**CMLE Strategic Plan 2016-2018**

Minnesota Rules 3530.2200 require multicounty multitype library systems to include a strategic plan with their state aid applications. Legislation states that CMLE’s purpose should lead to programs in most of the following areas, and can include other cooperative services too: Sharing of resources among all participating libraries; Planning for cooperative programs; Development of a delivery system for services and programs; Development of a bibliographic database; and a Communications system among all cooperating libraries.

**Methodology:**

1. A CMLE Member Needs Assessment was offered to Central MN library/school media staff in March 2015 to gauge interest in broad service areas and to help determine specific unmet needs in the region. Participation in the survey was 20.2% of CMLE membership. The results of this survey provided one means of direct input into CMLE’s strategic planning process.
2. A CMLE Outreach Panel has been using Google Hangouts for its meetings, with representative membership as it aligns with CMLE membership; 7 school media specialists, 1 academic, 1 public librarian and two CMLE staff members. This group meets monthly, and has acted as a sounding board for programming ideas. This group also provided usability and relevance testing for the online Needs Assessment before it went live.
3. The Director also reviewed the outcomes of CMLE programs from 2013 to 2015 (attendance, feedback from program attendees, reactions from Board members, website utilization, and comments from other professional organizations such as ITEM).
4. CMLE programing/ initiatives were also compared with those of the other MN multitype systems, and with programming/continuing education opportunities provided through ITEM, TIES, MLA, and Minitex programs.
5. Recommendations of the MDE Library Consultation group in February 2015 were also considered into the bigger picture thinking of this plan. At the time of this writing, multitypes are waiting to hear if State Library recommendations will be adopted.

These five components provide a strong foundation for the 2016-2018 CMLE strategic plan.

**Vision:** *CMLE supports library staff by providing the skills, tools, knowledge, resources, and connections needed to better accomplish their missions for excellent library service and an informed citizenry.*

**Mission:** *CMLE serves as the Central Minnesota library hub, a clearinghouse of talent, materials, and expertise for all types of libraries.* *CMLE leads, supports, encourages, engages, and connects library personnel with the resources they need.*

**CMLE’s Audience:** *CMLE staff interact with library and media personnel from 320 academic, public, special, and school libraries (primary audience). As a result of these interactions, service to end users is enhanced (secondary audience).*

**Statement of Core Values**

CMLE:

* *Provides services that strengthen libraries*
* *Encourages cooperation, coordination, and collaboration*
* *Inspires and strengthens, rather than prescribes or enables. Encourages and engages, rather than tells.*
* *Promotes collegiality based on respect, dignity, grace, integrity and honesty*
* *Advocates that all citizens deserve the benefit of strong library/information literacy resources and programming*

Goals for FY2016

CMLE’s goals fall within the legislative requirements and within the expressed needs of the twelve-county Central Minnesota region. CMLE will continually seek cooperation, coordination, and collaboration in order to leverage scarce resources and foster important relationships. CMLE’s strength lies in its ability to both understand and respond to regional needs, while also proactively leading by exposing library personnel to library trends and best practices.

Goal 1. Resource Sharing: *Legislative Definition--*Provides materials, data, expertise and information among member libraries that benefit library patrons. This includes but is not limited to activities such as interlibrary loan, document delivery, contract for delivery services and databases licensed either in whole or in part by the multicounty multitype system for the use of its members and their patrons.

*CMLE will use these broad strategies to provide services in this area, while utilizing detail from the needs assessment to focus possible topics/opportunities*

1. Test multiple methods and strategies to facilitate resource sharing and engagement.
2. Continue to assess possible topics and determine the best scope or delivery for each topic.
3. Continue sharing eBooks to advance knowledge in the field whenever feasible.
4. Online opportunities: Explore various possibilities including but not limited to, Metronet’s MILI and Camp Read a Lot programs, Google Hangouts, Twitter Chats around hot topics, etc..
5. Continued care and utilization of CMLE member database to advance resource sharing.
6. Participate in joint library/technology conference presentations
7. Maintain subscriptions to online services/tools that enhance CMLE’s ability to share resources: LibGuides, Survey Monkey, Qualtrics, Google Apps for Nonprofits, DropBox, Wordpress.

**Goal 2. Planning for Cooperative Programs**: *Legislative Definition--* Determining the feasibility of either regional or statewide cooperation among libraries for a specific goal or activity.

*CMLE will use these broad strategies to provide services in this area:*

1. Seek data to help assess school media center staffing in order to best gauge interest, aptitude and programming opportunity.
2. Increase efforts in working collaboratively with other multitypes, State Library Services, ITEM, MLA, Minitex, and others to explore efficiencies and/or opportunities. Remain open to additional partnering opportunities whenever possible.
3. Investigate possible new tools to make activities possible beyond face-to-face meetings.
4. Seek opportunities for libraries to work together
5. Engage in individual, regional, and statewide discussions around cost efficiencies for libraries for materials, subscriptions, staffing, software, etc….

**Goal 3. Development of a Delivery System for Services and Programs**: *Legislative Definition--* Providing services and programs to meet member libraries’ needs and facilitating opportunities for staff of member libraries to gain expertise and learn best practices. This responsibility includes continuing education, defined as providing library staff, advisory boards and boards of trustees with information and skills to enhance performance in present responsibilities and to prepare them for evolving roles.

*CMLE will use these broad strategies to provide services in this area, while utilizing detail from the needs assessment to focus possible topics/opportunities*

1. Identify, promote, or host events/activities around needed professional development.
2. Continue to assess possible topics and determine the best scope or delivery for each topic.

**Goal 4. Development of a Bibliographic Database**: *Legislative Definition--* Creating a set of online electronic records that differentiate among materials that comprise one or more libraries’ collection(s).

1. Promote, develop, and help sustain the North Star Library Consortium for schools in Central Minnesota so all K-12 schools have a cost efficient, hosted library management system.

**Goal 5. Communications System for Libraries**: *Legislative Definition--* The multiple methods by which information is shared among member libraries’ directors, staffs, governing boards and auxiliary groups, such as Friends of a Library.

*CMLE will use these broad strategies to provide services in this area, while utilizing detail from the needs assessment to focus possible topics/opportunities*

1. Utilize the Weekly Review newsletter, the website, social media tools, and networking and professional engagement opportunities to continue the CMLE tradition of being an information hub for library personnel.
2. Continually refine and develop communication tools and content. Provide relevant, practical communications to all types of libraries in Central Minnesota.
3. Communicate about low cost or no cost professional development opportunities.
4. Share grant opportunities, provide helpful tips or informal coaching for securing grants and/or identifying other funding strategies or cost efficiencies.
5. Administer a scholarship program to: a) reduce costs for individuals to engage in professional development activities, and b) encourage others reading about scholarship experiences to learn about, and seek out, professional development opportunities for themselves.
6. Collaborate with other multitypes in offering a large networking event during the evening of the ITEM conference in October of FY16; specifically Trivia Night.

**Other:**

**Advocacy and Leadership:** CMLE accepts and will continue its role in advocating for all types of libraries. CMLE staff model leadership and will promote opportunities to further develop library leadership.

**Change Agent:** CMLE will continue its work in modeling how to grapple with change and embrace innovation. CMLE staff can do this both through their practice as librarians, and also by identifying best practices and examples of change and innovation in libraries. Blog posts about local efforts often encourage others to try new things, knowing they have colleagues who can help.