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Jill K. Underly, PhD, State Superintendent

July 5, 2024

Tom Bobrofsky, Library Board President  
Wisconsin Valley Library Service  
300 North Front Street  
Wausau, WI 54403

Dear Mr. Bobrofsky:

I would like to express the Department of Public Instruction's support of the Northern Wisconsin ILS Consortium Exploration (NICE) Project. Integrated Library Systems are at the heart of library service and this project stands to greatly improve library services both in the Wisconsin Valley Library Service service area as well as the entire state of Wisconsin.

This project helps move the state towards realizing one of the recommendations set forth from the Public Library System Redesign (PLSR) project. PLSR was a grassroots effort that relied on the expertise of hundreds of Wisconsin librarians from throughout the state. DPI has funded the initial phases of the exploration as a way of implementing the recommendations set forth in PLSR. This project meets the directives set forth in the final report of the PLSR steering committee of building organic, non-mandated support, using effective research and planning to move service improvements forward, and using the work of the ILS/ILL PLSR Workgroup as a framework. For all these reasons, DPI supports moving forward with this project, pending the approval of library system boards.

Furthermore, this project serves as a statewide model for collaboration in all areas of library service. The careful, thoughtful, and transparent exploration and analysis carried out by NICE is a triumph of systems working together to meet the needs of Wisconsin residents.

DPI stands ready to provide funding to assist with the implementation of the findings of the project. An ILS merger of this scale is rare. Wisconsin has a chance to improve library services to the entire state through this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben D. Miller".

Ben Miller  
Director of Library Services  
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction