

Future Planning – Southern Systems Meeting
Kaskaskia Community College
Vandalia Center
2310 West Fillmore Street, Vandalia
June 22, 2010

Participants:	Fran Rickman	Leslie Bednar
Allen Lanham	Harriett Zipfel	Lynn Wiley
Amanda McKay	Jan Ison	Marian Albers
Amy Ihnen	Janet Hicks	Nina Wunderlich
Beverly Obert	Joan Rhoades	Pat Boze
Connie Elder	JoAnn Nabe	Rachel Miller
Connie Elder	Joyce Jackson	Randy Domineck
Diane Steele	Judy Groom	Rosanne Reidner
Dick Helton	Karen Bounds	Scott Drone-Silvers
Doris McKay	Kevin Becker	Thomas Turner
Elaine Steingrube	Lee Ann Fisher	Traci Edwards
Ellen Popit	Leeann Grossman	Valerie Green

Jan Ison, Bev Obert, Leslie Bednar, Ellen Popit introduced themselves. Jan reviewed current financial situation facing systems and ISL directives discussed at ILSDO as well as the issue that System Boards are in charge of their own future decisions. There are various activities related to restructuring and examination that are now occurring around the state.

Jan asked each person around the table to introduce themselves, stating what the people of their community would lose without library cooperation. General concerns expressed included loss of resource-sharing, more expense to get expert help, networking and learning from colleagues, loss of delivery and automation, step backwards in time, loss of access to resources, loss of confidence in ability of smaller libraries to provide service, and many others. Noteworthy phrases included "erosion of education," "isolation of communities" "loss of collective connections."

Southern systems began meeting two years ago, developed collegiality, began doing some joint projects including Collaboration Today consulting web site. ShLS and LTLS held a preliminary discussion in May, just to begin the conversation of merger/restructure. Second meeting was scheduled to invite LCLS, RPLS, as well as ALS and PALS. Also, work involving the automation managers collaboration and planning, which began in April and continues today, was also reviewed. There is not a definite proposal yet but the impetus is there to share and proceed together in developing a proposal to create efficiencies and investigate co-location and vendor options available to a possible merged collaborative project..

The systems in the northern part of the state have signed letters of intent to investigate merger as well. These systems have announced that they are only doing automation and delivery, and have laid off non-related staff. There was also a letter from ISL indicating that systems must consider merger but the System Boards are the ones authorized to make those decisions. There was discussion about what ISL wants versus autonomy of systems and additional discussions that there may not be enough money even with fewer systems. What we want as a future should be determined without the option of additional funding.

The financial situation of each system was discussed – RPLS and LTLS can operate with no new revenue until June 2011 but will spend down reserves. LCLS and ShLS will face sooner closures without additional funding. ShLS has voted to put its building on the market.

There was discussion of duplication of services, how to eliminate redundancy, there is no point in doing a merger if we can't offer economies. Can we do delivery and automation with no additional money? We may have to eliminate buildings, go to a central automation data center, reduce administrators. Should we do triage to eliminate everything to get through a difficult time, then start to build back as we are funded? Automation and delivery continue to be the most essential services in a difficult time.

The group asked for additional data to help with decision-making. Data gathered should include:

- Administrative Costs
- Assets Appraisal
- Building Price per square foot Operational costs
- Contractual Arrangements
- Costs of delivery
- Costs of personnel
- Governance cultures/organization of LLSAP
- Income from lib
- Labor Contracts
- Laid off (Arrangements already done)
- Liabilities/Assets
- LLSAP Costs
- Other Personnel
- Personnel (What have you done to this point?)
- Staff pay out
- Value of buildings

There was consensus that the group should continue the discussion with another meeting planned for July 14, 1 pm at Vandalia. Some present asked for the data to be available before the meeting, so they can review and be prepared. Attendees agreed at the conclusion of July 14th meeting they would assess their recommendation to their respective system boards regarding moving forward in this process of merging the four southern systems.