

Mideastern Michigan Library Cooperative Work Plan 2015-16 Final Report

Submitted by Denise Hooks, Director

Vision Statement: Continue our commitment to the advancement of library service by assisting all members in providing and delivering valuable, cost effective services to their library communities.

Preface: Our year was filled with new opportunities and exciting challenges that we managed carefully with our member needs in mind. Funding at the state level remained steady and that guarantees the future of MMLC well into the future. This also gives Michigan libraries an assurance that legislators are supportive of the work that libraries do on a daily basis for their communities. We are committed to continuing our cooperative work with determination and purpose.

Goal 1: Move the Cooperative forward by maintaining an effective structure.

[...calls for the Cooperative to maintain an effective organizational structure and program of services through regular evaluation and validation of services. Providing core and unit cost services are the focus of this effort.]

- Hold business meetings of both the Advisory Council and MMLC Board according to the schedule adopted at the annual meeting. **Three Board meetings and three Advisory Council meetings were held as scheduled. Unfortunately, there was no quorum at the May Board meeting and, therefore, regular business was not conducted. Met with two new Board members to discuss cooperative operations.**
- Follow goals of Strategic Plan document to further organizational objectives; continue to audit plan goals against Work Plan objectives for efficacy and completion. **We regularly review the annual Work Plan to monitor that goals and objectives are being met. The MMLC Mission guides all that we do.**
- Conduct regular assessment of services and adapt to changing needs of members; survey members throughout year for new ideas and seek opportunities to introduce members to innovation. **We are in regular contact with our members and receive requests for advice and support on a daily basis. Members provide ideas and request new services as needed. I updated cooperative employee job descriptions to reflect current work responsibilities.**
- Continue to review/revise cooperative policies as required. **The Document Review Committee met to discuss changes to the Plan of Service covering Board composition and the timely update of Appendices/Attachments. The revised plan was approved in September and sent to the Library of Michigan. We also began the process of updating operational policies to reflect current requirements and practices.**
- Introduce new services and streamline cooperative processes through the use of technology. **We have planned to conduct an evaluation transitioning our website to new software in 2016-17 and have tweaked the Technology Plan to reflect that action.**

Goal 2: Move the Cooperative forward by exploring and promoting alliances.

[...puts a high priority on cooperation and collaboration with other organizations, both within and outside of the Cooperative area. The search for partnerships is intended to encourage growth and development of services as well as to identify opportunities to increase funding.]

- Work with other cooperatives to provide workshops and opportunities for networking among members. **The CDA has adopted a goal of offering collaborative workshops in several locations around the state or to provide webinars that can be accessed on an on demand basis. I presented CDA activities and achievements at Library of Michigan Board meetings**

and also spoke to Southwest Library Cooperative members about the importance of cooperatives.

- Find ways to partner with other groups and organizations to further cooperative goals. **We are continually working with other organizations such as MCLS, MLA, LM, MAME, the Friends of Michigan Libraries, and other individual cooperatives to forge alliances and meet our mutual objectives. The focus this year was a collaborative workshop with the Michigan Association of Media Educators (MAME) offered in November 2015 and a second one on Reading Redefined with Dr. Maryanne Wolf is scheduled for September 2016. I completed my second term on the FOML Board and transitioned to Advisor role.**
- Encourage and foster collaboration among member libraries, including initiatives between different types of libraries. **The 3D printer project is a prime example of different library types working together to share resources and develop services. I am also currently working with MLA to develop a training component for building relationships with current/new legislators after the November election.**
- Support libraries by providing year round programming opportunities for their communities; widen the scale of programming by offering service to libraries outside of the cooperative service area. **We have been pleased to add a few more libraries to our programming service list in different cooperatives this year. Evaluations are very positive and we will continue to offer this service statewide. We were asked to consider how we could partner with Superiorland Cooperative in the Upper Peninsula on providing programming and have agreed to pilot the arrangement by hosting Superiorland members at Showcase and encouraging those libraries to book their programming through MMLC.**

Goal 3: Move the Cooperative forward by the promotion of libraries.

