

Notes on Meeting
Steering Committee for the Survey of State Library Agencies
September 23-24, 1998

The Steering Committee for the Survey of State Library Agencies met on Wednesday, September 23 and Thursday, September 24 1998, at the Wyndham Bristol Hotel, 2430 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW in Washington, DC. Mr. Shubert called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Present were (* indicates the individual was present for part of the meeting; ** indicates the individual was not present at the opening of the meeting): Laura **Aneckstein** (Census), Adrienne **Chute** (NCES), Eugene **Cox*** (Census), Patricia **Garner** (Census), Howard **Harris*** (NCLIS), Thomas **Jaques** (COSLA, State Library of Louisiana), Elaine **Kroe** (NCES), Keith Curry **Lance** (FSCS Steering Committee), Mary Jo **Lynch** (ALA), Kim **Miller** (NCLIS/LSP), Paul **Planchon** (Associate Commissioner of NCES), Joannell **Porter*** (NCES), Robert J. **Rossi**** (Director, Center for Community Research, American Institutes for Research) Gerry **Rowland** (Data Coordinator, State Library of Iowa), Joseph F. **Shubert** (New York State Librarian Emeritus), Betsy **Sywetz** (Deputy Director, IMLS), Diana Ray **Tope** (Georgia), Robert S. **Willard*** (NCLIS), Barratt **Wilkins** (State Librarian of Florida and Chair of the COSLA Research and Statistics Committee).

The Steering Committee met from 1:30 to 5 p.m. on September 23 and from 9 a.m. to noon on September 24.

(1) Introduction of New Members and Others

Mr. Shubert noted with pleasure the presence of Mr. Planchon. He noted that Libby Law was unable to attend the meeting and that Tom Sloan, who has been re-appointed to the Committee will attend the next meeting. Mr. Planchon subsequently introduced Ms. Joannell Porter of NCES. who will be attending future meetings.

(2) Chair's Remarks and Agenda

Mr. Shubert expressed appreciation to Committee members for responding to various e-mail requests. He particularly noted the help of Ms. Miller in preparing for the meeting, Ms. Nevins for her willingness to chair the Task Force on Improved Formats and Presentation of Data, Ms. Kroe for her work on definitions to be discussed today.

The preliminary agenda was approved with the proviso that additional items might be added to Item 13 during the course of the meeting.

(3) Recent Developments in NCES Impacting on the Survey

Mr. Planchon described the proposed NCES organization. The re-organization places the StLA, FSCS public library, school library media centers survey and the cooperative surveys in a new Elementary/Secondary and Libraries Studies Division. Ms. Korb will continue to work with the IPEDS program, and Ms. Kindel retired this year.

Mr. Planchon is Associate Commissioner for the Division and is also the program director for the several surveys. He commented briefly on the importance of the library surveys, including the StLA survey. He pointed out the importance of the library surveys program and affirmed his support for the FSCS, StLA, Academic annual surveys, and his interest in placing the school library media survey and the cooperatives survey on a more frequent basis.

He noted that the Committee will discuss the Harris report, *Assessment of and Planning for NCLIS Role in Library Statistics Cooperative Program (LSCP)*. He said that NCES funded the study, which was then sponsored by NCLIS. He has been meeting with the NCLIS administration and they have agreed upon a full partnership, extension of the cooperative concept (as developed in FSCS and StLA) to the school library media centers, academic libraries, and the cooperatives/networks surveys, the desirability of a coordinating entity for the surveys, and an evaluation of the LSP program.

He commented on funding of the library data programs totaling about \$1.5 million provided by NCES. Approximately one-half of this sum is paid to Census for their work on the surveys and studies. Another one-third supports the two cooperative programs. In addition, NCES commissions such other studies as the Rossi study of data elements common to the several surveys and related work on improving the statistics program.

NCLIS has a long-term goal to provide \$250,000 annually for the LSCP, and surveys, and other research. In FY 1999, NCLIS will provide \$70,000. Mr. Planchon commented on what he had heard at the NCLIS-NCES meeting on the Harris study in the meeting which preceded the StLA Steering Committee meeting. He outlined concepts for a modified LSCP organization taking into account the discussions that have taken place since Mr. Harris presented his recommendations.

In ensuing discussion, Ms. Lynch pointed out that state library agency relationships and various library organizations differ from state to state. She cited the IPEDS academic library survey as an example. About twenty state libraries have volunteered to coordinate the academic libraries surveys for IPEDS. In other states this work is done by a library or library network. Several Committee members recommended viewing the steering/advisory committees for the five surveys as basic to the success of those surveys. They also observed that a new body established for coordination of data and cross type-of-library data efforts should be advisory to the steering committees, but not dictate to them. One member suggested that such a forum or group be called "The House of Commons."

(4) The 1997 and 1998 Surveys

Ms. Kroe reported that a few states had submitted their 1997 data or resolved questions on their data as late as May or June. Two states submitted the state librarian's forms on July 1 (the deadline for submission was February 15). The adjudication comments are due by October 2, and she hopes for adjudication of the data in November or December.

