

> From: "Ruth Hemphill" <[Ruth.Hemphill@state.tn.us](mailto:Ruth.Hemphill@state.tn.us)>

> To: <[swhittle@swgrl.org](mailto:swhittle@swgrl.org)>

> Sent: Thursday, February 05, 2009 9:08 AM

> Subject: LBPH services

>

>

> Hi, Susan--

>

> Ideally, I feel that libraries for the blind & physically handicapped

> should have "branches" (or subregionals in NLS network terminology!)

> scattered throughout the "service area" of any regional library. This

> would enable patrons to browse collections, make their own selections and

> pick up books (and/or players) whenever they need them, making LBPH

> services comparable to public library service in the region.

>

> Recognizing that current conditions are NOT ideal, economically, however,

> we must consider how government agencies can provide services in the most

> efficient and effective way, which may result in the centralization of

> some services.

>

> Ruth

>

>>> "Susan Whittle" <[swhittle@swgrl.org](mailto:swhittle@swgrl.org)> 2/5/2009 9:12 AM >>>

Thanks so much for your words of advice, Ruth. I enjoyed our conversation

via telephone yesterday and appreciate your time and willingness to share

your experience as Regional Librarian for the Blind and Physically

Handicapped in Missouri and now Tennessee.

Please stop by and see us if you are ever down our way.

Susan

Susan S. Whittle

Director and Subregional Librarian for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

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Check out our new website at [www.swgrl.org](http://www.swgrl.org)

From: "Ruth Hemphill" <[Ruth.Hemphill@state.tn.us](mailto:Ruth.Hemphill@state.tn.us)>

To: "Susan Whittle" <[swhittle@swgrl.org](mailto:swhittle@swgrl.org)>

Sent: Thursday, February 05, 2009 11:29 AM

Subject: Re: LBPH services

Thanks...you never know where my travels might take me! Is your library greyhound-friendly? ;-)

Ruth

**From:** Susan Whittle [mailto:[swhittle@swgrl.org](mailto:swhittle@swgrl.org)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 05, 2009 2:41 PM  
**To:** Gunde, Mike  
**Subject:** Regional library service cost and satisfaction level

Mike,

I am on a committee in Georgia that is reviewing service delivery models to blind and physically handicapped individuals. I understand that Florida has a centralized fulfillment/decentralized Readers' advisory/outreach model and would be interested in any report or summary of patron satisfaction, costs for service, outreach and readers' advisory mechanisms and any other information that you can share regarding your experience with effectiveness and efficiency in complying with NLS standards and serving your patrons.

We are meeting next week to discuss 3 models --Centralized Model such as North Carolina;Decentralized Model such as Georgia with 13 subregionals and 1 regional in Atlanta; and Centralized Fulfillment/Decentralized Readers'Advisory and Outreach Model such as Florida.

Any light you can shed on the Florida model would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks.

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**From:** [Gunde, Mike](#)  
**To:** [Susan Whittle](#)  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 05, 2009 4:09 PM

**Subject:** RE: Regional library service cost and satisfaction level

It's complicated, maybe more so in our case. I wouldn't say that Florida has a centralized fulfillment/decentralized RA and outreach model, because all of our libraries provide some fulfillment and some RA/outreach. Our SRLs fill loans, in general, for their customers for all recorded books that have been released by NLS in the past 2-3 years. The RL fills requests statewide for most older RCs, nearly all BRs, and all of the locally produced books and magazines in both Braille and recorded formats. The SRLs provide RA and outreach services to customers who live in 13 of Florida's most populous counties, while the RL provides the RA and outreach services to customers who live in the remaining 54 counties. There is some overlap; for example, we sometimes do outreach in SRL service areas (Jane is out today doing a presentation to the VA in Orlando), and we will provide RA services to customers who, for a variety of reasons, contact us instead of their SRL.

