

APPENDIX B

Script for interviews with public library staff

Winter 2009-2010

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the 2009-2010 Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study, which is funded by the American Library Association and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. I will be talking with library directors in two to three states to explore trends from our national survey, share effective practices and deepen our understanding of advocacy, funding and sustainability issues around public access technology. Do you have any questions for me before we begin?

2009-2010 Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study public library director interview questions

- How long have you worked at this library?
- Please describe your library and the technology resources (e.g., hardware, software, Internet services and technology classes) it provides members of your community.
- What have been the one or two greatest challenges to maintaining or improving public access technology (PAT) (e.g., computers, laptops, Internet access, Internet services) in the past 12 months?
 - What approaches has the library developed to respond to these challenges?
 - What approaches have been the most successful? Why?
 - What would you do differently in the future? Why?
- Has your library seen a change in funding over the past two fiscal years?
 - If yes, what has been the change?
 - What has the library done differently as a result of this funding change? How did you come to this decision?
- What is the library's greatest accomplishment in maintaining or improving PAT in the past 12 months?
 - What would you recommend to a colleague that would like to replicate this success?
- Has patron use of the library changed in the wake of the economic downturn?
 - If yes, how?
 - What has been the most significant impact of the economic downturn on public access and use of technology in your library?
- What changes (if any) has the library made in technology deployment/services in the wake of economic crisis – particularly as it relates to job seekers or others in financial distress?

- How is your library connected to the Internet (e.g., cable, fiber, DSL)?
 - Is your connection speed adequate to meet patron and library demands? If no, how are library users impacted by insufficient connection speeds?
 - What services or resources (e.g., more computers, wifi, downloadable media) might the library offer if it had faster connection speeds?
 - Are you or library staff involved in any efforts around improving Internet access in your community?
 - Do residents in your community currently have access to high-speed Internet access? Is it considered affordable?

- How often is it that you have a computer out of service to the public?
 - How long does it take to get a computer back in service?
 - Is this the same/up/down from 12 months ago?
 - What is the process for returning a computer to service?

- What PAT uses does your library track or measure (e.g., computer sessions/wireless log-ins/Web hits)?
 - How are you using these statistics to highlight PAT challenges and needs of the library?
 - Do you have any templates that you can share for presentations, press releases, etc?
 - If you aren't tracking or measuring technology uses, why not?

- What challenges and opportunities do you see on the horizon in the coming 12 months?
 - If you could do anything, what would you most like to do to improve public access to technology in your community?

- How could the state library, state library association chapter, ALA or other state or national organizations best assist you in addressing these challenges in the future?

Now, I just have a few more questions related to library advocacy.

- Do library users, trustees and/or Friends speak out/advocate in support of funding for library IT, Internet connectivity, and other Internet-based resources and services? If yes, how? If no, why not, do you think?

- Do you or others on your staff or board have memberships or represent the library in community organizations (i.e. Chamber of Commerce, Rotary or government taskforce or committee)? If no, why not? If yes, how has this benefited the library?

- What are the perceived benefits to the library and its community through PAT in the library?

- How is this communicated/publicized?
- Do you have any templates that you can share for presentations, press releases, etc?
- What would you most like people in your community to know about your technology resources?

Close

- Is there anything else you'd like me to know about public technology uses, access and deployment in your library?