The material for the 1998 survey should be mailed to the states by mid-October, depending upon completion of software changes. The deadline for submission will be January 15, 1999. (The deadline for the StLA surveys has been January 15, except for last year, when software problems delayed the mailing of FY 1997 survey instrument and the date was therefore set for February 15.)

(5) Data Elements

The Committee reviewed recommendations for seven definitions or data elements as proposed in discussion document 5. Following discussion, the Committee approved the following changes in definitions:

1. [Definition for "state resource center and reference/information service center (046)] "A state resource center/information center is an operation outside the StLA, administered by a local public library or academic library, which provides library materials and information services to libraries and individuals throughout the state. It is administratively separate from the StLA but receives grant or contract funds from the StLA for providing services."
2. [Additional language for definition for StLA outlets in the note to question 8 *re* 082-085] A StLA outlet has regular hours of service in which StLA staff are present to serve its users. The staff and all service costs are paid by the StLA as part of its regular operation. A loan of books or total collections (whether permanent or short-term) to another agency, library or school does not constitute an StLA outlet inasmuch as it is not administered and staffed by the StLA.
3. [Clarify the existing Note in questions 6, 10 and 13 by adding the following at the end of the next-to-the-last sentence, "***unless such outlets are administered and staffed by the StLA.***"
4. Ms. Kroe and Mr. Shubert will develop a clarifying note for the definition for question 7, (080-081) to distinguish between unlimited "walk-in" public access and some kind of limited or restricted public access.

The Committee approved the following changes in data elements:

1. Discontinue collecting data on race/ethnicity, as the number of staff in state library agencies is too small to permit the publication or release of these data, based on NCES statistical standards. Keep question 17, but limit it to staff by gender.
2. Delete the following from question 1 (034): "Judicial branch" inasmuch as no StLA is located in the judicial branch.
3. The Committee asked Mr. Wilkins to consult COSLA for a recommendation on the following question: ***Where should StLA microforms be reported in collection data?***

(6) Data Elements Related to LSTA and IMLS Information Needs

Ms. Sywetz said that the StLA data and the IMLS data are not duplicative and are useful to the Institute on Museum and Library Services. She described the IMLS annual report data, which the states will be supplying to IMLS, as designed to show the "thread of LSTA benefits." IMLS will collect such data as numbers of grants, numbers and types of libraries that are grant recipients, and kinds of grants and programs assisted by LSTA.

(7) NCLIS Developments and Research Impacting on the StLA Survey.

Mr. Willard commented on the September 23 meeting on the Harris report, noting that several people from the StLA Steering Committee had participated in it. He pointed out that the lively discussion included an expected reprise of old problems, strong support for more timely and frequent school library media data, and questions on the proposed use of a Fellow for the LSCP program. He said that the meeting had been recorded and that he will shortly send participants a draft copy to check for accuracy. Following the preparation of final text of that summary, it will be distributed more widely in mid-November.

Mr. Willard responded to questions regarding the proposed structure for the LSCP and Mr. Harris' recommendation for a single Survey Technical Working Group with the present steering committees re-constituted as its sub-groups. He said that he hopes soon to appoint the Fellow for the LSCP. He was pressed for information on next steps, his reactions to the suggestions made at the September 23 meeting, and what he will propose to NCLIS. He said that the only action expected of the Commission will be approval of a budget request for funding for the LSCP program. He also commented on the Title 44 and copyright deliberations in Congress.

Mr. Harris reported on the findings of "The 1998 National Survey of Public Library Outlet Connections." The Steering Committee members congratulated NCLIS on the survey and its important findings.

(8) Improved Formats and Presentation of Data

Ms. Nevins reported for the Task Force on Improved Formats and Presentation of data (Mr. Jacques, Ms. Lynch, Ms. Rudd, Mr. Shubert, and Ms. Nevins, Chair). The Task Force reviewed the E.D. Tabs and prepared ten suggestions for Steering Committee discussion of further improvements in the annual publication and ways in which the report might be made more complete and easy to use. Their first general recommendation was continued work for timely availability of the data. In discussion, Ms. Kroe pointed out that it would be useful to make users aware that the data are available online well before publication of the E.D. Tabs.

The Steering Committee endorsed recommendations for a subject or key word index; including page numbers in references and footnotes; re-ordering of some tables and the information in the "highlights" and other text sections; shortening table titles emphasizing the key words in table headings; considering ways to make it easier to scan data in the tables; including historical data for some key items [cf. IPEDS]; and inserting headings in the list of tables in the "Contents".

Following discussion, Ms. Kroe said that it might be possible to make some such changes in the FY1997 E.D. Tabs.

Based on the discussion, Ms. Nevins will provide: suggested headings for grouping of tables; examples of shortened titles; specific suggestions for additional footnotes; a re-sequencing of tables; and a model for a new section of state-by-state information.

Mr. Wilkins will secure COSLA suggestions for historical data and rankings of key data.

(9) Securing More Timely Submission of Data.

