alone without recognizing the role of trained staff and need for up-to-date equipment and attractive functional physical facilities. The State's plan for use of Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) Title I (services) funds provides for personnel and equipment grants to central libraries, and its Title II (construction) plan gives high priority to helping meet their building needs. This, however, with CBA and the

⁴*Emerging Library Systems: The 1963-66 Evaluation of the New York State Public Library Systems*. Albany: The University of the State of New York. The State Education Department. Division of Evaluation, 1967, pp. 46, 220.

employment of a staff member with a major assignment to central library problems was all the division could do until 1966.

1966 LEGISLATION

In 1966, before *Emerging Library Systems* with its recommendations for central library aid was published, the Division of Evaluation's staff papers that eventually were fed into the final report and the Division of Library Development's own experience had clarified the need. The department, therefore, sponsored, and the legislature passed in 1966, an additional State aid feature - aid for the further development of central libraries. It enables each system to apply for \$15,000 or 5¢ per capita based on the population served by the system (whichever is greater) with the funds to be used only for central library purposes. In order to qualify for these grants, which vary from the minimum of \$15,000 to approximately \$167,000, each system was required to submit a long-range plan for the development of its central library services. Because the development of these plans, a cooperative undertaking of system and central library boards and staffs, required considerable thought, time, and effort, provision was made for paying the 1966 grants on the basis only of budgets showing how the first year's funds would be spent. The long-range plan requirement went into effect in 1967.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

The Division of Library Development was charged with administering the program. The papers and procedures it developed and the Commissioner's regulations it helped to formulate (§101-a) were designed with specific purposes and needs in mind.

1. The needs were great, and the aid was provided to help meet them. It was, therefore, important that there be safeguards against the possibility that State dollars might be used simply to substitute for local dollars. The safeguard is a requirement that local taxes for central library purposes other than capital outlay may not fall below a prior 2-year level. If it does, entitlement is reduced by 25 percent.
2. The strictly local needs are likely to continue to increase, and local funds

should be provided to meet them. Also, in many areas incentives are needed to get local support up to a bare minimum level. There was a regulation requiring a minimum of \$1.75 per capita local support for expenditures for other than capital improvements. This rose to \$2 for 1968 when applications for aid in 1969 were reviewed. While the requirement is very low in terms of even present needs for strictly local service and in terms of local effort in many areas, it has caused some badly undersupported central libraries to stretch a bit in order to qualify each year. One system did not qualify for the aid in 1966, but has since used the regulation successfully to secure a local tax increase each year in order to receive its State aid entitlement.

3. There are some minimal requirements in regard to central library staffing and service hours. These too are very low indeed, but they have been successful in raising the level in some of the smaller central libraries.
4. Some central libraries are city or county public libraries, and their State aid goes directly to the city or county treasury. Some of the forms and procedures were designed to assure that the funds will be used only for the purpose intended and not be diverted to nonlibrary municipal functions or to noncentral library system programs.
5. There was a multifold purpose behind the requirement that each system and central or cocentral library board of trustees jointly develop and submit for division approval a long-range plan for further development of its central library service program. The foremost purpose was to give those responsible for providing adequate public library service to the people of the State an opportunity to take a new look at the needs for library service seen in the light of both local and areawide requirements and to define the steps required to meet these needs.

It has become commonplace to speak of the rapid growth of new knowledge and the

need to get this knowledge into the hands of those who must have it to earn a living or to stimulate personal growth. Acquiring and dispensing this knowledge poses a critical problem to all libraries and is particularly crucial for central libraries which have had to face the question: How to move from the fairly simple matter of supplying general information for their former relatively small population base to the highly complex function of providing a variety of services to a larger and, in some instances, a more sophisticated public which consistently demands current and precise information.

COOPERATIVE PLANNING

Finding an approvable answer required the very best efforts of system and central library staff and trustees working together, and several plans went through a number of revisions before receiving approval from the division. While the task of formulating one was demanding, it was also exciting and fruitful in most cases. It occasioned a give-and-take between system and central library directors and their respective boards, and there resulted improved relations and reduced tensions between system staff, most of whom do not serve library patrons directly, and central library personnel who are usually eyeball-to-eyeball with a demanding and often critical public. Mutual understanding of each party's problems and an honest approach to joining skill and effort to meet systemwide needs emerged in some areas.

The Commissioner's regulations required that the long-range plan have a 10-year base. Obviously, a decade is a long time in a field that is changing as rapidly as this one, and such plans are not likely to provide a perfect blueprint for very long. Amendments are, therefore, encouraged as time and experience provide new frames of reference, as new needs become evident, and as new opportunities arise. Additional aid in 1970 would be such an opportunity, and the amendment procedure will be important for many of the systems and central libraries.

GUIDELINES

The guidelines as to how CLD funds may be used are simple and have been interpreted liberally when it served the broad purpose of the program and best interests of the library

involved. While the CBA program is devoted wholly to the reference and information functions of central libraries, the CLD program is not limited to them. Improved information services and resources and free direct access result in greatly increased traffic and demand of all kinds in the larger libraries. Expenditures are, therefore, constantly being approved for improvement of service to all age groups, administrative procedures, staff organization, inservice training in all departments, audiovisual services, and popular as well as research collections.

