

OWLS Director Report

June 17, 2021 OWLS Board of Trustees Meeting

OWLS and COVID-19

OWLS operations have returned to pre-pandemic norms with the exception that most staff continue to work from home most of the time. As we seek new office space, we anticipate maintaining a hybrid work model for most staff. I plan to implement some monthly scheduled in-person days for specific teams beginning in September.

Libraries and COVID-19

OWLS hosts monthly online Directors Chats, and I hold weekly online office hours. Library service levels are under the control of local library boards, so service levels vary based on local conditions. OWLS member libraries report service levels as follows (as of 6/1/21):

- Closed: 0 libraries
- Curbside only: 0 libraries
- Open doors; limited service, restricted access: 2 libraries (BCL, HPL)
- Browsing/lingering permitted with greater access: 12 libraries (CPL, FPL, IVL, KAU, KIM, MAN, NLP, SCA, SEY, SHI, WAU, WEY)
- Fully restored: 3 libraries (APL, LIT, MAR)

Total YTD OWLSnet circulation through May 2021 is 56% of 2019 circulation through May. We have seen an increase in delivery volume in June, which is normal for the start of SLP.

OWLS Facility

Dave Bacon and I visited several potential office spaces on June 2nd, and I am in conversation with our broker and a few landlords to further evaluate a few locations and related costs. I plan to schedule a Facilities committee meeting soon.

PLSR

DPI has issued a bid to analyze the State Aid funding formula as a direct response to PLSR Recommendation 4: *Conduct a thorough analysis of the current funding formula for public library systems, including practices utilized to apportion state aid. Identify and propose alternative funding formulas, methods of apportionment, or other solutions with potential to improve equity of access to high-quality library services.*

The final deliverable, expected in Spring 2022, would simply be an analysis of the funding formula. DPI does not intend to enact or unilaterally change the way funding flows to systems as a result of this analysis. The intention would be to engage the library community, working together with our stakeholders, to convene a summit or other forum to discuss the results and identify champions to move any potential changes forward.