Customer satisfaction remains above 97% statewide and I would guess that you will find this in all of the states. In my opinion, this has more to do with the expectations of our customers than with actual service quality. Not that the service quality is terrible, but there is a surprisingly high level of satisfaction for library services in general nationwide, even when hours are reduced, collections are decimated, etc. As for this service, how could **anyone** be satisfied with obsolete technology and a very limited selection when compared with the vast holdings available to people who read print? Yet a large number of talking book readers all over the country say they are COMPLETELY satisfied.

The centralized models are always cheaper, but providing remote services has other bad implications that affect the role and value of public libraries. In our case, the SRLs are funded by the counties, who also provide nearly 100% of the funding for all local public library services. The small supplement in State Aid that the county public library systems get is still there, of course, but it keeps shrinking as a percentage of their budgets and was never large to start with. If the SRLs closed, a larger percentage of the talking book service in FL would shift to the State and that would mean that the RL would need more State funding, which almost certainly would not happen, and that in turn would lead to reduced services in FL.

Hope this helps. Thanks.

MIKE

Michael G. Gunde, Chief  
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Division of Blind Services  
Florida Department of Education  
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(386) 239-6069 (FAX)  
<http://dbs.myflorida.com/library/index.php>

***"2007 Governor's Sterling Award Winner"***

**From:** [Susan Whittle](#)

**To:** [carlkeehn@ncdcr.gov](mailto:carlkeehn@ncdcr.gov)

**Sent:** Thursday, February 05, 2009 10:38 AM

**Subject:** Regional library service cost and satisfaction level

Mr. Keehn,

I am on a committee in Georgia that is reviewing service delivery models to blind and physically handicapped individuals. I understand that North Carolina has a centralized model and would be interested in any report or summary of patron satisfaction, costs for service, outreach and readers' advisory mechanisms and any other information that you can share regarding your experience with effectiveness and efficiency in complying with NLS standards and serving your patrons.

We are meeting next week to discuss 3 models --Centralized Model such as North Carolina;Decentralized Model such as Georgia with 13 subregionals and 1 regional in Atlanta; and Centralized Fulfillment/Decentralized Readers'Advisory and Outreach Model such as Florida.

Any light you can shed on the centralized model would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks.

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**From:** [Keehn, Carl](#)  
**To:** [Susan Whittle](#)  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 05, 2009 4:21 PM  
**Subject:** RE: Regional library service cost and satisfaction level

A centralized model can present challenges in dealing with a statewide service, especially in performing outreach. We depend heavily on the telephone and mail to reach our patrons, we do a limited amount of walk-in service. We offer three toll-free telephone lines with nationwide access so our patrons can reach us no matter where they are. In addition we offer three local access phone lines. We try to be proactive in serving our patrons, we use the KLAS Integrated Library System and it enables us to establish reader advisor queues to send materials to our patrons as they return materials. Consequently, no matter how the patron account is set up, whether for automatic sending of materials or requiring the involvement of the reader advisor, service can be and is provided to the patron without a need for them to contact us. We do encourage our patrons to contact us with any concerns or to request materials and our reader advisors handle about 1,600 phone calls per month as well as about 300 mail or email requests per month.

Patron satisfaction tends to be high. We conduct patron surveys every two years and the response to the service tends to be positive. In the most recent survey conducted in 2008, 96% of our patrons rated the courtesy of the library staff as very good to excellent and 95% of responding patrons rated the service as very good to excellent. Concerns with the service tended to center more on the equipment or the quality of the cassettes, issues that we have limited control over. As a number of our complaints have been in

reference to newer recorded titles, it is apparent that the issue is not reflected as much in our inspection process as it is in the declining quality of cassette stock, even for NLS produced materials. I would speculate that as digital players and materials become readily available, we may see a decline in complaints based on technical issues.

The commitment of our staff in offering the service is a major factor in the high level of satisfaction that we are able to engender. All staff receives an orientation to each of the units and the training emphasizes how the units relate to and depend on each other. In addition, a number of the staff have been cross trained in either circulation or public services and can and do fill in as needed. Even when extreme demands are placed on the service as happened recently when a combination of the holiday period and a computer error which meant that we were under serving our patrons during that period generated a need to double our normal output to catch up with the backlog. Our circulation staff was happy to make the extra effort, recognizing the importance of providing the materials to our patrons.