Given this broad and quite liberal frame of reference, the 22 approved long-range plans and the implemented annual CLD expenditure programs have accomplished a great deal despite the very inadequate 5¢ per capita level of aid. It would be futile to detail here each system's plan and progress, but trends in the State as a whole since the CLD program was initiated in 1966 and some dramatic developments merit attention as the systems and central libraries review their currently approved long-range plans in the light of needs that have emerged in the past 4 years, the possibility of increased aid, and new directions they might take.

A major trend has been away from dissipating CLD aid by spreading it over more than one library. This trend has received the strongest possible encouragement from the Division of Library Development.

PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT

In 1966 and 1967, the 22 systems were distributing their CLD aid to 33 central, cocentral, and contracting local units. Seven systems were dividing it up among two or more libraries. In 1969, only four systems were doing so, and aid was being concentrated upon the programs of 26 key libraries. In three of these systems, aid to cocentral libraries is justified by their wide geographic separation and resource-center importance for major subregions within the system service area. In the fourth, the two cocentral libraries are geographically close to each other and to the system headquarters. Each, however, has demonstrated willingness to develop and accommodate resources and services of systemwide importance far in excess of what would normally be expected of a

library serving its own locality, and each is already carrying a very heavy load of free direct access borrowing from nonresident patrons.

At the 5¢ per capita formula, annual grants for further development of central libraries now total about \$895,000. (See Table I.) From 1966 through 1969, the grand total of State aid paid under the program was some \$3.48 million.

EQUIPMENT

As was to be expected, there were quite heavy expenditures for equipment during the first 2 or 3 years - almost heartbreaking evidence in some cases of the very commonplace but necessary items some central libraries had been doing without or without in sufficient number (simple office equipment, tables, chairs, book trucks). They were also indicative, however, of need that arises from the central library function and in many instances from the CBA program. Shelving and other storage facilities, microfilm readers and reader printers, and audiovisual equipment were widely purchased. New circulation desks and systems were installed in a few places, and approval was also given for installation of an automatic booklift and new ventilating system.

Generally such expenditures have tapered off, and, with only a few exceptions, it appears that allocations for equipment will be very slight in 1970, focused primarily upon occasional replacements and rental of copying, circulation, and TWX machines. Clearly, however, the use of CLD aid for hardware has been a boon to both large and small central libraries, enabling them to acquire much that was essential for even an efficient local unit but had been denied by their taxing authorities and to tool up for effective regional service.

STUDIES AND EDP

The total amount allocated to other operating expenses has been somewhat higher than might have been expected. This has been due primarily to contracts for studies (e.g., supporting the implementation of automated processes, business management, work methods) and for temporary personnel to carry out inservice training programs such as telephone reference. At The New York Public Library, for example, where CLD aid has been used to assist

in the launching and development of the Mid-Manhattan Library, design and study relating to the automated book catalog is underway. It has been purposely delayed wherever possible in order to incorporate and reflect as much of the ANYLTS (Association of New York Libraries for Technical Services) thinking as possible, but from present planning statements it appears that as much as 75 percent of the CLD aid received by The New York Public Library in 1966-69 will be encumbered to this major catalog change and breakthrough. Developmental programming of Electronic Data Processing (EDP) applications to technical processes, circulation control, and film booking is also underway at Rochester Public Library.

LIBRARY MATERIALS

As noted earlier, expenditures for library materials are not restricted to reference and information resources. While this category of purchases is higher than others, sizable amounts are being allocated to audiovisual materials by about half the central libraries, several are reinforcing their popular collections through rental services, and at least five are using the funds in part to acquire duplicate copies of juvenile and young adult material. There has also been an interesting followthrough with CLD aid for projects that were initiated with LSCA Title I funds - notably in microform, audiovisual materials, and paperbacks. There is a potential here that cannot be realized fully with the limited funds available. Worse, despite a clearly felt need for a strong State supplement to the local book budgets of central libraries (over and beyond CBA), the commitments to personnel from CLD funds in 1970 will be so high that many of the libraries will be unable to allocate much if any aid for their principal stock in trade.

PERSONNEL

Tangible as all the above has been, the most impressive impact of the CLD program has been in staffing. Currently the aid is funding 20 new full-time professional positions and one part-time, one trainee, four full-time technical assistants, 57 full-time clerical positions and nine part-time, plus an unidentified number of pages in five libraries. The principal purpose or assignments

of the new staff in the various libraries are illustrative of broad needs: support for reference service (eight libraries), inter-library loan (five), circulation (four), general support (four), administration (three), acquisitions and collection development (three), documents and serials service (two), audiovisual service (two), centralization of reserves (one), outreach to disadvantaged (one). In one large library, personnel are assigned to community relations and publications, expediting interdepartmental referrals, and extending service hours in the children's department. In another, Brooklyn, all CLD funds are devoted to implementing reorganization of the clerical operations in the central library.

The Brooklyn program demonstrates the CLD dilemma under the present formula as well as what can be accomplished when a system is ready with concrete planning when opportunity knocks. The purpose of the plan is to strengthen reader services by: further delineating clerical from professional tasks; establishing a clerical hierarchy at levels commensurate with service responsibilities; creating a clerical career service to attract staff with background, training, and competence to perform their responsibilities effectively; and increasing the stability of the clerical staff at the hub of the library system. It established clerical staffing patterns in public service divisions designed to relieve professional staff of clerical duties and of supervision of clerical operations, adding 30 new positions and reclassifying one. The program was announced in October 1967. Delays occasioned by difficulty in recruiting key personnel resulted in accrual of a substantial balance which is the only reason the full program can be budgeted for in 1970, and perhaps in 1971, despite salary increases. The full program in 1969 cost about \$82,000 more than the system's annual grant.

