SEFLIN Needs Assessment Survey

Findings from the 2018 member survey

This document reports the results of a member survey of expectations of library staff on the needs of their community and the library within the next three years.
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Findings from the 2018 member survey

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Investigate, develop, and maintain opportunities for networking and sharing of expertise for staff from all types of member organizations in the areas of:
  - Emerging technologies and trends
  - Preservation and disaster planning
  - User experience
  - Community engagement
  - Safety/security
  - Adult and Youth programs
  - Innovation

- Investigate, develop and maintain continuing CE for staff from all member organizations particularly in the areas of:
  - Digitization and digital projects
  - User experience
  - Community engagement and outreach
  - Leadership
  - Partnerships
  - Computer and technology curricula
  - Personal and professional development
  - Big Data

- Investigate and develop pilot projects or resources that address some or all of the following concerns:
  - Need for advocacy and marketing for libraries
  - Need for social services within libraries
  - Need for access to computing, electronic devices, and connectivity
  - Shared and better access to Electronic and ebook collections
  - Online Privacy and Security
  - Support Early Literacy and 3 grade reading proficiency
  - Open repositories and support for e-publishing
  - Content Creation
BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

In March and April, 2018 the Southeastern Florida Library & Information Network (SEFLIN) conducted a survey of staff at member institutions to assess their opinions on future needs of libraries in the SEFLIN area and in what areas SEFLIN resources and services could be useful. The survey instrument asked member staff to identify their library type (Academic, Public, or School) and the county in which they worked.

The survey was designed by the SEFLIN staff, and ran for a month. Response to the survey was excellent, over 350 staff members replied. This result may have been encouraged by the promise of a drawing for a $50.00 gift certificate to Amazon.

The survey was built in SurveyMonkey and distributed by SEFLIN staff to all contacts in the “Constant Contact” folder of members. After the survey closed, data was analyzed by the Director, Jennifer Pratt, and findings presented to SEFLIN staff and SEFLIN member staff in this report.

FINDINGS

SEFLIN received 354 responses to the survey. 86 percent of these were complete (305) and 14% were incomplete (49). 70% were from public libraries (215), 27% were from academic libraries (82), 5 from schools and 2 from special libraries. Representation across the four counties was:

- Miami-Dade: 24.7% 75 responses
- Broward: 33.8% 103 responses
- Palm Beach: 40.5% 123 responses
- Martin: 1% 3 responses

267 or 88% of the respondents provided their email addresses, indicating they wished to participate in the raffle for the $50 Amazon gift card. They will all receive an email of this report.

QUESTION #5 LIBRARY SERVICES; WILL THEY INCREASE, STAY STABLE OR DECREASE?

In comparing public library statistics in the SEFLIN region, between 2012 and 2017,

- There are 136 buildings, a decrease of two but the square footage increased by 2.8%.
● The total print collection has been reduced by 931,404 volumes (11%).
● The E-book collection has grown from a total of 197,109 to 524,535 (a 62% growth).
● Programs increased by 10,520 (17% growth).
● There was a gain of 14 public computers. There are 5,616 public computers for a population of 5,811,774 or 1 computer for every 1035 community members.

Respondents were asked their opinions about the changes they anticipate within the next three years for their libraries. They were asked to tell us whether a list of library services would increase, remain stable, or decrease. The highest expected increase was in Electronic (online) collections available through the library with 85% (275) expecting an increase. The only service in the list at least 43% (137) of respondents expected to decrease was Traditional Collections. The second, third, and fourth highest services expected to increase were Outreach and Community Service at 81% (263), Staff Training at 77% (249) and Partnerships between libraries and/or community agencies at 71% (233). These numbers stay true when filtering the data by library type.

**Figure 1 Library Services; will they increase, stay stable, or decrease**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Decreasing</th>
<th>Stable</th>
<th>Increasing</th>
<th>% Increasing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electronic (online) collections available through the library will be</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach and Community Engagement services will be</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library staff training needs will be</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships between libraries and/or community agencies will be</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library services related to a changing demographic population will be</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Services and programs (financial literacy, workforce, homelessness, etc) will be</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Traditional collections (seeds, bicycles, baking pans, etc) available through the library will be</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical library space will be</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional collections in the library will be</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
QUESTION 6 – LIBRARY FUNDING OVER THE NEXT 3 YEARS

Respondents reported they expect library funding to remain stable at 64% (196), with 20% (60) expecting it to decrease and 16% (48) expecting it to increase.

