WHAT'S NEW IN PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE MEASUREMENT

Making it Count
CLA 2014 Preconference

Denise M. Davis, Deputy Director
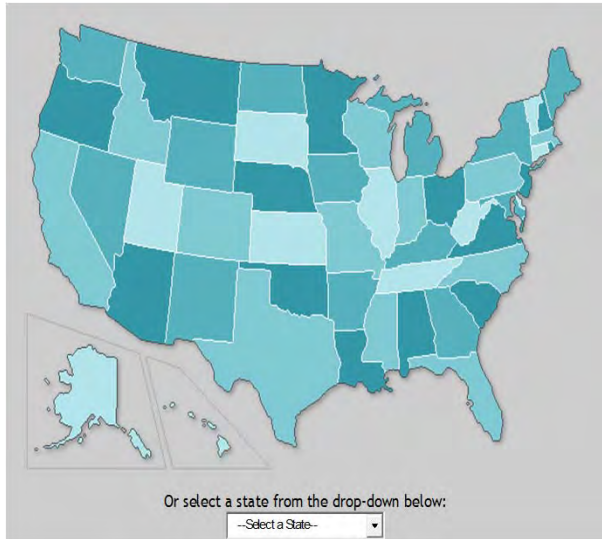**Sacramento Public Library**

WHAT'S NEW IN PUBLIC LIBRARY METRICS

Digital Inclusion Survey – interactive mapping tool

PLA initiative to develop national performance measurement strategy – developing measures, beta testing and next steps

Library Research Service, Colorado State Library – Research Institute for Public Libraries

DIGITAL
INCLUSION
SURVEY

Or select a state from the drop-down below:
--Select a State--

Home

California

PDF version

SELECT A LIBRARY OR NEIGHBORHOOD

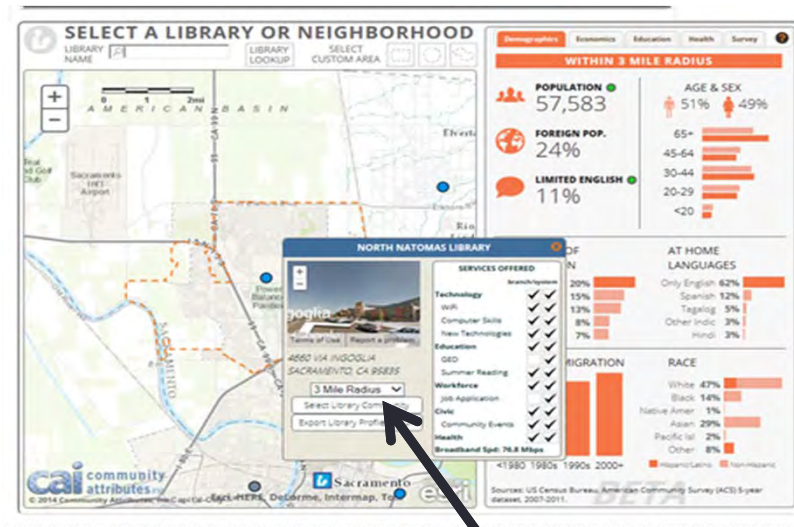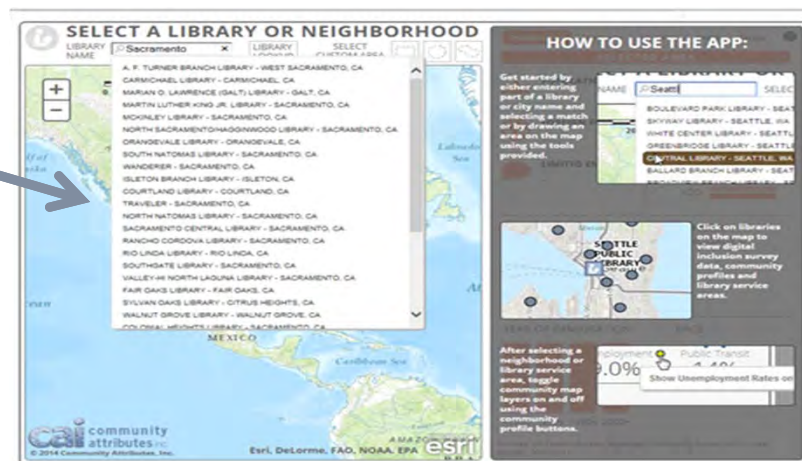| PUBLIC ACCESS TECHNOLOGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE	STATE 2012-2013	NATIONAL 2012-2013
Broadband		
Mean Download speed:	33.3 Mbps	57.4 Mbps
Minimum Download Speed:	1.2 Mbps	0.1 Mbps
Maximum Download Speed:	1000 Mbps	3000 Mbps
WiFi Availability:	97.8%	97.5%
Libraries that would like to increase bandwidth:	75.1%	66.1%
Mean number of public access computers/laptops:	25.9	19.8
Patrons experience wait time for public access computers:	63.7%	35.9%
Technology Services for Patron Use		
Databases:	100.0%	100.0%
E-books:	96.7%	89.5%
Online homework assistance (e.g., tutor.com):	100.0%	96.5%
Online job/employment resources (e.g., Brainfuse, JobNow):	97.5%	95.6%
Mobile apps to access library services and resources:	58.7%	42.6%