SUNDAY SERVICE HOURS

In addition to adding new positions and supplementing the salaries of seven professionals in three libraries, CLD aid is also funding the prime hourly rates for Sunday service by 27 professionals, 26 clerks, 15 custodians, and pages in four libraries. Only eight of New York State's central and cocentral libraries are open on Sunday, and five of these initiated the service under CLD, with one

locality (Newburgh) picking up the cost after the first year in order to release the funds for other purposes. While increased open hours, particularly on weekends, have attracted many former nonusers and been enthusiastically received wherever implemented, the most dramatic instance in terms of people served is the Queens Borough Public Library with a potential public of some 1,809,580.

For lack of funds and authorized positions, Queens had been unable to open on Sundays and was forced to close on Saturdays in the summer in order to schedule staff vacations. Its long-range plan gives priority to providing full reference and circulation service at the central library from 2 to 6 p.m. on 43 Sundays per year and to reopening the central library on Saturdays from mid-June to mid-September. CLD aid has enabled it to provide the basic personnel needed by financing time and overtime for existing staff and adding five positions that allow a schedule of year-round vacations with Saturday openings in summer. Unfortunately, this is another example of a creative program that is underfunded. The personnel budget alone exceeds the annual grant by more than \$45,000, and only a rapidly diminishing accrued balance is salvaging a very popular new public service for a great many people.

Because of initial delays in the formulation of approvable long-range plans for further development of central libraries, the need for amendments as the central library concept and responsibilities became clearer to the staff and trustees involved, and difficulties in recruiting key staff to implement approved plans, substantial balances accrued in many CLD accounts by the end of 1967. The balances enabled many systems and central libraries to fund strong programs beginning in 1968 or 1969 after they had tooled up and when they were far readier to implement their planning.

MORE AID NEEDED

The need for additional aid is clearly evident when each system's annual CLD grant

is compared with its 1969 budget (Table I). Eighteen of the systems had 1969 CLD budgets far in excess of their annual grants. Personnel alone consumed 95 percent of the total grants in the State last year. The staff involved was vital in connection with system-wide services - multicounty in most cases. It is neither reasonable nor equitable to expect the central libraries' local taxing authorities to pick up the tab, and it is not financially feasible for the systems to cover it from their general purpose aid.

Without a much more generous CLD aid formula, curtailment of current staffing programs will be necessary in 1970 or 1971 in at least seven central libraries. In all of the others, as personnel costs rise, there will have to be a steady reduction in what in most central libraries are already quite modest CLD expenditures for library materials, operating expenses, studies of new potentials, and the acquisition of appropriate new equipment as it comes on the market - all of which are critical in an effective program of regional library service.

As the Board of Regents put it, the present level of CLD aid "is token, and most inadequate. Raising it by \$.07 per capita and producing a more realistic and meaningful reimbursement for services rendered beyond municipal boundaries is needed."⁵ The proposed increase is crucial at this stage of New York State's public library system development if the staffing needs of central libraries, as evidenced in current operations, are to be met. Statewide 12¢ per capita central library development aid would yield no more than is needed simply to maintain the present important level of staffing and expenditures in other categories with a very modest allowance for rising costs.

⁵*Major Recommendations of the Regents for Legislative Action 1970.* Albany: The University of the State of New York. The State Education Department, November 1969, p. 20.

GUIDELINES AND POLICIES PERTAINING
TO BUDGETARY PLANNING UNDER
THE CENTRAL LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

(Appendix to "Central Library Development Aid in New York State," The Bookmark,
February 1970)

1. Central Library Development aid is to be used to improve the resources and programs of the central library as defined in Regulation 101-a.2.*
2. Annual plans must be consistent with long-range plans, but amendments are encouraged. The fact that something has not yet been approved or tried (for lack of the idea or sufficient funds) does not preclude its consideration or trial.
3. Expenditures that strengthen service to the systemwide area are urged in preference to those that are of primary advantage to the immediate locality.
4. The funds must be devoted to improvement of service in or from the central library's main building. This, however, does not preclude their use to rent space outside. (Expenditures have been approved for rental for storage of important, but seldom-used, material and to relocate whole departments outside the main building so that the most important public services could be accommodated and developed better in it.)
5. Studies, contracts, temporary staff, and other operational costs for short-term corrective measures, experiments, etc. are approvable where they have a potential for contributing to the achievement of long-range goals.
6. CLD funds may not be used for construction of a new or expanded physical plant. They may, however, be used for equipment in the main library building, whether or not it is connected with a construction project, and for renovations in existing physical plants where reorganization or relocation of departments or service areas is to be accomplished.
7. CLD funds may be used to supplement the pay scale of central library professional staff, but may not be applied to increase the salary of nonprofessional personnel. The rationale behind this is that boards of trustees have a responsibility to maintain a clerical rate of pay that is in line with local conditions. Local taxing authorities are inclined to recognize this fact of life, but, while library boards have a similar responsibility to keep professional scales at a competitive level in the national library manpower climate, some have been unable to convince the authorities of this critical reality in library management. Supplementary pay for professional staff in central libraries can serve the dual purpose of providing some compensation for their involvement in services of system-wide importance and creating a salary scale more likely to keep and attract key personnel.
8. CLD funds may not be used to shift, from a cooperative library system to its central library, sole responsibility for a service or function to which the system board is clearly committed in its own approved Plan of Organization and Services.