The State of North Carolina underwrites our operating expenses, our staff are state employees and the facilities are funded by the state. Supplies and large print and descriptive video materials are provided through the state or by the Friends Group, the Friends group is extremely active and their grants enable us to extend our services and maintain our equipment. That said, the Federal support through the provision of braille and recorded materials and the free matter mailing privilege is the major part of our operating expense.

Outreach tends to be our Achilles heel, especially with budget issues which have developed during the present fiscal year. Our library has an outreach librarian, responsible for reaching out and providing outreach services. In the past, the outreach librarian has travelled extensively throughout the state. Under the current budget situation, travel reimbursement has been eliminated and travel has been discouraged or banned. We are scrambling to develop alternative means of reaching out to our patrons. Our outreach efforts have traditionally been a joint effort between the library staff and our Friends group, Our Friends group is taking over more of the out of area outreach activities. We are also working with State Library, Library Development Services to piggy back on their resources and reach the public libraries more effectively. The Friends Group provides funding to underwrite the outreach expenses of our Outreach librarian, we hope that we will be able to get approval for our librarian to travel as it won't require any state funding.

I hope that this answers some of your questions, if you have any further questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely

Carl R. Keehn

Carl Keehn  
State of North Carolina Library for the  
Blind and Physically Handicapped  
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Raleigh, NC 27635  
[carl.keehn@ncdcr.gov](mailto:carl.keehn@ncdcr.gov) (Note new Email Address)  
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> From: "Susan Whittle" <[swhittle@swgrl.org](mailto:swhittle@swgrl.org)>  
> To: "Barbara Mates" <[Barbara.Mates@cpl.org](mailto:Barbara.Mates@cpl.org)>  
> Cc: [swhittle@swgrl.org](mailto:swhittle@swgrl.org)  
> Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 3:37:54 PM (GMT-0500) America/New\_York  
> Subject: Regional library service cost and satisfaction level  
>

> Ms. Mates;  
>  
> I am on a committee in Georgia that is reviewing service delivery models  
> to blind and physically handicapped individuals. I understand that your  
> state has a centralized model and would be interested in any report or  
> summary of patron satisfaction, costs for service, outreach and readers'  
> advisory mechanisms and any other information that you can share  
> regarding your experience with effectiveness and efficiency in complying  
> with NLS standards and serving your patrons.  
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> We are meeting next week to discuss 3 models --Centralized Model such as  
> North Carolina;Decentralized Model such as Georgia with 13 subregionals  
> and 1 regional in Atlanta; and Centralized Fulfillment/Decentralized  
> Readers'Advisory and Outreach Model such as Florida.  
>  
> Any light you can shed on the centralized model would be greatly  
> appreciated.  
>  
> Thanks.  
>  
> Susan  
> Susan S. Whittle  
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From: "Barbara Mates" <[barbara.mates@cpl.org](mailto:barbara.mates@cpl.org)>  
To: "Susan Whittle" <[swhittle@swgri.org](mailto:swhittle@swgri.org)>  
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2009 5:13 PM  
Subject: Re: Regional library service cost and satisfaction level

> Hi Susan,  
> Wow, your questions hit this at a good time. Ohio is about to change its  
> service delivery (pretty sure)as  
> of July 1 (FY 2010). We will be going from 2 Regional libraries to one,  
> with service coming from here in  
> Cleveland. The parent agency of the Cincinnati LBPH could no longer afford  
> to subsidize the program.  
> If it helps to know that Cincinnati (the other Ohio LBPH) held public