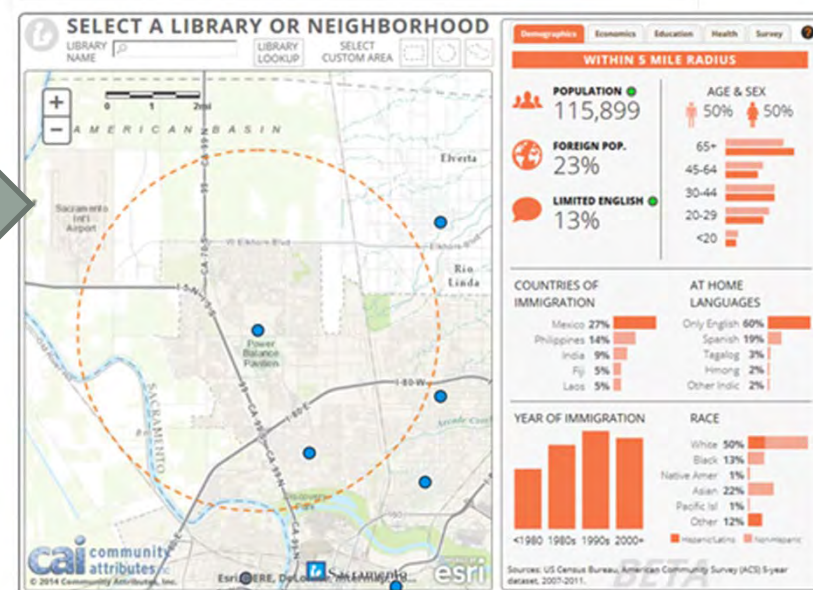| DIGITAL LITERACY/PUBLIC ACCESS TECHNOLOGY TRAINING	STATE 2012-2013	NATIONAL 2012-2013
Formal Training:	99.3%	98.0%
General computer skills:	92.9%	91.4%
General familiarity with new technologies (e.g., using e-readers, tablets):	54.3%	67.5%
Social media (e.g., blogging, Twitter, FaceBook, YouTube):	39.0%	58.5%

Select library

5 mile radius

PLA PERFORMANCE MEASURES

PLA Presidential initiative
July 2013 to present

Vision Statement

To develop <u>standardized measures of effectiveness</u> for widely-offered public library programs and promote the training for implementation and use of the measures across public libraries.

Develop methods for establishing a scalable model of performance measurement for public libraries

PLA Task Force – Goals and Objectives

Overarching work of the task force

- Launched through an open meeting at ALA 2013 with invited libraries and any other interested individuals

- TF built across three groups with membership from a broad specter of public libraries, state libraries, and assessment researchers

- TF works in-person and virtually, utilizes the ALA Connect space to communicate and post work products

- Researchers – Joe Matthews and John Carlo Bertot; Carl Thompson, Counting Opinions

Project Strategy Influenced by Research

- PLA outputs
- Edge Initiative
- U.S. Impact Study
- Other research…..

Why PLA and Why Outcomes?

Outputs

- Libraries traditionally measure outputs
  - Circulation, gate counts, program attendance

- Outputs do not reflect what libraries actually do

- Outputs do not tell a compelling story

Outcomes

- Some confusion output vs. outcome in field

- Outcomes show real difference library makes in the life of the customer

- Some libraries already measuring, but spotty, inconsistent

Public library field needs simple to collect, meaningful outcomes measures

"What is needed is a set of measures that can capture the services public libraries are currently providing in their communities, with guidelines for conducting the measures to ensure consistency and validity. When PLA developed Output Measures for Public Libraries in the early 1980's, a frequent consideration was for measures that were "good enough" to capture the desired information without being so difficult or time-consuming that staff would be unlikely to carry them out as intended. Public libraries need data to accompany the anecdotes they relay to funders regarding the outcomes of services offered and the resultant impact on the community."