* Re-numbered § 90.4 STANDARDS FOR CENTRAL LIBRARIES

TOWARD A DEFINITION OF THE ROLE OF CENTRAL LIBRARIES IN PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEMS

by Ronald L. Lagasse, Director
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INTRODUCTION

As in several other fields of education, New York State pioneered the development of public library systems. Since there were no models, one had to be created. This was the successful Watertown experiment wherein, in 1948, a regional service center was established to serve libraries in Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence counties. The primary functions of the center were consultation, development of union catalog, bookmobile service, and processing of books. To this day, these functions serve as major underpinnings of the rationale for public library systems. Interestingly, the Watertown model did not incorporate any provision for a central library function. Perhaps due in part to this exclusion, a conceptual framework for a "central library" and its role was never adequately developed. The formal charge to central libraries, as defined in the Commissioner of Education's Regulations, is quite broad and unspecific. "The central library or co-central library of the system shall provide information service and bibliographic assistance to residents of the system's service area." All public libraries actually have this mandate.

This absence of specificity is not surprising when one considers the variations among central libraries in terms of size, functions, governance, and funding. Excluding the three consolidated systems serving New York City, the staffs of central libraries range from 13 to 280. Some central libraries provide consultant services for the system; others, film services and technical services. In one instance, the central library is administered by the system. Such diversity coupled with the absence of a proven model has resulted in a lack of an adequate working definition of the central library.

In the following remarks an attempt will be made to define the evolving role of central libraries as addressed in major evaluation studies and as construed in the standards for central libraries established by the Education Department. This analysis will be followed by suggestions for developing a conceptual model of the central library as an integral part of a public library system and for evaluating the effective-

ness of the central library in this context of oneness with the system.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

In 1956, Commissioner of Education James E. Allen, Jr. established a committee to review progress in public library service resulting from the provision of State aid for regional purposes beginning in 1950. The committee, in its comprehensive 1957 report, directly addressed the role and problems of the central library. Among its observations were the following:

- 1 Under the then State aid law, there was inadequate provision for strengthening the central library in order to meet the demands of an enlarged service area.
- 2 Every system must have a strong central library with a minimum collection of 100,000 volumes.
- 3 The central collection should be the primary source from which community libraries can draw material not in their own collections.
- 4 The central library should provide reference service.
- 5 The quality of service that the system can offer is significantly dependent upon the quality of the central library.¹

Throughout the report it is suggested that systems should be built upon existing strengths, i.e., the large, established libraries in each identifiable geographical area. It goes so far as to state that the central library should be the "core of systemwide services." From it, field consultants, bookmobiles, and technical services staff would serve the libraries and people in the system's service area. As is now commonly known, this expanded central library role was never realized in most systems.

The 1957 report, however, did lead to legislation in 1958 designed to not only facilitate

establishment of library systems, but also to improve the collections of central libraries. A provision was included in the law to increase the number of adult nonfiction volumes in each central library to 100,000. The plan stipulated that the Education Department provide four times the number of volumes that were purchased by central libraries with non-State funds. The program was instrumental in strengthening central and co-central library collections, for by 1966 nearly 300,000 adult nonfiction volumes had been added to central libraries.

“...additional State aid be provided to central libraries [and they] be required to meet prescribed standards...”

In 1965, in a study sponsored by the Southern Adirondack Library System and funded by an LSCA grant, a partial but very specific model for a central library, based on an analysis of four library systems, was developed.² The study recommended that "with all deliberate speed the necessary steps be taken to centralize the reference and information services in the central library and that the provision of essential staff be considered as a joint effort of the central library and library system." The study recognized that there were serious limitations preventing some central libraries from effectively performing these difficult functions. Buildings, collections, number of staff and their level of expertise would all have to be improved. Relative to system/central library relationships, the study noted "the lack of a clear definition of obligations..." and that "...there remain many grey areas where it is not clear where responsibility falls."

In 1967, the State Education Department issued its landmark study entitled Emerging Library Systems: The 1963-66 Evaluation of the New York State Public Library System.³ By this time, all 22 systems had been in existence for at least 5 years, thus providing an opportunity for some in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of the State-supported library systems. The role, functions, and problems of the central libraries were extensively addressed. It was found that the central libraries were "proving to be an important line of defense in back-stopping the other community libraries." Several central

libraries were providing over 50 percent of interlibrary loan materials for member libraries. While cautiously praising the improvement of the central library collections, the 1966 report focused on problems faced by central libraries resulting from this expanded role. Resources were still inadequate. There was a demonstrated need for duplication of copies, and it was found that central and co-central libraries generally had inadequate physical facilities. Of these libraries, 65 percent were substandard in floor space and 79 percent were below minimum standards for seating space. Staffing was also inadequate, with some central libraries having only one professional staff member. The report concluded that the "system program did not make adequate provision for compensating the central library to properly carry out its role." Therefore, it recommended that additional State aid be provided to central libraries in order to compensate them for their contribution to interlibrary loan and for their acceptance of other regional responsibilities. The study also recommended that central libraries be required to meet prescribed standards of performance.

