
Appendix C

Making a Difference @ your library™

March 8, 2001

Dear Library Director:

Greetings! I am sending you this letter to introduce an exciting new venture the Nebraska Library Commission is launching this spring, which we are calling: Making a Difference @ your library™.

We would like your help. Sometime during the coming months, Nebraska Library Commission representatives would like to visit your library to talk with you, your staff, and other interested community members. During this visit, our staff members would like to facilitate two different sessions:

- A discussion with library staff members (and anyone else you would like to include) on how any Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grants or other grants made to your library during the past three years are Making a Difference @ your library™. If your library has not received a grant from the Library Commission during that time, we would like to visit with you about other Library Commission services that your local library may find useful.
- An open forum dialogue with the library staff, trustees, customers, and other interested community members to gain a better understanding of local issues, concerns, and goals, as well as to learn how state and regional services impact local library services.

Library Commission staff members serving on two-member teams will visit all public libraries in Nebraska over the course of a ten-month period between April 2001 and February 2002. Jacqué Crocker will contact library directors to schedule a visit. Prior to the visit, the team will contact the library director to discuss the visit and provide additional information. We look forward to visiting your community in the near future.

Best wishes,

Rod Wagner

Director

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AGENDA FOR LOCAL LIBRARY VISIT

Introductions

Tour of Library

Take Photos

Discussion Session:

General Questions

Grant Questions

State Aid Questions

Dialogue Session:

Introductions

Questions

Wrap-up



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GENERAL QUESTIONS

- 1) Please tell us about your major successes in providing library services to your community:
- 2) Please tell us about the kinds of things (programs, services, people, grants, etc.) that have helped you achieve these successes:
- 3) Please tell us about the major challenges you've faced in providing library services to your community:
- 4) Please tell us about the kinds of things that have helped you meet or deal with these challenges:



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GRANT QUESTIONS

LIBRARY SERVICES & TECHNOLOGY ACT (LSTA) GRANT, CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING GRANT, and/or CHILDREN'S SERVICES GRANT

- 1) What difference or impact did receiving this grant make or have in your library?
 - on you and your staff?
 - in your community?
 - can you share stories or examples of these?

- 2) Was there any special training you or your staff needed as part of this grant project?
 - if so, please describe:

- 3) Did you encounter any problems when you were implementing this grant?
 - if so, please describe:

- 4) Do you have any suggestions for ways we could improve the process of applying for these types of grants?
 - if so, please describe:



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STATE AID QUESTIONS

- 1) What difference or impact has the state aid your library received from the Library Commission made:
 - on your staff?
 - on your services?
 - can you share stories or examples of these?

- 2) Do you have suggestions on how the state aid process could be improved?
 - if so, please describe:



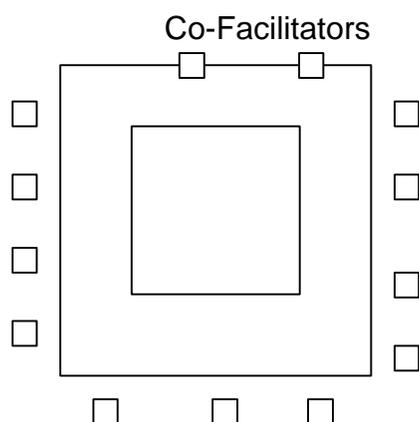
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Preparation for Dialogue Session

We encourage attendance by a broad spectrum of the community, such as library staff and board members, library users, library non-users, and community members who might have a stake in the growth and development of library and information services.

Room set-up: If possible our preference would be for tables arranged in a rectangle or U-shape, with room for our facilitators at the head.

Room set-up



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Facilitator's Opening Remarks for Dialogue Session

Welcome, I would like to get us started with some introductions. My name is _____ and my co-facilitator today is _____. We are from the Nebraska Library Commission and we would like to thank you for participating today in this "Making a Difference @ your Library" dialogue session.

The purpose of this session is to gather your ideas about the kind of services you want or need Nebraska libraries to offer in the near and/or distant future. We are also interested in hearing your ideas about the kind of services Nebraska libraries could offer in the future that would expand library patronage within (name of the community).

What will happen after this: The information you provide us will be analyzed for themes. The Nebraska Library Commission will use the themes as we conduct strategic/future planning efforts. Thus, your information will help assure that the Nebraska Library Commission direct its energy and resources towards supporting the development of services required and/or desired by the communities it serves.

What is going to happen today: Today we are going to spend about 90 minutes asking you questions and listening to your responses. The questions we will ask have no right or wrong answers. You should try to stay focused on the questions, but whatever you feel you need to say in response to a question is what we want to hear. Feel free to build off one another's ideas. Periodically, my co-facilitator or I may need to ask a question in order to clarify something that has been said. You may also see us nodding our heads. None of our verbal or non-verbal actions should be construed by you as agreement or disagreement with what you have said; it simply means that we understand or are trying to understand what you are saying.

For each question, one of us will ask the question and the other will be responsible for writing down what you say in response to that question. We will trade this function back and forth with each question in order to prevent one of us from getting writer's cramp.

Opportunity to ask questions: Is there anything further you wish to know about the purpose of this session or the process that will be used?

Before we begin, we would like to go around the room and have each person take about 30 seconds to tell us your name and tell us the capacity in which you are here today. For example, tell us if you are here as a user of the library, or as a member of the local Chamber of Commerce, etc. We will write these names at the top of our notes so that we will have a record of the participants in the group at this location. Can we begin to my left and go around the room. Facilitators note: If you have more than twenty participants in your dialogue session, you should dispense with participant introductions. You may want to explain to them that in order to keep within the time constraints we will not be able to do introductions, but the sign-in sheets will serve to inform the Library Commission of those who participated in this group.

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Dialogue Questions

1. This first question is going to require you to do a little bit of future thinking and imagining. Imagine it is five years from now and your local library has all the services of which you could ever think or dream. As you visualize this, tell us:
 - Why are you using your library?
 - What do your library services include?
 - How and where do you access these services?
2. What library service needs and wants will your community (use name of town) have within the next five years?
3. What kind of local efforts do you think might be required to make the library service wants or needs of which you have spoken a reality? How would you see yourself being involved in those local efforts?
4. What knowledge, skills and abilities would you and your community need to achieve these outcomes?
5. Beyond the local level, whom do you want or need to partner with in order to accomplish this work?



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[Date]

Dear [Library Director's Name],

Thank you for agreeing to host a local Making a Difference @your library™ visit in your library! [name of partner and I] will be visiting the [name of public library] on [date].

Enclosed are materials intended to provide a sense of what we would like to accomplish during our visit and the questions we will use to guide our conversations with you during the following sessions:

- A discussion with library staff members (and anyone else you would like to include) on how Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grants, other grants, or state aid provided to your library during the past three years are Making a Difference @ your library™ (see attached list of grants). If your library has not received a grant or state aid from the Library Commission during that time, we would like to visit with you about local library service successes and challenges.
- A dialogue with the library staff, trustees, customers, and other interested community members to gain a better understanding of local issues, concerns, and goals, as well as to learn how state and regional services impact local library services.

We look forward to visiting you and your community.

Best wishes,

[name of lead team member]

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GRANTS FOR DISCUSSION

[Name of Library]

LIBRARY SERVICES & TECHNOLOGY ACT (LSTA) GRANT(S):

[Year	Type	Title	\$Amount]
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CONTINUING EDUCATION & TRAINING GRANT(S):

[Year	Type	Title	\$Amount]
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CHILDREN'S SERVICES GRANT(S):

[Year	Type	Title	\$Amount]
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STATE AID: We will discuss how you use these funds in general.