(Carolyn Anthony, http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2013/08/new-measures-for-a-new-era/)

Important Distinction About Outcomes

PLA is developing measures to understand

Outcomes in the lives of people

<u>NOT</u>

Outcomes that may occur in the library itself

Other Research:

PLA Performance Measures work informed by

- PLA outputs (Results series)

- Edge Initiative (Library Edge, ULC and others)

- U.S. Impact Study (Univ of Washington)

- Other research…..Matthews, Hernon and others

PLA Framework

1. Pick a target population & service objective to study
2. Why is that target population & service objective selected
3. How do libraries know this service objective makes a difference
4. Determine what data is to be collected
5. List some things libraries might want to know
6. Provide examples of how libraries can find out

Data Strategy and Early Results

- Understand what libraries are currently collecting and willingness to collect outcomes measures.

- The annual PLA Public Library Data Service has an optional section that the Task Force used this year
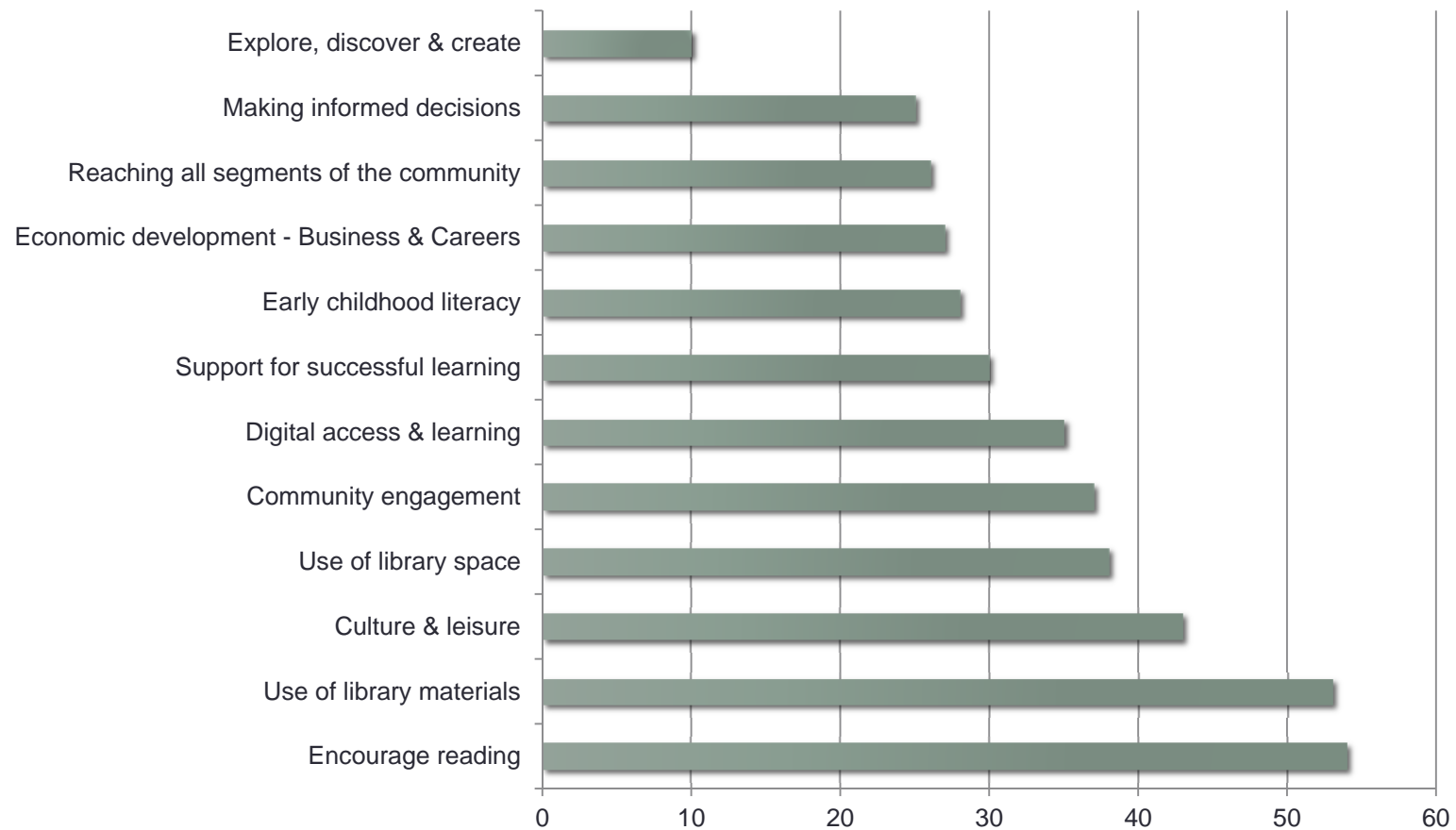
And the Survey Said…