These recommendations did not fall on deaf ears. In 1966, the State aid bill authorized continuation of the Central Library Book Aid feature beyond the formerly limited 10-year period. In addition, the legislation provided 5¢ per capita for further development of a system's central library services.

In 1970, the Commissioner of Education's Committee on Library Development issued its report of findings on all types of libraries and library services in New York State.⁴ Because of the extensive scope of its investigation, the committee did not focus on public library systems. However, in its limited discussion of central libraries, the committee report categorically affirmed that the central library has responsibility for providing reference and inter-library loan for the entire system.

“...neither the responsibilities of the system nor of the central library were sufficiently defined.”

The Legislative Commission on Expenditure Review, in 1974, released its program audit on State aid to libraries.⁵ While some of the commission's assertions are open to dispute, the commission did correctly note that neither the

responsibilities of the system nor of the central library were sufficiently defined. As a result, in some instances, such as the book collection function, the respective roles of system and central library were allowed to evolve contrary to legislative intent.

In 1978, the Task Force on Planning Library Development on Long Island, in its proposals on reference service, recommended, as a long-range objective, the creation of a Total Information Retrieval Center with a reexamination of the State plan for central libraries.⁶ While the study did not address the role of central libraries, it inferred that central libraries in Long Island are no longer to be considered only in the context of the public library system.

In summary, these studies emphasize the importance of a concentrated "core" collection in central or co-central libraries, the primary role of central libraries in interlibrary loan and information services, the equation of overall system quality with the quality of the system's central library, and the financial difficulties of most central libraries. In addition, either explicitly or by inference, these studies point out but do not resolve the conceptual dilemma between State aid and expanded regional responsibilities of central libraries on the one hand and local funding and community responsibilities of the same libraries on the other.

STATE LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS OF THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

By law, the Commissioner of Education is empowered to establish standards for central libraries as well as for other types of public libraries. Over the years, the standards for central libraries have not changed appreciably. The central library must provide an annual minimum average of 55 hours of service per week to the public, and 60 hours if the central library's chartered population of service exceeds 100,000. Additionally, the central library must employ at least two full-time librarians whose salaries are financed from other than Federal funds. Concerning local support, central libraries must receive a minimum of \$3 per capita, excluding capital expenditures. While these standards are relatively undemanding, assurances have to be taken by system and central library officials that they are met; otherwise, the central library is not eligible for State aid. Currently, the Independent Central Librarians' Association is developing a proposal that would increase the minimum number of professional personnel from two to three and also require

maintenance of current local funds for library materials as a condition for receipt of the entire Central Book Aid grant.

Periodically, the Board of Trustees of each library system must file with Library Development a 10-year plan for central library development. Primarily, the plan provides descriptive information on staff, collections, current services, and physical facilities of central libraries. A prioritized ordering of purposes for which State aid to central libraries will be used must also be included. In addition to this 10-year plan, another section of the overall system plan requires the development of system/central library priorities. These are actions that should be undertaken jointly by the system and central library for the purpose of improving services to the system service area.

The major shortcoming of the plan of service document is the absence of measurable criteria for the purpose of evaluating progress toward achievement of goals and objectives. Also, the plan does not include provision for allocation of specific system resources on a program basis. As a result of these shortcomings, there is the ever present danger that the plan of service for the system and the central library will become a "wish list" that is consulted only when it is time for updating.

Some obvious conclusions can be made on the basis of the Commissioner's Regulations. First, it is clearly the intent of State legislation and the State aid law that the central library should possess a large collection of adult non-fiction materials which serves as back-up for other libraries in the system. Secondly, the mandated minimum of 55 hours of service implies that time-wise, at least, the central library must be accessible to the system's population. Thirdly, State aid to central libraries is intended to improve the quality of central libraries and to compensate them for systemwide responsibilities. However, such aid is not intended to be a substitute for local support.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the preceding remarks, no attempt has been made to compare existing central libraries for the purpose of extracting their essence. The variety in size, governance, and functions of the central libraries and systems is far too diverse and complicated for adequate treatment in this essay. However, a comprehensive, comparative, study would certainly yield much useful informa-

tion. Nor can State law and the Commissioner's Regulations alone provide sufficient specificity regarding functions of central libraries. The evaluation studies of library systems during the past two decades have only partially addressed the role and functions of central libraries. However, if all of the above elements are considered together and if the guiding principle is improved service to libraries and library users, the ingredients are present to establish a descriptive model of what a central library should ideally be and do. This modelling effort should be directed toward understanding the central library and, by extension, the system itself since the system and central library should be viewed as an operational entity. Heretofore, with rare exception, this has not been the practice. The categorical Central Book Aid and Central Library Development grants, while assuring the central library of specified portions of State funding, have by their very nature isolated them from system concern. The prevailing philosophy understandably deduces that central libraries have been provided for by these grants. The same rationale, however, does not apply to other system services such as bookmobile service, technical services, and consultant services, to name a few. Also, in the development of a model, the central library has to be considered in the light of evolving concepts on regionalism, inter-type library cooperation and consolidation of services. This model can then be subjected to the application of simulated resource allocations and projected payoffs.

