



# STATEWIDE RESOURCE SHARING

A Collaborative Project of  
State Library of Ohio, OPLIN,  
Ohio Library Council, INFOhio,  
and Ohio Educational Library  
Media Association (OELMA)

April 2000

## Statewide Resource Sharing Formulates Policies

*Anyone, anywhere, at any time can borrow anything from any other Ohio library.*

A sweeping statement? To be sure—but one that the Policies Taskforce of the Statewide Resource Sharing (SWRS) Committee took to heart when the tough challenge of formulating policies began. The above statement was the outcome of the initial Summit Meeting that took place in 1998. While the concept is visionary and expresses the altruistic feeling of that summit meeting, it was obvious to the Policies Task Force that some additional framework was needed to support it.

The Steering Committee and the Policies Task Force acknowledges and reinforces the fundamental relationship that exists between the local library and its patrons. Any policies that were formulated needed to reflect this construct. Our task was a formidable one, but the members of the Task Force gathered with the objective of writing policies that were innovative, visionary, positive and would embrace the local library's existing policies to help fulfill each library's mission as much as possible.

The very concept of statewide resource sharing is viable in Ohio because the major part of public libraries' funding come from the state, making our customers all Ohio residents. The Task Force recognized immediately that we were NOT dealing with an inter-library loan system; we were expanding circulation procedures as we shared, not loaned, our resources to our statewide library users in a title-driven, patron-initiated service.

In our discussions, we quickly realized that the issue of photoduplication in terms of Statewide Resource Sharing was a non-issue, because "resources" was defined as "any library material that circulates." Requests for photocopying will continue to follow whatever route was already established in local libraries and were outside the scope of SWRS.

In making every effort to share our resources equally, we addressed the issue of scoping or layered searching. Of course, this searching is a software issue, but we wanted our opinions heard. Our recommendation was that the first search for an item would be local (stand alone or shared catalog) and then move to random searching predetermined groupings of libraries.

The Task Force's enthusiasm grew as we began to notice the many positive aspects of SWRS. Because it is patron-initiated, there will be no multiple-copy forms to be completed by librarians. The daily pick-up and delivery of materials will eliminate the bagging and mailing of items to other libraries. Library patrons across the state will have access to an enormous wealth of materials in all

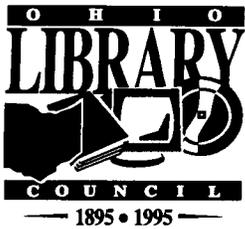
formats, and they can expect to have a quick response to their requests, with the expedient delivery of wanted items. What an amazing, innovative, and wonderful expansion of library service to our users!

When the Task Force adjourned its meeting, nine simple and concise policies were agreed upon. While we realize that there might be some additional policies needed if software issues cannot address specific needs of SWRS, we believe that, to a great extent, we have formulated policies that will allow anyone, anywhere, at any time to borrow anything from any other Ohio library.

1. Libraries will share any circulating resource with any Ohio library patron. Requests will be filled in accordance with the lending library's policies.
2. Libraries will make resource sharing an integral part of library service to their patrons and commit to staff and patron training.
3. The borrowing library is responsible for the circulation, retrieval and return of borrowed items.
4. The lending library will absorb the cost of any lost or damaged materials.
5. Library must use the statewide resource sharing delivery system and must pay for contracted delivery costs.
6. Libraries will process statewide resource sharing requests daily.
7. Loan periods will conform to the borrowing library's lending policies, with renewals not to exceed six months.
8. Libraries will designate a statewide resource sharing contact person(s) and provide this information to the State Library of Ohio. This information will be distributed and updated as needed.
9. The State Library of Ohio will coordinate statewide resource sharing training for library staff.

Additionally, although not policy, we expect the State Library of Ohio to coordinate annual and other reviews of statewide resource sharing activities and make promotional materials available to libraries.

We hope that you are as enthusiastic and excited about the prospect of SWRS as we are. We are anxious to hear from you. Please feel free to contact Task Force Chairs Gayle Patton at [pattonga@oplin.lib.oh.us](mailto:pattonga@oplin.lib.oh.us), and Mary Jane Santos at [santosma@oplin.lib.oh.us](mailto:santosma@oplin.lib.oh.us) if you have questions or concerns. And don't forget that you can also post your questions or comments at the Web Forum at the Ohio Library Council's web site ([www.ohc.org](http://www.ohc.org)). Click on "What's New" to get to the web forum for SWRS.



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## Contributors

Planning for statewide resource sharing has truly been a volunteer effort. The following persons have participated in the Policy Task Force since its inception. A big thank you to all of them and to all who sent comments and suggestions. We apologize if we have omitted the names of anyone who attended or commented

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## Watch for More News

The next issue of Statewide Resource Sharing will focus on delivery. Following that, we'll do another issue on technology, detailing who our software vendor is and giving you much more information on how the system will work. The two final issues will focus on management and training. And don't forget to visit our web site if you have questions or comments. Check the web forum at <http://www.olc.org>.