

KLA Executive Board Report #21

Kentucky Dept. for Libraries and Archives

March 29, 2008

The new Education Cabinet Secretary, Helen Mountjoy, has taken office. Secretary Mountjoy has visited KDLA and she has been very accessible and gracious with her time. She is assembling an excellent team at the Cabinet. Unfortunately she didn't have the luxury of settling into her new job as she arrived at a difficult time for state government and at the opening of a legislative session with many issues.

Like most other state agencies, KDLA has undergone a budget reduction since the last meeting of the State Advisory Council and we are facing further cuts in the coming biennium. In December the state budget shortfall forced a 3% cut for the current year. Unfortunately most of our budget is in grants that had already been distributed and in staff so we absorbed the cut through salary savings, reductions in operating, and one time reduction in the Local Records Grant program. There are additional serious implications for our budget in the coming biennium. The House of Representatives passed a budget which includes a reduction of \$1,700,000 in our General Fund allocation. Since our General Fund budget is almost entirely staff and grants, serious reductions in both would be required with the adoption of this budget. The Senate version of the budget restored \$150,000 for direct state aid. The Conference Committee will soon begin to reconcile the different versions of the budget so there remains much uncertainty. We can be fairly certain that staffing and operating reductions will be necessary. Our staff is reviewing every purchase, every trip, and every open position to ensure that every expenditure is absolutely necessary. As positions become open this year, we will also look at reorganization that might bring savings.

As we look to the future, KDLA has undergone a strategic planning process. Our staff identified 3 goals: 1) providing effective services for library and government records customers, 2) efficiently managing KDLA resources, and 3) building recognition and support for library and government records services. Within these 3 goals are 13 objectives – 7 of which we have determined as priorities for the coming months. Our activities will focus on:

- Increasing participation in the Kentucky Public Library standards
- Assisting public libraries in achieving higher standard levels
- Improving archival and records management programs
- Increasing compliance with records management statutes
- Enhancing the KDLA website
- Providing training that meets customer needs and
- Improving all levels of internal communication.

We are continuing to work with counties where library service is not meeting the needs of the residents. We are working with groups in Carter County and McLean County to establish library service that would enable those counties to receive direct state aid for library service. We are also working with the County Judge Executive and citizens in Livingston County who are seeking state funding for the construction of a public library.

Though we don't have major legislation during this session, we still have been working with legislators. The Kentucky Public Library Association Legislative Committee has launched a campaign to encourage reading by taking photos of legislators for a READ poster. More than 100 legislators have been photographed along with the Governor, First Lady, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Agriculture Commissioner, Education Secretary, and Education Commissioner. The posters were displayed in the tunnel between the Capitol and the Annex for 2 weeks and KPLA is planning a traveling exhibit of the posters which we hope to see in the officials' offices. This program was heavily supported by the Education Cabinet and could not have been completed without the Cabinet's strong support.

Our staff is always looking for ways to better use technology in providing our services. As you are probably aware, we house the state library that is designed to provide information resources needed by state government employees to perform their duties. We maintain a collection of outstanding resources. Informing more than 35,000 state employees spread across the state about these resources is a huge challenge. Using GotoMeeting, our staff has developed a series of workshops that state employees can attend at their desks. Materials for the workshops are made available on their work stations. These workshops are more accessible while offering interaction with instructors and other participants. In these times of travel restrictions, they are especially important. These classes have filled up almost as soon as they are offered. I participated as a student in one of the sessions and I was very proud of the quality. We have trained 350 state employees since Jan. 2008. I hope it is a model we can use for many other training sessions.

KDLA has a new webmaster, Dave Holzwarth who has begun work revising and improving our website. In the near future, we also plan to create an electronic newsletter to help distribute information about KDLA and Kentucky's libraries in a better manner.

One of our most important services is consultation to public libraries through our regional system. With about 2/3 of our public libraries managed by Library Directors who do not have a master's degree in library science, KDLA's regional librarians provide critical services to library directors and library boards that enable them to provide service in a professional and legal manner. As a result of staffing reductions, the number of regions – and regional librarians – that serve our 116 public library systems were reduced from 16 to 12 in 1998. Since that time KDLA has never had sufficient staff to fill these positions and we are now staffed with 8 librarians. Staff from other positions at KDLA and temporary realignments have been used to cover the vacant positions, but as a result service is very uneven. With the unlikely prospect of adding staff members in the near future, we are planning a realignment of the state into 8 regions with each assigned a regional librarian for working with public libraries.

Submitted by Wayne Onkst