It is not recommended that all library systems and central libraries be cloned from an abstract model. Systems should reflect the unique characteristics of their populations and the libraries that they serve. However, while tailored to take into account these characteristics, the model can and should establish standards and criteria against which to adequately measure and compare system/central library performance, to establish priorities, to define programs and to allocate resources. Therefore, cost/benefit analysis and program planning and evaluation should be included as integral elements of the model.

Modeling is a technique to predict performance. Actual performance, however, requires implementation of meaningful evaluation, the second recommendation concerning central libraries and systems. Presently, the major tool for evaluating central libraries and systems is the annual report. While instrumental in providing financial information and numerical data on collection development, circulation, and interlibrary loan, the annual report does not

address the effectiveness and efficiency of the system and central library. The evaluation and measurement of human services have long been a recognized challenge. Fortunately, significant progress has recently been made in this area. The Public Library Association Goals and Guidelines Project has devised new measures and sampling techniques for determining characteristics of the collection, use of library facilities, and user characteristics.⁷ These new performance measures are intended to evaluate library services and resources in order to foster better decision making.

The Consortium for Public Library Innovation has, as one of its goals, the improvement of user-centered public library services through systematic research and experimentation. The consortium has completed a study which identifies the components, cost elements, and evaluation process for adult reference service. Since provision of reference is a key responsibility of central libraries, the use by central libraries of the measurement techniques recommended in this study should be seriously considered.

"...the standards for central libraries have not changed appreciably."

The Public Library Users Feasibility Study Panel of the National Center for Educational Statistics, noting the inadequacy of current output measures, has suggested more meaningful evaluation criteria, such as the measurable impact of libraries on meeting survival needs of the people and the effects of specific administrative decisions on public library services and users. The above studies, as well as others, could be consulted in an effort to develop a more useful reporting format.

The application of a coordinated model construct/performance measurement process for central libraries would serve some primary needs. They are:

- 1 a more precise definition of the role of the central library in its relation to the system and other member libraries,
- 2 a more intelligent allocation of limited resources,

- 3 better accountability at the local and state levels, and
- 4 a more effective means for justifying the need for additional resources.

The implementation of this process, while not a simple task, may not be as difficult as one might initially conclude. As pointed out earlier, the essence of the central library can be partially determined from existing legislation and regulations, a review of major evaluation studies, and presumably through actual analysis

and comparison of central libraries. The present short-range and long-range reporting instruments do provide useful data for analysis and evaluation; and some of the new techniques for measuring the performance and social benefits of public libraries that are being developed might be incorporated into the reporting and evaluation process. The end result of this approach hopefully would be a much clearer understanding of the role of the central library in public library systems and in the continuing evaluation of multi-type library cooperation and networking in New York State.

REFERENCES

- 1 The University of the State of New York, Committee on Public Library Service, Report of the Commissioner of Education's Committee on Public Library Service. Albany, 1957.
- 2 Southern Adirondack Library System, System-Wide Reference Services in Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library, Finger Lakes Library System, Ramapo-Catskill Library System, Southern Adirondack Library System. Saratoga, June 26, 1965.
- 3 The University of the State of New York, Division of Evaluation. Emerging Library Systems: The 1963-66 Evaluation of the New York State Public Library System. Albany, 1967.
- 4 The University of the State of New York. Report of the Commissioner of Education's Committee on Library Development. Albany, 1970.
- 5 New York (State) Legislature, Commission on Expenditure Review. State Aid to Libraries. Albany, March 4, 1974.
- 6 Task Force on Planning Library Development on Long Island, Report, July 24, 1978.
- 7 This study and those following were extensively reported on at a meeting of the Library Administration and Management Association during the 98th Annual Conference of the American Library Association held in Dallas, June 23-29, 1979.

THE WISCONSIN LIBRARY MEDIA SKILLS GUIDE

The Wisconsin Library Media Skills Guide is designed to integrate media skills with all curriculum areas of the school program. This guide recognizes the shared responsibility for instruction between teachers and media specialists. It features a sequential learning process, K-12, based on acquaintance, instruction, and reinforcement. The 200 page guide covers 17 basic skills organized in five broad areas: orientation, organization and utilization of resources, selection of resources, research and study skills, and production and utilization of materials. There is an overview in chart form of the levels of instruction for each skill at each grade level; performance objectives are listed grade by grade; annotated bibliographies for grade level groups are given, as well as directions on how to develop your own skills program.

The Wisconsin Library Media Skills Guide was developed for the Wisconsin School Library Media Association by a statewide committee of practicing school librarians and audiovisual specialists. It costs \$10 plus 50¢ handling, 10 percent off on orders of five or more. Prepayment is required. To order your copy, please send your check to the Wisconsin Library Association, 201 W. Mifflin Street, Madison, WI 53703. For further information write or call the Wisconsin Library Association (608) 231-1513.

Central Library / Westchester Library System Request for Proposal

Background Information: The Westchester Library System (WLS) requests proposals from member libraries to serve as the Central Library for the period July 1, 2017 through December 31, 2021. The selected library will work with the E-Content/Central Library Coordinating Committee, WLS Executive Director and staff, the Public Library Directors Association (PLDA) and other member committees on an ongoing basis to recommend, develop, implement, evaluate and report on services and programs that are consistent with the approved 2017-2021 Central Library Plan of Service.

