



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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Testimony on Senate Bill 491

Senate Committee on Education

Senator Patrick Testin and Representative Mary Felzkowski

December 19, 2017

Chairman Olsen and Committee Members,

Thank you for hearing testimony on Senate Bill 491 to allow the Department of Public Instruction more flexibility to give libraries access to DPI programs and teach grants.

This bill has two components. The first concerns WISEdata and WISEdash information systems. Currently, the Division for Libraries and Technology in the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) provides K-12 schools with these systems.

WISEdata deals mainly with how DPI *gathers* data, and makes those processes as efficient and secure as possible. Efficiency often requires making software “talk” to each other on the back end through interoperability.

WISEdash deals mainly with how DPI *uses* data, including analysis, reporting, displaying, and teaching people to use it effectively in their decision-making.

DPI seeks the flexibility to provide similar services for public libraries by giving them access to these programs. While the tools for public libraries may not be the same, the goal to process data more efficiently and allow for easier data utilization, without a loss in security, remains the same.

Below are a few examples of library projects that could be advanced with information system flexibility:

- **Single Discovery Layer**: Currently, local libraries have their own catalogs of library materials. Using API technology, a single discovery layer could be created that would allow library users to find materials that are owned by libraries throughout the state. This technology would expand access and save time for library users and would improve efficiencies in sharing materials among libraries.
- **Consolidation and Cloud Technology**: Libraries could improve access and reduce administrative costs by having shared instances of ILS software and/or moving the ILS administration to the cloud. API technology could be applied to improve interoperability of library systems.
- **Business Intelligence**: WISEdata can be used for business intelligence purposes through the dashboard tool, WISEdash. Currently, schools can view aggregations of student data in order to assess their students’ progress and also compare their school with other schools throughout the state. Libraries need these similar tools to assess their effectiveness in serving the library needs of their community and to respond to changing needs. Funding could support training librarians to search and interpret the data to help them make better decisions on allocating resources. Understanding usage patterns and user characteristics will help librarians respond more quickly and effectively to the evolving needs of their communities.

- Authentication and Security: Implementing a “single sign-on” through federated identity management software would greatly improve timely access to information and materials for library users.
- Automate Library Cards for School Children: Achieving interoperability of software systems between schools and libraries would facilitate giving every child a public library card when they start school. Kids need to learn to read and read to learn. This optional partnership supports literacy programs in schools and libraries.
- Automate Certification of Librarians: Currently the certification and re-certification of librarians is a very manual process. Automating this process will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of this state requirement.

The second component concerns current eligibility for TEACH grants. TEACH grants are currently targeted to small and rural *schools*. DPI seeks to allow rural and small *libraries* of a similar classification to be eligible to apply. The following is a list of examples of what these libraries could use the grants for:

TEACH Training Grants –

- to help library professional learn the technologies which their patrons use to access library resources, like e-books
- to help library professionals learn how to help their patrons with electronic resources for things like workforce development
- to help library professional understand the need for data privacy and security in an era of increasing cyber-security threats, and to help their patrons understand those threats;
- to develop their skills by leveraging electronic learning systems that are more feasible for them to access than face-to-face events which require long-distance drive-times.

TEACH Infrastructure Grants –

- libraries are currently being migrated to the new, more extensive BadgerNet broadband network which will require them to upgrade their electronic switches and routers;
- libraries are adding more wireless access points (Wi-Fi) as their patrons more routinely come in with their own devices to access the Internet;
- libraries are also interested in providing wifi “hotspots” for their patrons on a check-out basis, much like schools do for their students home use;
- libraries would like to leverage resources to ensure their networks are secure and not vulnerable to data attacks.

Both of the components to this request **do not** require additional funding. We bring this forward simply because the Legislature needs to grant DPI the flexibility to use existing WISEdata and WISEdash funds for both K-12 schools *and* public libraries.

Thank you for hearing our testimony. We’d be happy to answer any questions.

**Senate Committee on Education
December 19, 2017**

**Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Testimony on Senate Bill 491**

Thank you Chair Olsen and committee members for the opportunity to be here today to testify in support of Senate Bill 491 (SB 491). I am Erin Fath the Policy and Budget Director for the Department of Public Instruction.

SB 491 authorizes the Division for Libraries and Technology in the Department of Public Instruction to conduct activities related to the collection and maintenance of public library-related data, including purchasing licenses for data collection software; training staff on the effective use of data; creating tools for libraries to use internally in analyzing and reporting to the public about library use; and developing and implementing technology systems that allow for interoperable data exchange and automation of work processes.

This bill also makes certain public libraries located in census-defined rural areas and serving municipalities with a population of 20,000 or less eligible to receive grants under the Technology for Educational Achievement program, known as TEACH. Under the TEACH program, the Department of Administration (DOA) awards information technology block grants to school districts to improve information technology infrastructure and educational technology teacher training grants to school districts to train teachers in the use of educational technology. Under the bill, DOA may award grants to eligible libraries to improve information technology infrastructure in rural libraries and train librarians in rural libraries in the use of educational technology.

Under SB 491, the department would be given the authority to use the amounts appropriated under the appropriations for WISEdata and for WISEdash to establish and maintain a public library information system. Essentially, the bill allows the department to use the WISE suite of data systems that is currently used to collect data for pupils in public, independent charter and private schools, for data collections pertaining to public libraries. The department's public library development and resource library teams conduct many of the same data collection, analysis, and reporting tasks that are required for schools. In addition, they have software license, hardware, staffing, and training costs that are similar to those for schools, and provide training to staff in public libraries around the use of data tools for improvement planning.

The bill does not appropriate additional funds for the department to conduct these activities. Therefore, such tasks would be completed within existing WISE appropriation levels.

With respect to the expansion of the TEACH infrastructure and training grants to public libraries, SB 491 requires that, in any year in which DOA awards educational technology training grants to a public library system or consortia, DOA must pay the following amounts:

- \$500 for each eligible public library or branch in the consortium or system located in a municipality the population of which is 2,000 or less
- \$750 for each eligible public library or branch in the consortium or system located in a municipality the population of which is at least 2,001 but less than 5,000
- \$1,000 for each eligible public library or branch in the consortium or system located in a municipality the population of which is at least 5,000 but less than 20,001

Under the information technology block grants, the total amount DOA may award to an eligible public library during a biennium may not exceed the following:

- \$5,000 if the population of the municipality within which the eligible public library or branch is located is 2,000 or less
- \$7,500 if the population of the municipality within which the eligible public library or branch is located is 2,001 but less than 5,000
- \$10,000 if the population of the municipality within which the eligible public library or branch is located is at least 5,000 but less than 20,001

The bill does not appropriate additional funds to DOA for the expansion of the TEACH grants.

Thank you for your time today discussing SB 491 and the additional flexibility under the current appropriation to provide additional services to Wisconsin libraries. We are happy to answer any questions that you may have.