- Slightly more than 1,500 responses to the PLDS survey

- 942 answered one or more of the optional Outcomes questions

- About 200 indicated they collected outcome measures – follow-up candidates
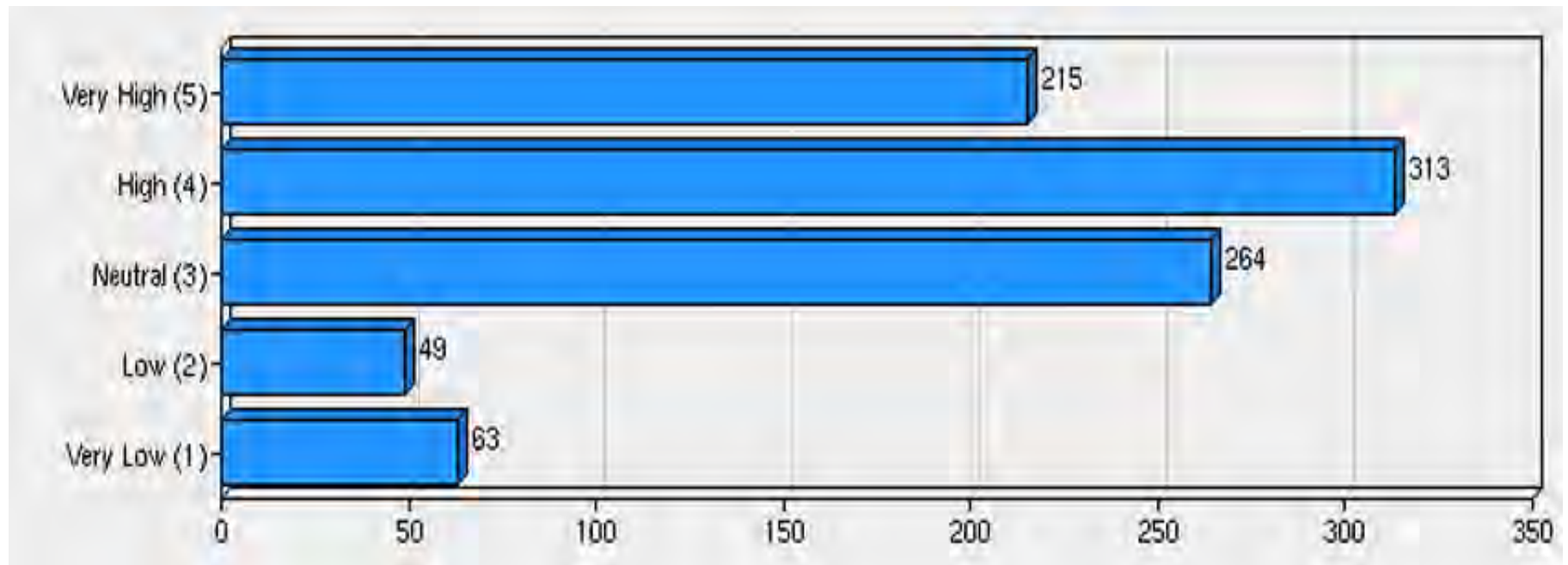
The Outcome Questions

- Please indicate if you currently or plan in the future to capture measures, either Outcomes (effectiveness) or Other (Input/Output/Process)

- Please list any other service area where the library captures outcome measures

- Please describe how the library currently captures and/or uses outcome measures

- Please indicate the importance to and readiness of your organization to capture outcome measures (1 – 5 scale)