[...makes the promotion of library services to the general public a priority for the Cooperative. The purpose is to increase public awareness of libraries and public use of library services.]

- Work with other organizations, including Cooperative Director's Association, Library of Michigan, Midwest Collaborative for Library Services, MLA, and ALA to promote member libraries; serve on statewide continuing education committees and take a lead in planning the collaborative effort for 2016. **On behalf of the cooperatives, I worked with both Library of Michigan and Midwest Collaborative for Library Services to provide the speaker for our September workshop on reading. Dr. Wolf spoke at a session I attended at the ALA conference and was excellent.**
- Alert members to ways of enhancing public awareness; provide ideas for marketing through new avenues; offer library promotion grants to each public library member. **This promotions grant opportunity provided new revenue for libraries and was very well received. The first Advisory Council meeting of our next fiscal year will focus on marketing as well and we will offer this grant for at least one additional year.**
- Support the adoption of new services with opportunities to experiment through "pilot" activities; expand the 3D printing pilot project to include policy development and creation of an interest group meeting schedule. **Our first quarterly conference call gave members an opportunity to discuss the ways they were using the printer and to share successes plus any challenges encountered. Libraries are taking a studied approach to the idea of creating policies at this point.**
- Make certain that MMLC libraries are included in statewide initiatives. **MMLC is always one of the first cooperatives to volunteer to participate in the conversations regarding what is planned for libraries. We will continue to take an active role whenever possible.**

Goal 4: Move the Cooperative forward by strengthening member libraries.

[...reaffirms the role of the Cooperative in furthering its mission of strengthening the member libraries through communication, consulting services, assistance with fiscal management, Board development, and through all forms of resource sharing.]

- Maintain regular contact with members through targeted emails, listserv postings, and direct telephone calls. **We strive to keep members informed and communicate information regularly to our members. We are aware of the importance of maintaining these contacts both via email and in-person. I attended meetings of the Lapeer libraries CALL group.**
- Encourage dialog among members to maximize knowledge of existing programs and to enhance individual library opportunities; conduct conference calls to provide access to other members for new ideas and the exchange of information. **When there is a topic that requires a group exchange of information or consensus, we hold conference calls that are also recorded for those who may not be able to attend. Our members are more than willing to share their experiences and expertise. We added a new member to the MMLC OverDrive consortia.**
- Continue to be available to members for advisement and consulting needs. **This is one of the most interesting and also rewarding services that we provide for members. It is also a learning experience in many cases that requires research and sometimes consultation with others at LM. It is a benefit to us that we have good relationships with all of our members.**
- Keep members informed of what is happening legislatively in the state and at the national level; devote a section of the Director's Report to current legislative action. **Covering legislative action in the newsletter has been enhanced by more regular communication from MLA and ALA. Sharing it with members also makes it accessible to Board members who may not participate in other library information channels.**
- When possible, offer "value-added" options such as Director Search opportunities; continue support library efforts to implement QuickBooks to insure fiscal compliance and ease in reporting functionality. **We presented to two Boards this year on the importance of using software to manage budgeting/reporting responsibilities and Irene has worked directly with two libraries to transition to QB software. In addition, she provided assistance to libraries that she worked with on QB in previous years. Irene successfully completed completed the QB certification training in December, learning about the newest advancements in the software and reaffirming the strategies we currently utilize. The Technology Support and Innovation Grant and the Library Promotion Initiatives Grant cycle ended in September and we collected evaluations which were compiled for the Board and Advisory Council.**

Goal 5: Move the Cooperative forward through leadership and innovation.

[...is a commitment by the Cooperative in support of leadership and innovation for the continual development of new services. The Cooperative will foster innovation through pilot projects that introduce new service methods, ideas and emerging technologies.]

