OLAQ

Continuing education stakeholders meeting report

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Continuing Education Stakeholders Meeting Report

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On October 21, 1999, representatives of over 28 library education providers, library organizations, and Oregon Library Association units participated in the OLA Continuing Education Committee's meeting of library continuing education stakeholders. The goal of the meeting was to establish dialogue between the OLA Continuing Education Committee and the education provider community for planning and communication purposes. After a keynote address by Dr. Gary Jensen, Director of the Western Oregon University library and past president of the Oregon Library Association, the agenda included the following planning activities:

1) reports from each organization about what works in providing library educational opportunities;

2) brainstorming about the challenges in providing continuing education;

3) developing solutions for the association and the CE committee, for libraries, and for education providers; and

4) prioritizing the solutions.

What Works
More than an hour was spent hearing reports about what works in providing library continuing education. Patterns were noticeable in the reports. Highlights and recommendations included:

- Vendors providing functionality training

- Opportunity for development through committee work

- Opening up of in-house training to other libraries

- Electronic advertising reaches people

- Geography makes a difference in opportunities; advantage of being local to certain areas/groups

- Success with taking training to established groups as a method of delivery

- Improvement over last 15 years: there is now an MLS program; many groups sponsor education opportunities

- Some libraries budgeting for staff development

- Cultivate local talent for teaching CE workshops (peer teachers)

- Consortium cooperation provides development opportunities through CE components and shared funding

- CE supported through the association annual conference and committee structure: committee work and workshops sponsored by committees

- Regional association's meetings are a development opportunity with guest speakers

- Scholarship program for support staff

- Focus on direct service in training topics

- Try for geographic equity by holding workshops at least once a year in Central Oregon, Coast, etc.

- Low cost, one-day conference for support staff provides alternative to OLA conference attendance

- Focus on varying levels of expertise

- Mix focus on practical with vision/principles education

- Internet-based distance learning advantages are: flexibility, cost-effectiveness, and access even for rural libraries

- Oregon good at year-round training, gives all staff opportunities to attend

- Experience shows that continuing education needs to be convenient, affordable, relevant, and to use a variety of marketing techniques

- MLS program means increasing demand for CE to complement formal education, and provide networking for students

- Teleconference downlinks are convenient

- Committees plan specific, focused instruction for members

- Providing CE at local point of need

- Right topic at right time

- Improved communication opportunities: electronic mailing list, bi-monthly Hotline, CE web page

- CE driven by resource sharing in recent years

The Challenges
The challenges in providing library continuing education were categorized under broad headings of technology, publicity, time, costs, geography, content, and coordination of opportunities. A catch-all category for other comments was also created. A sampling of challenges from this "other" category follows. The complete listing of the challenges will be posted on the Continuing Education page on the OLA web site.

- Securing informative, dynamic instructors

- Determining the most appropriate structure and/ or format for a presentation

- Finding locations to accommodate large groups and multiple sessions

- Identifying local talent

- Repeat sessions/stagger so all staff can attend

- Finding locations to provide hands-on computer training

- Leadership to inspire unmotivated staff to want CE

- Establish standards for effective CE

- Prioritize CE needs

- Follow-up for participants: reinforcement on the job

- Folks working toward a degree program cannot transfer the credits from institution to institution

- Accreditation from private providers

Prioritized Solutions
Ideas for solutions to the identified challenges were individually developed by the participants. Similar ideas were then clustered under broad headings of solutions for OLA and the CE Committee, solutions for libraries, and solutions for education providers. Participants used the "dot prioritization method" to identify which solutions they thought were most important to accomplish. The prioritized solutions list follows. The number in brackets preceding each item represents the number of dot votes that solution received. The reference in parentheses following each item represents which group should implement the solution:

[23] Establish core competencies and CE standards, and an educational program to support achievement; communicate education needs to achieve competencies to providers (OLA; libraries)

[19] Develop a "one stop shopping" web site for all CE with links to online registration, and course descriptions (OLA/CE Committee; education providers)

[15] Create and maintain a central calendar of CE Events (OLA /CE Committee)

[14] Establish a speakers bureau and a local experts database (OLA/CE Committee; libraries)

[13] Support CE through budget, time off, substitutes etc. (libraries)

[13] Share resources: faculty, facilities, programs, marketing, names of good presenters, and hot topics (education providers)

[7] Structure advancement based on education; make CE a job requirement (libraries)

[7] Consider "Summer Institutes" (week-long intensive training (education providers)

[6] Develop structures for libraries to share cost and planning efforts to benefit groups of libraries; communicate planned events (libraries)

[6] Develop sequences of CE programs which can be repeated, including programs for library technicians (education providers)

[5] Offer combination of workshops and distance education; make commitment to distance education (education providers)

[5] Exploit vendors (education providers)

[4] Take sessions to all parts of state (education providers)

[4] Create a liaison network for disseminating information (OLA; education providers)

[4] Improve communication and publicity efforts (OLA /CE Committee)

[3] Make sure technology allows cross-library sharing, and receipt of education (libraries)

[3] Open MLS program classes for CE credit (education providers)

[3] Convene a formal summit of educational institutions to work out transfer of credit issues (education providers)

[2] Work with regional partners in Washington and Idaho (OLA /CE Committee)

[2] Explore sources of grant funding to develop and send workshops to each region (education providers)

[1] Hire a CE Coordinator (OLA /CE Committee)

[1] Plan in-service days and coordinate so others can attend; close library to avoid conflicts (libraries)

[1] Look for diverse sources of CE beyond traditional such as vendors, out-of-state, distance education (libraries)

Next Steps
The participation of all who attended provided valuable perspectives and ideas to the OLA Continuing Education Committee. The committee's next steps include sharing information from the CE stakeholders meeting, gathering more input, deciding which ideas for solutions are most achievable, and incorporating the solutions into a plan of action. The Continuing Education page of the OLA web site will contain the full transcription of the information collected at the meeting, and will be used to communicate action plans and progress reports. The address is www.olaweb.org/con-ed.shtml. 🔾

Organizational Participants in the CE Stakeholders Meeting

ALBANY PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGE AND RESEARCH LIBRARIES

EASTERN OREGON LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

MARYLHURST UNIVERSITY, LIBRARY INFORMATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY

NET ASSETS

OCLC

ORBIS

OREGON LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

OLA CONTINUING EDUCATION COMMITTEE

OLA INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM COMMITTEE

OLA LIBRARY INSTRUCTION ROUND TABLE

OLA PUBLIC LIBRARY DIVISION

OLA PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

OLA REFERENCE ROUNDTABLE

OLA SUPPORT STAFF DIVISION

OLA TECHNICAL SERVICES ROUND TABLE

OLA VISION 2010 COMMITTEE

OREGON STATE LIBRARY

OREGON UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

PORTALS

PORTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

SOUTHERN OREGON LIBRARY FEDERATION

SPECIAL LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

VALLEY LINK

WASHINGTON COUNTY COOPERATIVE LIBRARY SERVICES

WESTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY, SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

WESTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY, DIVISION OF EXTENDED AND SUMMER STUDIES

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