

FY2011 PLS endorsed data elements

Comments (SDCs and LSWG members given March 11-March23 time period to provide comments; LSWG member comments during 3/24/11 call)

Proposed Additions:

1. Available Upload and Download Speeds at Computers used by the General Public. (Collected at the outlet level and reported out at the outlet level.) (This data element will not be collected for FY2011. The plan is to collect for FY2012. See page 2 for more explanation on this data element.)
2. Number of Up-to-Date Internet Computers Used by General Public (actual number of computers; collected at the outlet level and reported out at the system level)
3. Expenditures on Public Access Hardware during the Past Fiscal Year (actual dollar amount; collected and reported at the system level)
4. Established Replacement Plan for Public Internet Computers

Proposed Change

1. 450 Print Materials (Report **ONLY BOOKS IN PRINT**)
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Katina Jones (MO) said

at 10:19 am on Mar 21, 2011

Here is the one question I have:

Upload/Download Speed

Statement in Question:

"Staff would be asked to run the test the week prior to the end of the library's PLS reporting cycle."

I'm confused by this specification. When I read this, I see that in Missouri I would be asking libraries to run the test the week prior to the end of their fiscal year. So I would have libraries on calendar year FY running it the week of Christmas (week 51), some week 26 that are on July-June FY, ones on October-September FY running it week 39... Or am I to read this that they should all run it on the state's fiscal year (which for Missouri doesn't coincide with other July-June states in the PLS)...

Sorry – I need more clarification. My preference would be that all libraries in the state run it the same week.

Carlos Manjarrez (IMLS) said

at 11:41 am on Mar 21, 2011

Katina,

Thank you for your comment. You have honed in on one of the issues that was a bit vexing for us. The "one week prior to the library's reporting cycle was an attempt on our part to standardize collection in a way that would be easy for individual libraries to remember. The idea was to set a speed test deadline that was one week prior to their deadline for reporting their data to the state (not one week prior to the end of their fiscal year), because we did not think it would be feasible to establish a single speed test date that would work for all states.

It would be good to know from others if this (someone arbitrary) request to have people conduct their test one week prior to submitting your data to the state causes problems in other states as well.

Thanks.

-Carlos

Michael Golrick (LA) said

at 12:29 pm on Mar 21, 2011

Now I have a question related to Carlos' comment:

Is this a question we will need to ask, or is this something that we will ask each library to do prior to the state deadline for reporting? Or, my question could also be phrased as, do the libraries have to complete this test in order to be considered as completing the survey?

I will share Katina's concern since for almost all my libraries, the reporting period ends 12/31. That means people will be asked to remember to do the test the week between Christmas and New Year's. On the other hand, let me note that it is the definition that says "during a time designated by the state library" while it is only in the process section where the week before the end of the reporting period is mention. Perhaps there should be some consistency.

Oh...and since I am asking a question, let me express a concern. Since this is at the OUTLET level, I have concerns about getting libraries to correctly enter the FSCS id numbers (consistently).

Carlos Manjarrez (IMLS) said

at 8:15 am on Mar 31, 2011

Hi Michael,

Sorry about the delayed response. Regarding completion of the test, the collection will not be done through Webplus so there will be a non-response edit check in the first collection. It is difficult to predict what the response rate will be at this time. Because it will take time to develop the collection web site there will be time for us (SDCs and IMLS) to fine tune the

process of collection, incentives for participation and the timing of the test.

I am a little less concerned about the FSCS code issue as we could build an FSCS lookup into the collection website to make it easier for outlets to identify themselves.

-Carlos

Katina Jones (MO) said

at 2:50 pm on Mar 21, 2011

Carlos, thanks for your response. So, to be sure I'm clear, the statement I highlighted could read instead:

" ... run the test the week prior to the end of the state's PLS collection cycle." Is that correct?

Carlos Manjarrez (IMLS) said

at 8:33 am on Mar 31, 2011

Hi Katina,

Yes, it is correct (with an asterisk). As I mentioned to Michael, the collection web-site for this particular data element will not be in effect for the 2010 collection. I highly recommend that we (SDCs and IMLS) carve some time out of the next conference to fine tune these collection questions (should the data element pass this spring).

-Carlos

Thanks.

Katina

BrucePomerantz (MN) said

at 5:33 am on Mar 23, 2011

Item #3: Public Access Hardware

IN ORDER OF INCREASING OBJECTION:

1) Small libraries probably don't keep line item distinctions between public and staff expenditures. My experience has been that the financial numbers are prepared by the city clerk or treasurer. A request that they keep the items distinct will be go unheeded.

2) John Bertot has informed us that this was the most unreliable data he collected. So, how reliable will the data be if we collect it? Is this going to be a matter of GIGO?

3) Making a distinction between staff and public equipment is akin to making a mind/body distinction. It can be done but one cannot operate without the other so why do it? If we want to track the increasing expenditures that libraries spend on hardware, then make it one complete amount, regardless of staff or public usage.

4) As libraries decrease in physical space because materials become increasingly placed in "The Cloud" and available/downloaded upon demand, perhaps we need three new expenditure categories (1) hardware (2) software and (3) licensing.

Laura Stone (AZ) said

at 2:03 pm on Mar 23, 2011

I asked some of our public librarians for comments to the questions (I didn't provide the definitions), and the librarians commented that they don't break out computer expenditures by staff and public. One librarian noted that her library has a four-year replacement cycle, but that can change if the budget is frozen.

LSWG Member Summary of Comments

3/24/2011

Members on call:

LSWG Members: Howard Boksenbaum, Cathleen Bourdon, Edie Huffman, Martha Kyrillidou, Frank Nelson, Wayne Onkst, Bruce Pomerantz, Diana Very

IMLS: Michele Farrell, Susan Hildreth, James Lonergan, Carlos Manjarrez, Kim Miller

Frank: both 1 and 2 are worthy of ballot process but need more explanation.