- > hearings and the people
- > didn't seem to care where the books would come from as long as they
- > received them. There were
- > only about 4 letters to the state librarian expressing concern. The
- > consumer advisory committee was not consulted, nor have they voiced any
- > concerns. To date none of the legislators from Southern Ohio have reacted.
- > The Office of Budget and Management is thrilled-somehow they think it's
- > going to save a lot of money-consolidation never does.
- > For now the machine agency will remain in Columbus to allow some people to
- > stay on until they can
- > retire, then I think Cleveland will be doing the machines as well.
- > The basic end point is that the patrons didn't seem to care where their
- > books come from as long as they come & they have
- > toll-free service. If the shoe were on the other foot & the service were
- > going to Cincinnati, and no one
- > protested I'd be hurt and furious and I'd like to think our patrons would
- > protest-but, I think they won't
- > anyway, hope this helps
- > barbara
- > ps The Cincinnati RL closing will mark the end of one of the original 13
- > at the same time as having the dubious distinction of being the first RL
- > to ever close-that's sad coming from the state of Ohio which has the best
- > record of library support.

**From:** Susan Whittle [mailto:[swhittle@swgrl.org](mailto:swhittle@swgrl.org)]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 2:13 PM  
**To:** Ruda, Sharon  
**Cc:** [swhittle@swgrl.org](mailto:swhittle@swgrl.org)  
**Subject:** Regional library service cost and satisfaction level

Ms. Ruda;

I am on a committee in Georgia that is reviewing service delivery models to blind and physically handicapped individuals. I understand that your state has a decentralized model and would be interested in any report or summary of patron satisfaction, costs for service, outreach and readers' advisory mechanisms and any other information that you can share regarding your experience with effectiveness and efficiency in complying with NLS standards and serving your patrons.

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Any light you can shed on the decentralized model would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks.

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**From:** [Ruda, Sharon](#)  
**To:** [Susan Whittle](#)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 4:52 PM  
**Subject:** RE: Regional library service cost and satisfaction level

Hello,

We have 4 subregionals and 1 regional. The subs have a collection of the current two years plus any other books they chose to keep. Each site has RAs. Originally there were 18 subregionals. We have been combining them for years and may do more in the near future. One of the problems with subs is that there is no guarantee of the quality of service. The regional has the backup collection for the entire state.

The regional is the complete funding source for the subs. The total budget is 2.7 million. Because we are the sole funding source through an annual grant (two grants are over 1/2 mil each), we can put some teeth in the grant requirements. This way we can keep them on track. We will be meeting this month to go over our plans of service and standardize them so that there is only one format when applying for the grant. The good thing about our subs is that the directors are great and work TOGETHER to provide statewide service.

We have one circulation system - we totally share the collection and a book from one collection goes out to any patron.

Outreach is done by the subs.

I can answer any specific questions you might have. Please call any time.

Sharon

Sharon Ruda  
Associate Director Illinois State Library  
Talking Book and Braille Service  
401 E. Washington St.  
Springfield, IL 62701  
217-782-9435

Office of the Secretary of State Jesse White

**From:** [Susan Whittle](#)  
**To:** [Gary Swint](#) ; [Kathryn Ames](#)  
**Cc:** [swhittle@swgri.org](mailto:swhittle@swgri.org)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 5:38 PM  
**Subject:** Population & Square Mileage

Here are the states I have queried regarding the 3 models with their population and square mileage.

Susan

State	Population	Square Mileage
New York	19,306,183	47,213.79
North Carolina	8,856,505	48,710.88
South Carolina	4,321,249	30,109.47
Tennessee	6,038,803	41,217.12
Indiana	6,313,520	35,866.90
Minnesota	5,167,101	79,610.08
Texas	23,507,783	261,797.12
Illinois	12,831,970	55,583.58
Florida	18,089,888	53,926.82
Ohio	11,478,006	40,948.38
Michigan	10,095,643	56,803.82
Virginia	7,642,884	39,594.07
West Virginia	1,818,470	24,077.73
Georgia	9,363,941	57,906.14

**\*There were no responses from the following :**

**From:** [Susan Whittle](#)  
**To:** [tbbl@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:tbbl@mail.nysed.gov)  
**Cc:** [swhittle@swgri.org](mailto:swhittle@swgri.org)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 2:28 PM  
**Subject:** Regional library service cost and satisfaction level

Dear Ms. Somers;

I am on a committee in Georgia that is reviewing service delivery models to blind and physically handicapped individuals. I understand that your state has a centralized model and would be interested in any report or summary of patron satisfaction, costs for service, outreach and readers' advisory mechanisms and any other information that you

can share regarding your experience with effectiveness and efficiency in complying with NLS standards and serving your patrons.