When New York State's public library systems were created through legislative action in 1958, these systems were designed to provide guidance, support and cost-efficiencies to the member libraries. This legislation also created Central Libraries within each public library system to insure that each system, and in turn each member library of the system, had access to comprehensive collections of printed library materials available for use onsite at the Central Library or through inter-library loan. (Note: The print format of library materials has been expanded to include multiple formats, including digital/electronic materials.)

Providing materials to benefit the public library system's member libraries is still a role of a Central Library. WLS is fortunate to have numerous libraries with large, comprehensive print and media collections that can and do supplement the collection needs of other member libraries throughout the system.

In addition, WLS has put in place a strong system-wide collection of electronic resources including downloadable/streaming e-books, audio books, music, video and databases that allow library patrons and staff with 24x7 access to a digital Central Library.

Funding for Central Library activities occurs through Central Book Aid (CBA) and Central Library Development Aid (CLDA) as provided for in Education Law § 273(1)(b) . These funds are allocated to the public library system to support activities outlined in the Central Library Plan of Service.

This RFP provides an opportunity for member libraries to not only serve their local service area, but to provide comprehensive collection development support at a system-wide level.

Anticipated Selection Schedule

RFP issued: April 1, 2017

RFP information opportunity at the April 7, 2017 PLDA meeting

RFP responses due: May 19, 2017

Selection Committee completes review and recommendation processes by June 9, 2017

Recommendation approval by PLDA: June 15, 2017

Recommendation approval by WLS Board: June 27, 2017

All RFP respondents notified of final selection: June 28, 2017

Service Start date: July 1, 2017

Scope of Work

In consultation with the E-Content/Central Library Coordinating Committee and the WLS Executive Director, provide the WLS Board of Trustees with an annual summary report that describes actions taken to achieve the objectives of the Central Library Plan of Service and an analysis of the measured outcomes and/or impact.

Project Duration

The term of the project will be from July 1, 2017 through December 31, 2021.

Basis for Award of Contract

WLS seeks proposals from member libraries in full compliance with Commissioner’s Regulation §90.2 (Standards for registration of public, free association and Indian libraries).

- (1) is governed by written bylaws which outline the responsibilities and procedures of the library board of trustees;
- (2) has a board-approved, written long-range plan of service;
- (3) presents an annual report to the community on the library's progress in meeting its goals and objectives;
- (4) has board-approved written policies for the operation of the library;
- (5) presents annually to appropriate funding agencies a written budget which would enable the library to meet or exceed these standards and to carry out its long-range plan of service;
- (6) periodically evaluates the effectiveness of the library's collection and services in meeting community needs;
- (7) is open the following scheduled hours:

| Population | Minimum Weekly Hours Open |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Up to 500 | 12 |
| 500-2,499 | 20 |
| 2,500-4,999 | 25 |
| 5,000-14,999 | 35 |
| 15,000-24,999 | 40 |
| 25,000-99,999 | 55 |
| 100,000 and above | 60 |

- (8) maintains a facility to meet community needs, including adequate space, lighting, shelving, seating, and restroom;
- (9) provides equipment and connections to meet community needs including, but not limited to telephone, photocopier, telefacsimile capability, and microcomputer or

terminal with printer to provide access to other library catalogs and other electronic information;

(10) distributes printed information listing the library's hours open, borrowing rules, services, location and phone number;

(11) employs a paid director in accordance with the provisions of Section 90.8.

| Population | Minimum Education Requirements |
|-------------------|---|
| Below 2,500 | No requirement |
| 2,500 to 4,999 | 2 academic years of study at an approved college or university |
| 5,000 to 7,499 | A bachelor's degree from an approved college or university |
| 7,500 or more | A public librarian's professional / provisional certificate or a certificate of qualification |

Member libraries submitting proposals must also meet the following prerequisites for central library status as outlined in Commissioner's Regulation §90.4 (Standards for central libraries):

- Local expenditure for the support of the central library, from other than State and Federal funds and excluding capital expenditures, must not be less than three dollars per capita based upon the population of the central library's service area.
- The central library shall provide an annual average of not less than 55 hours per week of service to the public, and not less than the number of hours in each week required under §90.2.
- There shall be provision in the central library for at least two full-time professional positions, financed from other than Federal funds, excluding budgeted positions vacant for more than 24 months.

A failure to meet Maintenance of Effort requirements as outlined in Education Law § 272 (3)(j)(1) will result in forfeit of the Central Library role.

Member libraries submitting proposals must provide written acknowledgement from the library board verifying the library's willingness to assume the role of central library for the system.

Member libraries that submit proposals are encouraged to describe approaches that they would recommend and/or implement to meet the Success Factors listed below.

Preference will be given to member libraries able to demonstrate:

1. Their past success in supplying other member libraries with materials, especially print adult nonfiction and foreign language titles;
2. Their ability to provide reference assistance to member library staff and patrons;
3. Their ability and commitment to support 60+ minimum weekly hours of operation.

Proposal Response

Each proposal shall be submitted electronically via e-mail with attachments by the deadline to the RFP Contact Person listed below. All inquiries, written or verbal, shall be directed only to the RFP Contact Person. Violations of this provision by member libraries may result in rejection of the proposal.

