

# Mideastern Michigan Library Cooperative Work Plan 2018-19 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:** MMLC had another excellent year in many ways. Increased State Aid funding allowed for increases to technology and innovation grants, continuing education grants, and other library initiatives. The large increase in State Aid coupled with the good health of the economy has made this year the best of my 10 year tenure. This also marks a decade of clean audit reports. Member libraries are very engaged in cooperative operations, attend meetings, and have been active participants in cooperative planning and operations throughout the year.

**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. **All meetings were held in accordance with published schedules. We also provided orientations for new Board members and member directors.**
- Follow goals of Strategic Plan document to further organizational objectives; continue to audit plan goals against Work Plan objectives for efficacy and completion. **Throughout the year, we reviewed the Work Plan to be certain that we were on track to accomplish our objectives as approved by the Board. Director's Reports are regularly published to all and provide concise information on how MMLC achieves our objectives.**
- 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. **Members were asked to give input on services, meeting topics, and to provide ideas for future initiatives.**
- Continue to review/revise cooperative policies as required. **The Plan of Service was updated to include our new member, Harrison District Library, and update the organizational history. The Personnel Manual was revised and approved by the Board prior to the hiring of the new director. The Advocacy Committee met to review the Advocacy Plan and updated it as needed. The Technology Plan was updated to reflect annual purchases and future needs.**
- Introduce new services and streamline cooperative processes through the use of technology; review/revise Technology Plan annually. **MMLC provided registration services for a Bay County Library System program; Small Libraries. Big Impact conference; Collaborating Partners; and for MMLC Board and Advisory Council meetings.**
- Review/revise Director and Administrative Specialist job descriptions to reflect current job responsibilities. **The Cooperative Director's job description was updated and approved prior to the director search. The Administrative Specialist's job description was also updated and sent out to the Board and Advisory Council for information.**

**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. **MMLC worked with Northland Library Cooperative and several other cooperatives to plan a conference in April for small and rural libraries titled Small Libraries. Big Impact.**
- Find ways to partner with other groups and organizations to further cooperative goals; develop plans with cooperatives in geographic proximity to MMLC. **We continue to work with statewide agencies and other cooperatives to offer services. Partnerships have been highly successful including the Collaborating Partners workshop *Removing Barriers: A Library Accessibility Workshop* in November. The CDA is continuously looking for ways to partner for better pricing or unique services for members.**
- Encourage and foster collaboration among member libraries, including initiatives between different types of libraries; continue to monitor and enhance existing collaborations. **Members regularly work together on initiatives such as OverDrive and shared programming. In addition, libraries regularly share information about library projects and events.**
- 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; ensure that all libraries booking through the cooperative are receiving same quality of service. **The expansion of our programming service has meant that libraries, including those belonging to other cooperatives, have ready access to performers and opportunities only provided by MMLC. Performers Showcase was a fabulous event again this year and evaluations for the Summer Reading Program were outstanding. A total of 664 programs were booked in this fiscal year.**

**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 MiALA to promote member libraries; serve on statewide continuing education committees and remain active in the conversation for the purpose of shaping the agenda. **We continue to participate in leadership roles and have committed countless hours toward statewide collaboration on behalf of MMLC libraries. We continued as fiscal agent for the Friends of Michigan Libraries organization and have also been active in helping the group stay on task with strategic planning and the adoption of best practices.**
- Alert members to ways of enhancing public awareness; provide ideas for marketing through new avenues. **Marketing and new ways to share information with the public was provided through direct emails.**
- Support the adoption of new services with opportunities to experiment through "pilot" activities; continue the revised and enhanced grant program for public library members. **The grant program continues to be a way for libraries to support initiatives with additional funding through MMLC. When offered, libraries took advantage of a discount program on VOX books and Findaway Launchpads.**
- Make certain that MMLC libraries are included in statewide initiatives. **We frequently volunteer for committees and take responsibility for portions of meetings and conferences;**

**the Small Libraries. Big Impact. Conference in April is an example of the fruits of our efforts including management of the registration function at the conference.**

- Create a Facebook page to share information about MMLC and to promote member libraries. **This objective was not completed as planned. I did, however, advertise the director's job and other library related information including library advocacy on my personal FB account. Irene also promoted the director job opening and other library issues on her personal FB account. Statewide organizations also reposted the information.**

