

KDLA Report
Report to the Board
Louisville, Kentucky
November 12, 2011

Budget

While the fiscal outlook for the state is showing some improvement, we are awaiting a decision on our budget for the year that began July 1. The budget adopted by the Legislature included reductions of 1 ½% along with additional cuts to be determined by the Governor. KDLA submitted scenarios for reductions of 3% and 5%. If cuts are necessary, they will be taken from 3 positions that are currently unfilled with the remainder of the cuts to be made from various areas of operations. With the uncertainty about our budget, we are providing 75% of last year's state aid to libraries as many of them need funding at this time of year. Of course state aid and local records grants will be reduced as part of the budget reductions. Fortunately the Governor has announced that no further furloughs are planned.

We are also watching events in Washington that will determine the magnitude of reductions in federal funding for libraries. The reduction last year was \$169,000 and we expect further reductions in the future.

Local Library revenue

The season during which public library districts set tax rates is completed. This year was different from previous years as KDLA provide a wide array of options from which library boards could choose in setting their tax rates. Previously KDLA provided only 2 rates. As expected, we saw many more challenges to tax rates this year. Library boards, however, took great discretion in determining rates. We have encouraged boards to be prepared to justify their decisions about the tax rates that are chosen. In many cases, this has been necessary.

To clarify the board's authority in setting a tax rate, the Whitley County Library Board and the Whitley County Judge have asked for an attorney general's opinion on whether libraries created by petition before 1986 can legally change their tax rate. We are anxiously awaiting this decision that probably won't be issued until late next winter.

Monitoring of compliance with state law

With the increased focus on activities of special districts, a focus for KDLA this year has been compliance with state laws by library boards. This is the second year that copies of audits have been required with annual reports. KDLA staff is following up on any issues with late audits. We are also closely monitoring board appointments to make sure they are done in a timely manner and that they provide appropriate nominees for the County Judge Executive to consider. Finally, KDLA staff is developing a list of policies that should be adopted by every library board to demonstrate the desire for accountability and transparency.

We are confident that library boards are efficiently using public funding to provide essential services. These actions will demonstrate to the Legislature, local officials, and the public that libraries are operating in a fashion that guards the taxpayer's investment in the community.

Planning

We have signed a contract with Lyris to conduct an evaluation of KDLA's current 5 year plan for Federal funding which is due March 30, 2012. Once this is finished, Lyris will assist as we write a new plan that is due on June 30, 2012. At the same time, KDLA staff will be reviewing the agency's strategic plan to make necessary revisions so that it complements the new federal plan. We will be asking the Council for assistance in this process in the coming year. We are undertaking several initiatives that will provide information to assist in this process.

The Gates Foundation has chose KDLA along with the Texas State Library to undergo a study of the impact of budget reductions on service and suggest how funding might be reallocated to better meet the needs of customers. This report will provide much input for the strategic plan.

Federal Stimulus grant for Public Computing Centers (BTOP)

Much of the funding for public computing centers in 46 public libraries across the state has been distributed. Training has begun at many of the libraries. The first major reports of activity as a result of the grant are very impressive.

Bridging the Gap Grant

KDLA is entering the final year of a partnership with Bluegrass Community and Technical College and Northern Kentucky University to provide college classes for public library staff members. About 70 staff members have taken classes during the 3 year grant. Several students are nearing Bachelor's Degrees and additional students will be obtaining Associate's Degrees as a result of this program.

Public Library Development

Since the last report, new libraries opened in Meade County and Trimble County. The newly renovated and expanded Shawnee Branch of the Louisville Free Public Library was opened. Ground was broken for the new library in Owen County.

With the help of its sister library in Campbell County, the new McLean County Public Library inaugurated bookmobile service.

Construction Requests

Though we have had a number of new libraries constructed in recent years, there is still a large need for additional library space in many counties. KDLA staff surveyed the public libraries for interest in applying for funding from the state during the upcoming biennium. Twenty-three libraries indicated interest. KDLA has included additional funding as a budget request and the KPLA Advocacy Committee will be including a construction request in its priorities for the 2012 Legislative Session.

E-books

KDLA is now providing e-books as a resource for state employees. Training is being conducted for state employees. Early response has been very positive and a number of state employees have applied for library cards as a result of the opportunity to obtain e-books through the State Library.

Sister libraries

The Kentucky Public Library Association has established the Sister Library Program with the goal of strengthening libraries by partnering better funded libraries with libraries that are not as well funded. At least 4 such partnerships have been established with others being

contemplated. This should be very helpful for the smaller libraries while also providing benefits for the larger libraries.

Trustee certification

Work is continuing on the new trustee certification program. Development of this program has taken longer than anticipated, however, we hope to have it in place by the spring KPLA conference.

Archives News

Bids were opened on Oct. 28 for the new State Records Center. KDLA staff is evaluating the proposed bids and working with the State Budget office to award the contract. Once the winning bid has been chosen, approval will be necessary by the Capital Projects and Bond Oversight Committee in December before construction can begin. If all goes well, we could be moving by late next fall.

The Kentucky State Archives was one of six sites visited by a team of international experts testing new standards for digital repositories.

Kentucky hosted a Best Practices exchange for state archives across the country in Lexington on Oct. 13-14.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne Onkst