

IX. OLD BUSINESS

B. National Library Service (NLS) Plans - Discussion

As follow-up to the Board's June discussion of the Talking Books Service, and specifically the expressed interest in planning for its future, it was timely that the National Library Service (NLS) recently held its biennial national conference for all network libraries. In the NLS Operations Alert 18-59, NLS Director Karen Keninger shared highlights of the 2018 conference, including the status of goals shared at the 2016 conference. Since the Idaho Talking Book Service receives its players and player accessories and most of its content from NLS, many of these changes will affect the TBS staff workload.

Key announcements:

- The efforts to move libraries and patrons to a wireless distribution environment will be called Future Access Reimagined (FAR).
- NLS is initiating the process to officially change its name (new name to be determined).
- Six network libraries are now using Duplication-on-Demand for circulation of talking books to their readers. Eight more network libraries are in the process of implementing Duplication-on-Demand.
- NLS is working with circulation system vendors to ensure all network libraries have the option to adopt Duplication-on-Demand. NLS will provide cartridges, mailing containers, and labels to network libraries.
- Network libraries will be given the opportunity to erase and reuse white cartridges and containers locally.
- Beginning immediately, network libraries may register patrons for BARD directly without requiring them to complete a separate application.
- A single sign-on capability is being developed that will enable network library staff to use only one ID and password to access various web pages (i.e., BARD, Network Library Services Website, Network Library Database).
- The MOCA (mobile cartridge) pilot will be extended for current participants through the end of the calendar year (2018).
- The 2020 biennial national conference will be in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Major conference takeaways:

- Wireless distribution is the future.
- Braille eReaders (refreshable braille displays) are coming soon.
- Readership will expand due to outreach efforts and simplified eligibility requirements.
- Regulations will be changed to ease access for people with dyslexia and other reading disabilities, but not until we have the capacity to serve them.

- NLS can and will expand audio and braille content.
- NLS must build or acquire media delivery infrastructure with sufficient capacity to serve a bigger patron base.
- NLS expects to have a new talking-book machine/playback system in five years. We don't know what it will look like yet, but we do know it will have wireless connectivity, a voice-user interface, an "easy mode" for automatic download of books from a patron's wish list, onboard text-to-speech, and an emphasis on user experience.

Additional considerations:

- Migration from digital cartridges and hard copy braille to the cloud will mean a smaller footprint/less space is needed for network libraries as the physical collections are phased out.
- Less time will be spent by network staff on collection maintenance and managing physical inventory.
- NLS will encourage use of personal devices and investigate commercial off-the-shelf products, but will also maintain its commitment to providing a free player to patrons who request one, enabling all patrons to have equal access.
- A BARD Express MOCA Mode is envisioned to allow libraries or users to populate their Wish Lists, after which the titles would automatically download for easy transfer to a cartridge.
- Voice user interface devices like Google Home and Amazon Echo will continue to be explored once a streaming model has been developed.
- Self-service technology, expanded readership base, and efficiencies implemented effectively hold the possibility of actually reducing the per-patron cost of library services.

Sue Walker attended the 2018 conference; her highlights are summarized below:

1-2 year timeframe:

- **Duplication on demand:** NLS has developed a software program that allows multiple titles for a user to be automatically and quickly downloaded to a cartridge, eliminating the need for TBS staff to pull multiple cartridges from the shelves, check them out, check them in and reshelv them when returned. NLS will provide the hardware, software, and supplies to implement this process in all regional libraries. Before we can implement this, the interface between the duplication on demand system and the KLAS library system must be developed. KLAS staff projects that will take 6-12 months to develop.

Until this is accomplished, TBS staff will continue to expand the use of **patron centric cartridges**. This process differs from duplication on demand in that a customer service representative must review each user’s account as cartridges are returned.

- Migrate all content to cloud storage instead of hosting it on NLS servers to facilitate ease of use and decrease down time.

2-3 years:

- **Braille materials:** Develop and distribute a braille ereader to allow users to download braille electronically. This will reduce the cost of creating and housing braille materials. Currently Idaho contracts with Utah to provide braille materials to Idaho users, so this new service will not impact our TBS workload.

4-5 years:

- **Next generation player:** NLS is planning the next generation player with voice-user interface and Internet access/streaming capability. Such a player will increase the ability of users to download content without staff intervention and reduce the need to house physical cartridges at the Talking Book Service.

5+ years:

- **Eligibility:** NLS plans to extend service to persons with disabilities such as Downs syndrome and autism, and to remove the requirement for a medical doctor to certify those with an organic brain dysfunction. This change could increase the potential population served by 4.1-7 million or 880,000 new users nationwide.

Finally, the following comparison of FY2017 and FY2018 TBS metrics reflect the impact of the “Say Yes to TBS!” campaign.

TBS	FY2017	FY2018	% Increase
New users enrolled	577	714	24%
Total circulation	200,609	212,732	6%
Physical circulation	160,724	167,165	4%
BARD downloads	39,885	45,567	14%