QUESTION 7 – HOW IMPORTANT WILL THESE LIBRARY SERVICES AND RESOURCES BE TO YOUR COMMUNITY IN THE NEXT THREE YEARS?

Respondents were presented with a list of 10 topical areas and asked to identify the level of importance to their communities around each topic. Their responses, filtered by Academic, Public, and Together are below in figure 2. The topics are ranked 1 – 10 (with one the highest and ten the lowest) based on the number of respondents who marked this choice as very important. The rankings are shown using a “heat map” to distinguish high and low ratings. The dark green is the highest ranked, through green, yellow, orange, and red. They are sorted highest to lowest by the Together scores.

The 39 free text responses from those respondents responding to what other needs in your community will be important can be found in the appendices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 2</th>
<th>Together</th>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>Public</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to computing, electronic devices, and connectivity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Electronic and eBook collections</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Literacy training for library customers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Privacy and Security training for library staff and customers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Literacy training (Research, Fake News, etc) for library customers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support of early literacy and 3rd grade reading proficiency</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools and resources for lifelong learning</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to e-textbooks and e-journals</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to community forums and community spaces</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Repositories and support for e-publishing</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All but two of the topics were ranked “very important” by more than half of respondents in the non-filtered results. The two largest groups’, public and academic library staff, rankings were fairly close in comparison except for topics that were obviously a focus area for only one of the groups. Open repositories and support for e-publishing received a 19% ranking of very important from public library staff but a 59% ranking of very important from the academic library staff. Support for early literacy and 3rd grade reading proficiency was ranked very important by 76% of the public library staff, while only 19% of the academic library staff ranked this topic as very important. The two responses from special libraries and the five public school responses were comparable with the public library responses.

**QUESTION 8  IMPORTANCE OF SEFLIN SERVICES**

Interests differ when analyzed by library type. Below, the results are shown separately for public library staff, and academic library staff. Overall, all staff ranked Staff Training Events as a top priority. Facilitation of opportunities for networking and sharing expertise was also ranked very high by all staff. Only one service was ranked not important by more than more than 10 respondents, Maker Spaces and Innovation Labs (11)

**Highest importance among academic library staff (80 respondents)**

*High levels of “Very” + “Somewhat” importance*

- Facilitation of opportunities for networking and sharing expertise (99%)
- Staff Training Events (98%)
- Resource Sharing (98%)
- Pilot Projects on new or trending topics (97%)
- Library Jobs website (96%)
- Support of Digital Services and Digitization efforts (96%)
- Library Advocacy (95%)
- Support of Preservation and Disaster Planning (95%)
- Statewide Delivery Services to Libraries (94%)
- Shared Open Repository Systems (94%)
- Facilitation of partnerships and collaborative projects (90%)
- Maker Spaces and Innovation Labs (86%)

**Highest importance among public library staff (215 respondents)**
High levels of “Very” + “Somewhat” importance

- Facilitation of partnerships and collaborative projects (99%)
- Library Advocacy (99%)
- Staff Training Events (99%)
- Library Jobs website (97%)
- Facilitation of opportunities for networking and sharing expertise (97%)
- Resource Sharing (96%)
- Pilot Projects on new or trending topics (96%)
- Support of Digital Services and Digitization efforts (94%)
- Maker Spaces and Innovation Labs (92%)
- Support of Preservation and Disaster Planning (92%)
- Statewide Delivery Services to Libraries (91%)
- Shared Open Repository Systems (89%)

Question 9 – What else would you like to tell us?

25 respondents took this opportunity to thank SEFLIN for our services from a brief “thanks” to “I would like to thank SEFLIN for giving library staff the access and ability to learn about new ideas, concepts, and strategies that are being applied in libraries on a daily basis. It’s also awesome to have the option to be able to view courses live or on demand whenever possible.” 15 respondents described training they would like for SEFLIN to provide. The other 21 were a mixed bag of ideas, suggestions, and a few smiley faces. All responses can be found in the appendices.

Next Steps

SEFLIN will examine the results of the survey and use this information as a springboard for a discussion at the Spring Membership Meeting. The information from the survey and the spring meeting will be combined with a scan of the library environment. We will take this combined information and dig a little deeper through in-depth interviews with stakeholders. SEFLIN will plan a Board Retreat for the summer to discuss the findings and use the information as a framework for the new SEFLIN 2018-2021 Strategic Plan. Many thanks to all member library staff who took the time to answer our questions so thoroughly.