Data Element # 1:

Bruce Pomerantz: Why can't we have the libraries go to the FCC site for running the speed test? ? duplication cost for going for contract to do speed test

Carlos: This has to do with the Paperwork Reduction Act requirements that OMB monitors. The FCCs collection went through an OMB review a couple of years ago and it does not include IMLS' collection plans. Their OMB clearance is specific to their collection. The reason we are not asking libraries to simply use another web portal to do the test is because we did not want to burden people with having to physically record the results of their speed test and then transcribe those results into another collection vehicle. My interpretation of this data element was that the collection should be automated.

Frank: We haven't really fully explained to people how this data element was going to be administered.

Carlos: IMLS spoke to FCC and the two vendors they work with. The collection will not begin in the FY10 cycle. Should this element pass, there will be more time to discuss the collection process as we develop the collection tool.

Data Element #2

No comment

The following two proposed data elements were brought forth for deletion on ballot:

#3 & # 4

Data Element # 3

3 (expenditures) would be hard to get (Wayne and Bruce) see comments below

Bruce's comments from the PLSC Wiki:

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- 2) John Bertot has informed us that this was the most unreliable data he collected. So, how reliable will the data be if we collect it? Is this going to be a matter of GIGO?
- 3) Making a distinction between staff and public equipment is akin to making a mind/body distinction. It can be done but one cannot operate without the other so why do it? If we want to track the increasing expenditures that libraries spend on hardware, then make it one complete amount, regardless of staff or public usage.
- 4) As libraries decrease in physical space because materials become increasingly placed in "The Cloud" and available/downloaded upon demand, perhaps we need three new expenditure categories (1) hardware (2) software and (3) licensing.

Eddie: Indiana collects this information (#3) not sure if number is a useful and accurate.

Frank: It's a continuation to a very old and tired effort to complicate the hardware and software grid that really doesn't deserve that level of specificity. All a part of cost of doing business. Lumping hardware in with capital cost in with operating cost in a separate figure totally not connected to anything going on with inventory is asking for confusion and trouble.

Wayne: Rationale support of public access technology; how do we divide the numbers of public and staff. Not sure if the information would be worth anything to us. There is a difficulty in splitting off public and staff.

Diana: is for this data element – expenditures on the public access would help us know what's going on in the local library as far as giving them their tools. Keeping staff expenditures – should be separate anyway. It would be used for Gates and ALA - computer use as circulation goes down.

Howard: This data element could use a little work to home the actual collection. Those that control purse strings look at public access computing as a discreet service. How much are we spending and what's the gap. Helpful to know that the state level and hopefully, the national level. Doesn't see the difficulty in interpreting this. Didn't occur that there needed to be a strict distinction between staff and public access.

Carlos: Regarding use at the national level – IMLS would likely use this data element to compare expenditures at the local level, state, and national level. The comparisons could be done on a per capita basis or with some other metric for standardization. It is worth knowing what the expenditures are for this important service.

Michele: Understands where Wayne is coming from. If you don't keep the staff hardware up to date then it doesn't matter what happens at the public access level.

Frank: sticky note addendum – doesn't really add up. Looking at putting together the full list of expenditures collections. Bring the whole inventory into questions. Collections themselves should reflect what the expenditures are talking about. Keep it simple as possible and make it add up.

3

In favor of: 3

Not in favor of: 4

The voting members on the call voted to **remove** this data element on the ballot for FY2011. Will discuss further in future committee meetings.

Data Element # 4

Edie: believes this element would establish a precedent that we don't want to continue with. Won't help in terms of rating libraries or helping libraries help what they need to do to operate. Some will come from state standards and state law.

Cathleen: # 3 had problems with interpretation of the data and problem with answering the way it was phrased. #4 should keep it on the ballot since this is a pretty yes/no answer and let the Chief Officers and SDCs decide with their votes.

Howard: Would like to support that there is a process that produced this on the ballot we have to honor. Is it the yes/no nature of it that there is objection to? Is that the precedent?

Edie: No the precedent is starting to ask about policy.

Diana: that people would assume that they would have to have a replacement policy.

Edie: No. We start to ask about certain things. In programs we had start to ask about children then now young adult. It's getting into how libraries should operate instead of how libraries do operate.

Carlos: This is an efficient way of asking how they do this.

Edie: I think once you start asking questions like this libraries will question whether this need one or not. The survey just gets bigger and bigger.

Bruce: Not sure how to vote on this. What is the responsibility of the working group?

Michele: Great to find out if their colleagues are collecting this. Not thinking about the cost of collecting this data element? What would IMLS do with this? You would get a sense of who has replacement plans and who doesn't.

Carlos: The rationale for this data element is that it is correlated with investments in services locally. A replacement plan is correlated with continued investments at the local level.

Howard: Do we really need a census to answer any question that would come out of this?

Eddie: What if the library doesn't answer this? Do I need to call them.

Diana: Would it cause a problem with grant funding later on if the answer is no. Might be a reason for them not saying no.

Bruce: Why should we ask it if there is no state standard to support it?

Frank: Separates intent and purpose for this inventory. Idaho does not have the luxury of state aid. For something to find its way onto the PLS I will always be against this type of question.

Bruce: At the national level I can't see Congress coming by to do anything based on the whether or not there is a plan, Gates yes, they can dictate if the libraries want money. Why should we ask it if we don't have standards to support it.

Howard: There is an entire unexplored field of data driven for local decision makers, library managers or system aggregators. We need to be providing the data needed for that too. There has to be other reasons to convince Congress to give us money.

#4:

In favor of: 5

Not in favor of 2

Keep this data element on the ballot.