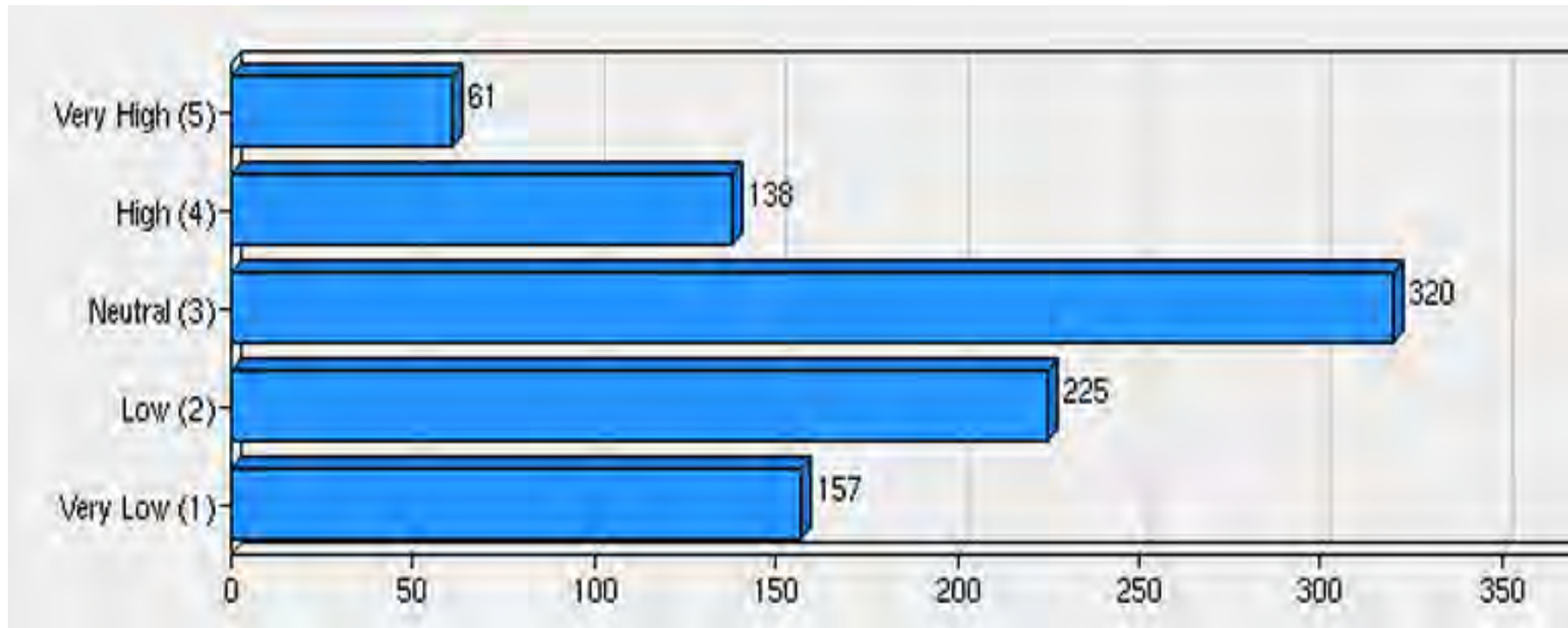- Please rank your top outcome measurement priorities

Current Measures

Importance

Readiness

Population

In general, smaller libraries indicated that they felt outcome measures were less important and that they were less ready to embrace outcome measures

Top Six Categories

- Early Childhood Literacy
- Encourage Reading
- Community (Civic) Engagement
- Economic & Workforce Development
- Education/Life Long Learning
- Digital Inclusion

PLA Performance Measures: Next Steps

- Task Force is testing measures in the five categories (Aug-Oct 2014)

- Fall 2014 will reconvene to refine/finalize framework

- Determine the best method and timeframe for testing at a national level

Research Institute for Public Libraries

Colorado State Library, Library Research Service

Research Institute (July 2015)

From the website:

Are you…

- … a **public** librarian, administrator, or other staff interested in getting started **using data for savvy and strategic planning**?
- … looking for both inspiration and instruction in a **hands-on, participatory environment**?
- … seeking to learn about **outcomes and how to measure library impact**?
- … committed to **leading your organization** in making data-based decisions?
- …eager to **develop a peer network** to support your research and evaluation efforts?

http://www.lrs.org/2014/09/03/research-institute-public-libraries-summer-2015/

Questions?

Thank you for participating!