**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. **Our ongoing commitment is to send information to members that is not duplicated by other statewide resources. Scanning the most vital information sources for news and advocacy issues is a daily activity. Sharing member initiatives and successes not only gives attention to the achievements, but also encourages others to gain ideas that aid planning.**
- 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. **Whenever there is an issue that requires discussion among members, we facilitate the conversation and schedule conference calls. The OverDrive consortia had two meetings this year to explore new ways to make sure collection development is a priority.**
- Continue to be available to members for advisement and consulting needs. **This is always a highlight of the year. We take pride in being available to help our members discuss topics in our areas of expertise and do research for members on those that are new or may need additional exploration.**
- 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. **In addition to keeping members informed about legislative issues and Action Alerts, we conducted Meet the Candidate sessions in coordination with other cooperatives in the Fall before the election.**
- When possible, offer "value-added" options such as Director Search opportunities; continue to assist with the transition to QuickBooks for member libraries and act as a consultant for libraries in other cooperatives. **We worked with member libraries to manage accounts and trained them in the use of the software to ensure that required accounting practices were in place. MMLC was also contacted about QuickBooks assistance by a library outside of the cooperative.**

**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 other cooperative's efforts to offer statewide library services such as discounts and MiLibraryCard. **Members were surveyed about shared initiatives and ultimately decided that each library would pursue their own needs and support new ideas with MMLC grant funds. They shared some of those ideas at the**

**October Advisory Council meeting including a general conversation about integrated library systems.**

- Continually look for cost effective ways to promote innovation. **We shared information on library innovation with members throughout the year. Exploration of possible shared services will continue every year. Targeted emails about funding for leadership training and activities helped members consider new opportunities for professional development.**
- Negotiate agreements with vendors for improved pricing on services to libraries; investigate consortium pricing if neither TLN nor MCLS offers that vendor's product. **The cooperative extended the hoopla, Movie Licensing USA, and OverDrive contracts this year. In addition, we provided new opportunities through Library Ideas for launch pads and Findaway for VOX Books. We were open to investigating any additional vendors and had a webinar with Linked In about Lynda.com.**
- Provide funding to support member led initiatives; survey members for new technologies to explore; host a technology showcase for members at the October Advisory Council meeting; survey members at that meeting for shared project ideas. **Members had a lengthy conversation about what each library was using their Technology and Innovation Support Grant funds to accomplish at the Fall Advisory Council meeting. Members did not decide on a collaborative project as the group had individual initiatives in progress, but members indicated a willingness to participate in one in the future.**

**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. **During the October meeting, we participated in a Real Colors workshop that was designed to inform attendees about their work styles and some indicated that they would use the exercise in a staff environment.**
- Offer grant opportunities for members to encourage professional development attendance at workshops and conferences. **Members were very pleased to receive funding for workshops and conferences for the library. Reports were submitted for review by the MMLC board.**
- Attend workshops and conferences to learn about new trends and developments that would benefit members; attend MLA, PLA, Rural Libraries Conference, and ALA as offered. **Attendance at the ALA Midwinter and Annual conferences provided new ideas that were shared with members.**
- Provide follow-up reports, share information, and post ideas on MMLC website. **Information gained at those conferences was shared with members via email.**

**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 21<sup>st</sup> 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. **The NLLD event was cancelled for this fiscal year, but will be held in 2020.**
- Sponsor meetings to assist members in learning about candidate positions on library issues; hold Meet the Candidate meetings during election years. **The Meet the Candidate sessions went**

**well when candidates attended. The meetings provide an opportunity to educate candidates about libraries and promote legislative issues related to libraries.**

- **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; send specific Call to Action emails when needed. This occurs on a regular basis throughout the year. This year in Michigan, there were challenges to Penal Fine revenue (again), but Personal Property reimbursement funding was received again this year. Advocacy for the library's right to legally stock and administer Narcan became law. At the federal level, it was a fairly chaotic year with threats of elimination for the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funding. Net Neutrality is still an issue, but the Federal Commerce Commission has not budged on the rescinding the rules that prohibited utilities from restricting access for the public.**