- Explore new initiatives for shared services among members of MMLC; continue the practice of offering shared consortia level services and support TLN efforts to offer statewide library discounts. **I have worked closely this year with TLN to assist them in determining which products members are interested in exploring. This year, MMLC added hoopla as a consortia service with five libraries choosing to opt in. We also offered an opportunity for libraries to add SCOLA, an online language program, which provided significantly discounted pricing.**
- Continually look for cost effective ways to promote innovation; negotiate agreements with vendors for improved pricing on services to libraries; investigate consortium pricing requested service. **We regularly share statewide discount information for products and services. TLN, as the negotiating agent for all cooperatives, has added a page specific to which**

vendors are available through the cooperative statewide discounts. We also promote the discounts of MCLS.

- Provide new equipment to enhance member delivery of services; invest in innovative equipment for trial use. **We launched the cooperative shared 3D printer project. The purchase of 3D printers for use in seven MMLC regions has led to some exciting new ways to collaborate and show that libraries are innovators in unexpected ways.**
- Serve as President of the Cooperative Directors Association. **I completed the second year of my term as President and have chosen not to run again. It is my belief that sharing leadership roles among different individuals makes the organization stronger due to a greater understanding of the importance of the role.**

Goal 6: Move the Cooperative forward by encouraging and facilitating professional development.

[...is a broad effort to build the skills and knowledge base of the Cooperative by investing in its human resources through education of library staff and trustees.]

- Use knowledge of trends and new developments in library field to offer timely, effective programs and workshops; continue to provide workshops on relevant topics in conjunction with Advisory Council meeting. **We began the year at our fall Advisory Council meeting focusing attention on human resources issues by hosting Brian Mortimore, HR Director at Kent District Library. Another emphasis has been trying new technologies. I provided a Board orientation for the Shiawassee District Library Board prior to the July meeting.**
- Attend workshops and conferences to learn about new trends and developments that would benefit members. **I attended MLA, PLA, ALA, and the Rural Libraries Conferences and have shared things learned. Prior to the conference, I served on the Rural Libraries Conference Awards committee. Irene also attended Rural Libraries and again was in charge of registration and conference logistics assistance.**
- Encourage members to request attendance at specific programs of interest during conferences; provide follow-up reports and post on website. **Reports for PLA and ALA are posted on the website and individual session notes are shared with members via targeted emails.**

Goal 7: Move the Cooperative forward by supporting advocacy and advocating for all types of libraries in the membership.

[...is a recognition of the Cooperative's advocacy role and the increasing importance of library advocacy in the 21st century as libraries face legal, financial, and legislative issues.]

- Attend Legislative Day activities coordinated by the Library of Michigan; provide funding opportunities for others in cooperative to attend; conduct training sessions prior to the Washington D.C. NLLD event and collect evaluations post-trip in order to report to Board. **We had an excellent group of eight advocates that applied for grants to travel to the ALA Library Legislative Day. We met by phone and in-person to prepare for the trip and to review the issues just prior to leaving. Unfortunately due to foggy weather, our flight from Flint was cancelled and we could not adjust our airline or flight times to be there in time for the established meeting in Washington D.C.**
- Sponsor meetings to assist members in learning about candidate positions on library issues; hold Meet the Candidate meetings during election years. **I am working with another cooperative to hold meetings in our shared areas. Three meetings have been scheduled at libraries in the MMLC service area.**
- Alert members to efforts to lobby directly with legislators on behalf of libraries; regularly provide updates on MLA and ALA strategic plans for advocacy and scan MIRS and District Dispatch for information to share. **I sent many specific Call to Action emails this year for**

both Michigan and national issues such as Dark Store legislation, tax captures, gag order laws prior to millages, net neutrality, privacy and surveillance.

IMPORTANT NOTE: We said goodbye to Desta Ureel, one of our longest serving Library Directors at Dryden Township Library. I know the Board will join us in wishing Desta the best in her retirement.