Any, all or no member libraries submitting proposals may be required to appear before the Selection Committee to explain their understanding and approach to the project and/or respond to questions from the Selection Committee concerning the proposal. The Selection Committee may award a recommendation without conducting negotiations, based on the initial proposal. The Selection Committee reserves the right to request information from the member libraries submitting proposals as needed. If information is requested, the Selection Committee is not required to request the information of all parties that submitted proposals.

Member libraries selected to participate in negotiations may be given an opportunity to submit a revised proposal to the Selection Committee, subject to a specified cut-off time for submittal of revisions. All information received prior to the cut-off time will be considered part of the library's revised offer. No additional revisions shall be made after the specified cut-off time unless requested by the Selection Committee.

The cost of developing and submitting the proposal is entirely the responsibility of the member library.

Evaluation of Proposals

Proposals will be evaluated by a Selection Committee comprised of the WLS Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer, a WLS Trustee and two member library representatives.

Award shall be made in the best interest of the Westchester Library System member libraries, as determined by the Selection Committee. Although no weighted value is assigned, consideration may focus toward but is not limited to:

- Adequacy and completeness of proposal
- Methodology to accomplish tasks
- Member library's ability to provide the services required
- Experience in providing similar services

The Committee reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals or part of a proposal; waive any informalities or technicalities; clarify any ambiguities in submitted proposals; modify any criteria in this Request; and unless otherwise specified, accept or reject any item in a proposal.

Terms and Conditions

The member library with the successful proposal will be required to enter into a written contract with WLS. All responses and statements made by the selected member library in response to the RFP will be incorporated into the resulting contract between WLS and the selected library.

Should the selected member library and WLS fail to reach agreement, WLS reserves the right to negotiate with one of the other member libraries submitting a proposal or to re-issue the RFP.

In the event of a conflict in terms of language among the documents, the following order of precedence shall govern:

- written modifications to the executed contract;
- written contract signed by the parties;
- this RFP including any and all addenda;
- Contractor's written proposal submitted in response to this RFP as finalized.

Notices: All notices, demands, requests, approvals, reports, instructions, consents or other communications (collectively "notices") which may be required or desired to be given by either party to the other shall be in writing and addressed to the designated contact for each party specified in the Notices section of the contract.

No proposals shall be disclosed until after a contract award has been issued. The Committee reserves the right to destroy all proposals if the RFP is withdrawn, a contract award is withdrawn, or in accordance with New York State law.

At the time of closing, only the names of those member libraries who submitted proposals shall be made public information. All libraries submitting proposals will be notified via e-mail of the selected party no later than June 28, 2017. Bid results will not be given to individuals over the telephone. Results may be obtained after contract finalization by obtaining a bid tabulation summary.

For additional information or clarification, contact the RFP Contact Person:

Terry L. Kirchner, PhD
Executive Director
Westchester Library System
570 Taxter Road, Suite 400
Elmsford, NY 10523
Email: tkirchner@wlsmail.org

Application for WLS Central Library:

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Library name: | |
|----------------------|--|

The library is in full compliance with Commissioner’s Regulation §90.2 (Standards for registration of public, free association and Indian libraries):

| Standard: | Response: Y or N |
|--|-------------------------|
| (1) is governed by written bylaws which outline the responsibilities and procedures of the library board of trustees | |
| (2) has a board-approved, written long-range plan of service | |
| (3) presents an annual report to the community on the library's progress in meeting its goals and objectives | |
| (4) has board-approved written policies for the operation of the library | |
| (5) presents annually to appropriate funding agencies a written budget which would enable the library to meet or exceed these standards and to carry out its long-range plan of service | |
| (6) periodically evaluates the effectiveness of the library's collection and services in meeting community needs | |
| (7) is open the minimum weekly hours required for its chartered service population | |
| (8) maintains a facility to meet community needs, including adequate space, lighting, shelving, seating, and restroom | |
| (9) provides equipment and connections to meet community needs including, but not limited to telephone, photocopier, telefacsimile capability, and microcomputer or terminal with printer to provide access to other library catalogs and other electronic information | |
| (10) distributes printed information listing the library's hours open, borrowing rules, services, location and phone number | |
| (11) employs a paid director in accordance with the provisions of Section 90.8 | |

The library meets the following prerequisites for central library status as outlined in Commissioner’s Regulation §90.4 (Standards for central libraries):

| Prerequisite: | Respond Y or N |
|---|-----------------------|
| Local expenditure for the support of the central library, from other than State and Federal funds and excluding capital expenditures, must not be less than three dollars per capita based upon the population of the central library’s service area. | |
| The central library shall provide an annual average of not less than 55 hours per week of service to the public, and not less than the number of hours in each week required under §90.2. | |
| There shall be provision in the central library for at least two full-time professional positions, financed from other than Federal funds, excluding budgeted positions vacant for more than 24 months. | |

Describe the library's past success in the ability to supply other member libraries with materials, especially print adult nonfiction and foreign language titles:

Describe the library's ability to provide reference assistance to member library staff and patrons based on the digital and physical resources available through the library:

To what extent has/or could the library support 60+ minimum weekly hours of operation?

By signing below, the library verifies that it is in full compliance with Commissioner's Regulation §90.2 (Standards for registration of public, free association and Indian libraries) and meets the following prerequisites for central library status as outlined in Commissioner's Regulation §90.4 (Standards for central libraries)

| |
|-----------------------|
| Board President Name: |
| Signature: |
| Date: |