

ILL Focus Groups 2012

Report & Recommendations

In March and April, 2012 the South Dakota State Library held several interlibrary loan focus groups in collaboration with the LSTA 5-Year Plan focus groups. These focus groups were held in Rapid City, Watertown, Sioux Falls, and Pierre. In addition there were two online focus groups. One online focus group was specifically for school librarians. The other online focus group was for anyone that was unable to attend an in-person focus group. There were a total of 40 librarians that attended the interlibrary loan focus groups. These librarians consisted of 12 school librarians, 5 academic librarians, and 23 public librarians.

The interlibrary loan focus groups were prompted by the inequality of interlibrary loan among the libraries that borrow from and lend to each other and the number of libraries that only borrow and do not lend.

In South Dakota there are 513 public, school, academic, and special libraries. Sixty-five of these libraries are full South Dakota Library Network members. Of the full SDLN members, 54 of them lend materials to all libraries. That is 10.54% of South Dakota libraries that lend materials through interlibrary loan. In 2010, public libraries that are not SDLN full members borrowed 8,513 items from other South Dakota libraries. There are no statistics for school libraries.

The focus groups were enlightening. The librarians that attended the focus groups provided us with their perspectives on ILL in South Dakota and with many good suggestions. We learned:

Discussion Highlights

- Inequitable ILL is a South Dakota reality. Librarians understand this and are willing to live with it.
- Charging libraries that borrow but do not lend would be more of a hassle than it is worth.
- The number of interlibrary loans received by the larger libraries is burdensome some of the time.
- Libraries that do not have the budget to provide unlimited lending for ILL have implemented local policies:
 - Only lend to libraries on the courier
 - Only mail materials to libraries in the region
 - Do not lend material published in the past year
 - Do not lend or borrow media
 - Do not lend or borrow material that costs less than \$15
- Academic libraries see lending to other libraries as part of their mission as institutions of higher education.
- In-state ILL would be easier if all libraries were SDLN Remote members or if separate library automation systems could interact. Currently interlibrary loan requests for non SDLN Remote members are processed by the State Library.

- Many non-SDLN libraries that don't currently lend would lend if people knew what the libraries had and asked for it.
- The courier is an important service.

Suggestions from Focus Group Participants

- State Library should continue to educate librarians and educators regarding collection development and interlibrary loan.
- Form a statewide committee to explore what other states are doing and to propose options.
- Reorganize the State Library's ILL line item. Reduce what is spent on the courier and WorldCat and put that toward reimbursing postage.
- Maximize the courier stops. Organize so more libraries can use one courier stop. Would need to have procedures for how this would work.
- Libraries should consider purchasing ILL requests rather than borrowing from another library.
- Libraries could limit the number of interlibrary loan items a patron can have at any one time.
- All librarians need to know the interlibrary loan policy of the library they are borrowing from.
- All libraries need to keep their interlibrary loan policy up-to-date.
- Librarians need to check item status when they want to borrow an item. If the item is checked-out, do not ask the library to lend the item.
- Use social media so ILL staff can talk to each other. Learn tips and tricks from each other. Facebook might be an option.
- Use software, such as OCLC's Illiad, to streamline the ILL process. Can save staff time.

After conducting the focus groups and receiving input from librarians, the Collection Services staff believes that no major change is needed in the current statewide interlibrary loan system. They recommend that the State Library:

Staff Recommendations

- Review the courier system and see if other libraries might be able to utilize the current system.
- Form a task force to study how interlibrary loan is conducted in states of similar size and economic status. Make recommendations to the State Library.
- Continue to have Library Development staff educate librarians and educators about collection development and interlibrary loan.
- Form a group on Facebook where library staff can discuss ILL, share tips and tricks, and learn from each other.
- Continue to explore options, such as a discovery layer, that would allow more libraries to lend materials.
- Review the State Library's current interlibrary loan policies and procedures, and make changes as needed.