

Memo

To: Montana State Library Commission

From: Darlene Staffeldt, State Librarian

Date: September 21, 2009

Re: Final certification update recommendations

I urge the Commission to adopt the Certification Update Focus Group's final recommendation for certification update requirements which are:

- Certification remains voluntary for all but public library directors.
- Three certification tracks will be available:
 1. Library Administrator Track (required for all public library directors)
60 continuing education credits earned in a 4-year period which includes:
 - minimum of 20 credits in the Library Administration continuing education (ce) category
 - minimum of 10 credits in each of the other 3 ce categories
 - balance of credits are electives
 2. Library Staff Track
60 continuing education credits earned in a 4-year period which includes:
 - minimum of 10 credits in each of the 4 ce categories
 - balance of credits are electives
 3. Trustee Track
15 continuing education credits earned in a 4-year period which includes:
 - minimum of 10 credits in the Library Administration ce category
 - balance of credits are electives
- Participants can earn a specialization in one or more ce category by accumulating a minimum of 20 credits in that category.
- All public library directors, no matter what size of library serviced or level of education, will be required to participate in continuing education activities and earn

certification. A change in the current Public Library Standards will be needed to make this requirement official; MSL will propose the necessary adjustments at the appropriate time. Public library directors with MLS/MLIS degrees, but not currently certified, would fulfill the Library Administrator Track requirements by December 31, 2013. If a non-certified director is hired, he/she has 4 years from assuming the position to fulfill the certification requirements for the Library Administrator Track.

- Library science college coursework (undergraduate and graduate level) completed during the 4-year certification period can be used for continuing education credits. MLS/MLIS degrees completed in the past 4 years can be used to meet requirements for certification.

- There will no longer be an enrollment process; participants will apply for certification whenever they meet the certification requirements.

These recommendations represent long deliberation and difficult decisions by the Focus Group. The result is a significant program update that meets the goals of the update process and is responsive to the concerns and comments heard from Montanans working in the library profession.

As a result of the update process, Montana State Library is charged with promoting the value of continuing education; encouraging boards to support continuing education for library staff and consider incentives for achieving certification; developing and providing quality training in all formats; increasing recognition for individuals who earn certification; encouraging boards to use certification as a hiring and promotion tool; implementing electronic certification manual, forms and tracking capabilities; clarifying program features and requirements; and enlisting library directors to assist with approving and tracking continuing education credits for staff.

Upon adoption of this recommendation, the State Library staff will make necessary changes in the certification manual and prepare all materials including the website for the launch of the newly revised program which will be effective as of January 1, 2010.