

**Indiana public library certification taskforce  
Minutes of June 18, 2007 meeting**

In attendance: Jacob Speer, Kathie Scott, William Goodhart, Jason Hatton, Brenda Williams, Larry Oathout, Tracy Gamble, Patty Stringfellow, Mike Williams, Dianne Osborne, Nancy Newport, Marian Corya, Margaret Hamilton, Joni Brookins, Terry Rheinheimer, Linda Judd, Rita Douthitt, Carol Jackson, Jenny Draper, Renee Reed, Sue Waibel, Andrea Bowman, Amanda Dillman, Tamsie Meurer, Carolyn Strickland, Elizabeth Schoettle, Ann Alexander, Kay Martin, Andrew Rowden, Roberta Brooker, Jim Corridan, Suzie Baldwin, Edie Huffman

Jim Corridan stated that at the town hall meetings earlier in 2007, there seemed to be consensus that certification needed to continue and be strengthened.

Once recommendations have been made and meeting results have solidified them,

- Indiana State Library staff will travel around the state to present them
- the Indiana Library and Historical Board will hold a public hearing to receive testimony related to certification
- the Indiana State Library will create a plan and write rules
- the Indiana Library and Historical board will enact rules

He also stated that the technology component of continuing education was important enough to require continuing education every x# of years

**Comments made by attendees:**

Director certification, once becoming III, requires only time.

Who will pay for certification? Can library pay for certification?

In '90s, librarians did not want certification to go away, but we could not find a legislator to sponsor legislation for change.

Professional license may change view of librarians.

Small libraries concerned about pay, cost of certification. Board has limited funds. Very hard to replace with another certified director. In most professions, practitioners pay for continuing education and for cost of license.

Many classes available through the Indiana State Library will be free or at reduced cost.

Look at models of other license programs.

INCOLSA, ILF, INDIANA STATE LIBRARY (WebJunction included),

Degrees (formal education) and continuing education two different discussions.

Location of classes important. Interactive, two-way, regional coordinators around the state. Northern and southern parts of state need consideration.

Must define “professional assistant”. Different for different sized libraries. Also, full-time vs. part-time.

Certify position or individual. Position’s duties need to be defined statewide. Legislators’ intent – professional duties.

Concern about tying certification to size of institution, mobility of society, disparity in pay scales. Can certainly meet higher class qualifications.

Find another way of organizing

Criminal background checks – teachers have to have that in order to be certified.

KY mandatory – have to be certified in order to be hired. 5 levels.

Opportunities for conferences – out of state qualify?

What if library staff can’t meet certification qualifications? What repercussions? Different from current situation?

Unserved/underserved – separate taskforce.

Addresses both professionalism and minimal level of library service/support.

Hard to find certified person to serve branch of 400+ people. When we can no longer give service taxpayers deserve, it’s time to merge. Branch head can roam, not be tied to branch. Have to tier branches as well as whole system. Need to look beyond when we are all still alive. Dept of Ed. went through this with lifetime certification, which is no longer issued.

Like to see Indiana on the vanguard.

Issue of financial impact (return on investment).

Staff committed to improvement, question about resources (time, energy). Make realistic and manageable requirements.

Clerks are not being considered – again, we need to define “professional assistant”.

We don’t need to break even but we do need to increase fee, to make sustainable.

Classes from different institutions are different; can't guarantee same knowledge, competencies, etc.

Credit versus noncredit.

MLS indicates basic understanding of libraries. Need to shore up smaller libraries. Teachers have to have certain # of classes/hours – general public “knows”.

Concern that State Library is presenting a suggested model of certification (tiers by library size and type of employee) which may prejudice discussion of other options

Keeping track of employee certification would create more work for directors

To improve profession, we need to standardize level of expertise and professionalism

Consensus that we should pursue certification change. We will check with other states, discuss with colleagues in other state library agencies pitfalls, great points,. Plan to meet every month.

2<sup>nd</sup> meeting - Monday, July 30<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm EDT

3<sup>rd</sup> meeting -

4<sup>th</sup> meeting – sign off on agreed changes.