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Any light you can shed on the centralized model would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks.

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**From:** [Susan Whittle](mailto:Susan Whittle)  
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**Cc:** [swhittle@swgrl.org](mailto:swhittle@swgrl.org)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 3:58 PM  
**Subject:** Regional library service cost and satisfaction level

Ms. Shanahan

I am on a committee in Georgia that is reviewing service delivery models to blind and physically handicapped individuals. I understand that your state has a decentralized model and would be interested in any report or summary of patron satisfaction, costs for service, outreach and readers' advisory mechanisms and any other information that you can share regarding your experience with effectiveness and efficiency in complying with NLS standards and serving your patrons.

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Any light you can shed on the decentralized model would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks.

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**From:** [Susan Whittle](mailto:Susan Whittle)  
**To:** [tbp.services@tsl.stat.tx.us](mailto:tbp.services@tsl.stat.tx.us)  
**Cc:** [swhittle@swgrl.org](mailto:swhittle@swgrl.org)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 2:35 PM  
**Subject:** Regional library service cost and satisfaction level

Ms. Smith;

I am on a committee in Georgia that is reviewing service delivery models to blind and physically handicapped individuals. I understand that your state has a centralized model and would be interested in any report or summary of patron satisfaction, costs for service, outreach and readers' advisory mechanisms and any other information that you can share regarding your experience with effectiveness and efficiency in complying with NLS standards and serving your patrons.

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Any light you can shed on the centralized model would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks.

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**From:** [Susan Whittle](mailto:Susan Whittle)  
**To:** [mn.lbph@state.mn.us](mailto:mn.lbph@state.mn.us)  
**Cc:** [swhittle@swgrl.org](mailto:swhittle@swgrl.org)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 2:32 PM  
**Subject:** Regional library service cost and satisfaction level

Ms. Durivage;

I am on a committee in Georgia that is reviewing service delivery models to blind and physically handicapped individuals. I understand that your state has a centralized model and would be interested in any report or summary of patron satisfaction, costs for service, outreach and readers' advisory mechanisms and any other information that you can share regarding your experience with effectiveness and efficiency in complying with NLS standards and serving your patrons.

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Thanks.

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**Cc:** [swhittle@swgrl.org](mailto:swhittle@swgrl.org)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 4:31 PM  
**Subject:** Regional library service cost and satisfaction level

Ms. Davenport;

I am on a committee in Georgia that is reviewing service delivery models to blind and physically handicapped individuals. I understand that your state has a centralized model and would be interested in any report or summary of patron satisfaction, costs for service, outreach and readers' advisory mechanisms and any other information that you can share regarding your experience with effectiveness and efficiency in complying with NLS standards and serving your patrons.

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**From:** [Susan Whittle](mailto:Susan Whittle)  
**To:** [calvertd@wvlc.lib.wv.us](mailto:calvertd@wvlc.lib.wv.us)  
**Cc:** [swhittle@swgrl.org](mailto:swhittle@swgrl.org)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 10, 2009 4:23 PM  
**Subject:** Regional library service cost and satisfaction level

Ms. Calvert;

I am on a committee in Georgia that is reviewing service delivery models to blind and physically handicapped individuals. I understand that your state has a decentralized model and would be interested in any report or summary of patron satisfaction, costs for service, outreach and readers' advisory mechanisms and any other information that you can share regarding your experience with effectiveness and efficiency in complying with NLS standards and serving your patrons.

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Any light you can shed on the decentralized model would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks.

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