July 14, 2014

To: The SWAN Board

From: Jamie Bukovac

I just want to share a few thoughts. I thought I'd write to you instead of taking up your time at the public comment part of Friday's meeting.

There was a lot of good discussion at the COW meeting as to pros and cons of the various proposals. However, the underlying principle behind the changes, as presented by the whitepaper, is to provide a uniform experience for all of our patrons and this philosophy wasn't discussed at the meeting.

While uniformity for patrons was feedback garnered from the member input sessions for the planning process, "A la carte member options" was also stated and is on the chart. This idea of member options has always been part of the SWAN discussion and we've all been frustrated through the years that III didn't provide this. Whenever something new was discussed, the first question was always, does this have to apply to all of members or is there the option for some to use it while others don't. SD provides us that wonderful option of actually allowing some libraries to choose certain features while others don't.

Also services across libraries are not uniform for patrons. There are differences in access to digital collections, ability for non-residents to attend programs, computer services, etc. The non-residents who use our library are used to differences.

In the past the idea of best practices came up repeatedly as we tried to reduce loan rules and deal with our upset patrons who would send back a DVD through ILL because the checkout date was only 3 days. The feedback that I have from my circulation staff is that once we stopped sending 3-day and 5-day DVDs through ILL the complaints stopped. SD's option that the circulation rules follow the borrowing library solves the problem we had for years.

The idea of "uniform best practices everywhere" is great but the fact is that each library's service area is different, has different issues and different needs. Plus what defines "best practices"? How do we know what the best practices are? I remember directors asking me these questions when we used to talk about creating best practices for loan rules.

I'm also confused – Aaron's presentation states libraries will set their checkout periods and fines, but we're going to be told how many renewals and grace period days we have to provide. Why is it ok to dictate those policies to the libraries? Plus with different loan periods and fines we aren't providing uniformity for patrons anyway.

I feel that Indian Prairie staff have studied and tweaked our policies and procedures to provide the best possible services for our residents. We have listened to our patrons over the years and have worked to balance our loan rules, provide a great selection of materials for people when they come to the library to browse and use our resources wisely and efficiently.

So, with this wonderful new software I'd like my library to have the option to decide all our loan rules.

Concerning Pick up Anywhere, as I stated at the meeting, I'd like a study done at some point to determine the impact on libraries and consideration of credits. Without a crystal ball, I don't know what the impact will be on us. Perhaps many of our patrons will select other libraries to pick up at and it will be a wash. But I have limited staff time and space to manage much of an increase. If we were to run out of shelving space I don't see how we could continue to participate, which I know would mean taking the service away from my patrons and I don't like to offer a service and then remove it. I realize I'm rambling here, sorry. What I'd really like to do is be left off the list of pick-up places for now, survey my community as to whether or not they would like to pick up their materials elsewhere and base the decision on their response.

Thank you for your consideration and your patience in this matter plus your time and energy on behalf of SWAN.