Mr. Wilkins will continue to keep Chief Officers informed on StLA Survey developments and deadlines. He and Ms. Kroe will coordinate on the timing of messages to COSLA. The Lorenz Award and the survey of COSLA should also be helpful in heightening the awareness of Chief Officers.

(10) Presentation of the John G. Lorenz Awards.

Kim Miller is preparing certificates for the Chief Officer and the staff member responsible for the StLA response in the 24 states that met the February 15 deadline for submission on 1998 data. Mr. Wilkins will present the certificates at the October 4 COSLA meeting to Chief Officers of the following 24 states:

Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Wyoming.

(11) Coordination and Improvement of NCEs Surveys

(a) Update on NCEs-sponsored Work on Consistency among Surveys.

Dr. Robert Rossi provided copies of *ESSI/AIR NCEs :Library Survey Analysis; Step 1 – Comparative Assessment of Survey Definitions, Procedures, and Contents*. He described the matrix as a dictionary of various data elements from the several library surveys. These are arranged in the following groups:

- General Definitions
- Survey Content
 - Organizational Characteristic
 - Library Staff
 - Income
 - Expenditures
 - Collections
 - Library Services
 - Special Topics

The data elements and definitions are taken from survey instruments used for the 1994 school libraries, 1997 StLA, 1996 FSCS, 1998 academic libraries, 1997 library cooperatives, and the 1994 Federal libraries surveys. Steering Committee members expressed great interest in the report and urged that it be kept up to date. Dr. Rossi is continuing to work on the matrix and he invited comments by e-mail <brossi@air-cs.org>.

Ms. Chute said that next steps may include content analysis of definitions, a look at gaps, and what library data are collected in other surveys.

b. Discussion of Key Points in the Harris Report

The Steering Committee decided that, depending upon the content of the NCLIS staff summary of the September 23 meeting, the Committee may want to express formally to NCES and NCLIS its sentiments and advice on the recommendations affecting the StLA survey and its expectations for a forum.

(12) Plans for Survey of Chief Officers re the StLA Survey

Mr. Lance presented a draft of an instrument for collecting information from Chief Officers on their use of StLA data. Following discussion, Mr. Lance agreed to produce another draft of the survey in consultation with Mr. Wilkins. Mr. Wilkins will prepare a transmittal letter to Chief Officers. Mr. Shubert and Mr. Planchon will review the survey instrument and transmittal letter before mailing. Responses will go to the Library Research Service in Denver. Mr. Lance will prepare a report of the survey findings in consultation with Mr. Wilkins. The survey will be conducted in late October or November, and results should be available by the end of the year.

The meeting was adjourned at noon on Thursday, September 24. The Committee will meet on March 24 (pm) – 25 (am), 1999 at the Doubletree Hotel in Rockville, MD.

J. Shubert

StLA Steering Committee, September, 1998. Quick 10/1/98

Attachments:

List of documents distributed before or at the meeting:

- Agenda
- Participant List
- StLA Steering Committee Roster
- The Survey of State Library Agencies: The Survey and Its Steering Committee – A Statement Approved by the Steering Committee February 20, 1998 - Tom Jaques

By Agenda Item:

- StLA Receipt Control Log, 8/26/98 (4)
- Instructions and form for 1998 survey (5)
- Data Elements Discussion – Elaine Kroe (5)
- Task Force on improved Formats and Presentation – preliminary report (8)
- The John G. Lorenz Award for Timely and Accurate Submission of StLA Data (10) (established by the StLA Steering Committee, February 20, 1998 (and example of certificate)
- ESSI/AIR NCES Library Survey Analysis; Step 1 – Cooperative Assessment of Survey Definition, Procedures, Contents; September 1998 – Bob Rossi (11a)
- Assessment of and Planning for NCLIS Role in Library Statistics Cooperative Program (LSCP) – revised report June, 1998 – Howard Harris (11b)
- Draft Survey of State Library Agencies About the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) State Library Agency Survey (StLA) – Keith Lance (12)

MEMORANDUM

October 26, 1998

To: Members of the StLA Survey Steering Committee

From: Kim A. Miller
NCLIS Special Assistant

Subj: Steering Committee for the Survey of State Library Agencies
Notes on Meeting, September 23-24, 1998

The notes from the September meeting and the roster of the Steering Committee were mailed on Friday, October 23, 1998.

The next meeting of the StLA Survey Steering Committee will be Wednesday, March 24, 1999 (p.m.) and Thursday March 25, 1999 (a.m.). The meeting will be held at the DoubleTree Hotel Rockville, 1750 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852 (tel. 301-468-1100).

Westat (NCES meeting contractor) is looking for hotel space in September for the FSCS Steering Committee and the StLA Survey Steering Committee. There are two different dates they are looking for:

1. Sept 15 (p.m.) – Sept 16 (a.m.) (StLA) (**FSCS Steering Committee will precede these dates with Sept 13-15**) and
2. Sept 22 (a.m.) – Sept 23 (p.m.) (**FSCS Steering Committee will precede these dates with Sept 20-22**).

Thank you.

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