

The article below will appear in the next issue of *Trustee Tale*

The Future of Public Library Systems in Wisconsin

In recent years library systems have been under tight budget constraints. Funding for systems in 2012 was reduced 10% from the previous year and has not changed since. As costs increase systems have had to change the way they provide services to member libraries and have also had to reduce services.

Throughout 2013 and 2014 several agencies and organizations have studied different aspects of system funding and services.

- **Creating More Effective Library Systems:** In 2013 the System and Resource Libraries Administrators' Association of Wisconsin (SRLAAW) undertook a process to examine how public library systems can remain effective in meeting member library needs in the future. The ultimate goal of this process is for systems to provide services that help their member libraries to better serve Wisconsin library patrons now and in the future.
- **ILS Study:** In 2014 WiLS conducted an in-depth study of shared integrated library systems (ILS). An ILS is the hardware and software that combines the library's catalog, patron database, circulation, public catalog, etc. In Wisconsin, all 17 public library systems support an ILS that is used by most, if not all, of their libraries. WiLS, formerly Wisconsin Library Services, is a non-profit membership organization that facilitates collaborative projects and services to save libraries time and money and to advance library service.
- **Department of Public Instruction (DPI) Lean System Study Work Group:** The Legislature's Joint Finance Committee inserted language into the 2014 – 2016 Biennial Budget Bill directing the Department of Administration to conduct a study of library systems, focusing on these areas:
 1. Consolidating systems.
 2. Increasing the use of technology.
 3. Reducing duplications and inefficiencies.
 4. Utilizing Lean production principles.
 5. Increasing the sharing of services among library systemsAlthough the Governor vetoed this proposal the DPI's Division for Libraries and Technology conducted such a study in 2014.

The DPI Lean System Study report was forwarded to the Council on Library and Network Development (COLAND). COLAND is a committee appointed by the Governor which is charged with advising the Governor and the Superintendent of Public Instruction on library issues. In January 2015 COLAND approved a set of recommendations that were forwarded to the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

- **Strategic Vision for Library Systems in the 21st Century Workgroup Recommendations:** These recommendations focused on five system service areas:
 1. Consulting
 2. Technology support
 3. ILS/ILL/Delivery
 - a. One state—one collection

- b. Resource libraries
- c. Statewide delivery service
- 4. Coordination of electronic services
- 5. Continuing education

The DPI is in the process of putting together workgroups to implement these recommendations. The **Future of System Services Roadmap** outlines how they plan to implement these recommendations. It is anticipated that these workgroups will begin working in July 2015 and implementation will begin in 2016 and the first half of 2017.

All these documents are available online at <http://dpi.wi.gov/coland/strategic-vision>