

Frequently Asked Questions – Library System Standards Revision Process

Why are the Library System Standards being revised at this time? The current standards were adopted in 1992. The Illinois library environment has evolved considerably in the last 16 years, in no small measure due to the success of the regional library systems. The current standards no longer provide an adequate basis for describing and evaluating the service programs of the systems. It is, therefore, time to bring the standards up-to-date.

Are the Standards a part of the administrative rules--- requiring State legislation approval/vote? The original system standards were included in the administrative rules for the Illinois Library System Act. The Joint Committee on Administrative Rules, a committee of the Illinois General Assembly, approves administrative rules. The revised standards will update the administrative rules.

How do the library standards affect funding? As specified in the Illinois Library Systems Act, regional library systems are funded with an annual grant from the Illinois State Library/Office of the Secretary of State's budget. Each system's grant is determined using a formula that includes the geographic area served and population served. While the system standards are not factors in calculating the area and per capita grants, they do establish a baseline for use of the state's area and per capita grants.

When will the revised standards be completed? The target date for completion of the draft revision of the system standards is Fall 2009, followed by public hearings.

Are the Library Systems Standards Committee's meeting dates posted on the web? Yes, the dates are listed at the bottom of the following web page, http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/whats_new/systemstandardrules.html. In addition, the dates of upcoming meetings are included in the weekly *E-news from the ISL*.

Can the public attend Library Systems Standards Committee meetings? Yes, the meetings are open.

Will we get to review the draft of the revised standards before they are approved? Of course. As standards are drafted or revised, they will be circulated for comment. This has already been done with the committee's planning assumptions. At the conclusion of this process, a completed draft will be circulated for comment. When the final draft is submitted, public hearings will be held, similar to the process followed when the original system standards were developed.

Will *E-news*, the Illinois State Library electronic newsletter, or the Illinois State Library web site keep us up to date on what's happening with the Standards revision? We will definitely keep the library community up-to-date on the process. The Illinois State Library web site is updated regularly; the committee's planning assumptions are posted now (http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/who_we_are/pdfs/systemstandards_assumptions.pdf). WebJunction Illinois (WJIL) provides an opportunity to comment on documentation related to the standards revision (go to the library systems area on WJIL).

Will the web page contain the notes from the Standards Committee meeting? Yes. The meeting notes will be posted after the committee reviews and approves the notes at the subsequent meeting.

How was the composition of the Committee determined? The goal was to have representatives with knowledge of current trends and challenges in libraries, broad experience of all types of libraries in Illinois, knowledge of the history and operation of the regional library systems and their relationship to the Illinois State Library, while keeping the group small enough to move the process along as expeditiously as possible.

Do the people on the Committee understand the role of the Regional Library System?

Yes. The Committee includes members with the following backgrounds and responsibilities: system member libraries, system director, system board members, and other statewide consortia and associations. Additionally, the Office of the Secretary of State is represented on the committee.

Shouldn't there be more than one person/people from the regional library systems on the Standards Committee? We are confident that the system directors and staffs are in regular communications among themselves, as well as with their representative on the committee and other members. As indicated above, all of the deliberations and revisions to the standards will be circulated widely for comment and that there will be a period for public hearings before the new standards are finalized.