

Wisconsin Libraries, 2017-2019

Value of Library Services, Statistical Report, Challenges, Opportunities, and Recommendations

Biennial Report

Council on Library and Network Development

July, 2019

COLAND Biennial Report on Wisconsin Libraries, 2017-2019

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INTRODUCTION

The Council on Library and Network Development (COLAND) advises the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (DPI) to ensure that all Wisconsin residents have access to library and information services. The 19 member council, appointed by the governor, functions as a forum through which librarians and members of the public identify, study and collect public testimony on issues affecting Wisconsin libraries and other information services. Members serve three-year terms. Council findings are communicated as advisory recommendations to the State Superintendent, Governor and Legislature.

In order to ensure access to library and information services COLAND carries out the following responsibilities:

- Promote free access to knowledge, information and diversity of ideas by all Wisconsin residents
- Facilitate the most effective use of library resources through interlibrary cooperation among all types of libraries
- Promote cooperation and resource sharing among public, school, academic and other types of libraries and related agencies
- Plan, coordinate, evaluate and set statewide priorities for the development of networks to enable library cooperation and resource sharing within Wisconsin

This biennial report is mandated by Wisconsin Statutes s. 43.07 (5) “On or before July 1 of every odd-numbered year [COLAND will] transmit to the state superintendent a descriptive and statistical report on the condition and progress of library services in the state and recommendations on how library services in the state may be improved.

COLAND Members

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In order to fulfill our mission of advising on library and technology issues throughout the state of Wisconsin, the Council met in these libraries during the years 2017-19: River Falls Public Library, Carl Traeger Middle School in Oshkosh, Resources for Libraries & Lifelong Learning (DPI) in Madison, Door County Library Egg Harbor Branch, Chippewa Valley Technical College in Eau Claire, Beloit Public Library, Fond du Lac Public Library, Milwaukee Public Library Mitchell Street Branch, Tomahawk Middle School, and Platteville Public Library.

VALUE OF LIBRARY SERVICES TO WISCONSIN COMMUNITIES

Wisconsin’s public, school and academic libraries transform communities by providing

- Resources for work, school and personal growth;
- Access to broadband technology and technology training;
- Literacy and lifelong learning programs and classes;
- Places to access and add to the world's knowledge

Wisconsin residents use and value libraries as a:

- Cost-effective source for books, digital resources and technology
- Place for independent learning and community gatherings
- Community anchor for economic growth
- Primary contributor to community quality of life

Public libraries are a gateway to a better life through lifelong learning. The library is the only institution that serves residents in all stages of life. Early literacy programs help young brains develop and get kids ready for school. Public libraries are the only library for homeschool children. Summer reading programs increase literacy achievement over the summer gap. STEM programs for young adults encourage students to consider careers in science, technology, and engineering—much needed for Wisconsin's economic development. Online courses and in-house technology training assists workers with mid-career changes and are especially important to citizens who lack basic technology skills. Public library resources and programs for the elderly help preserve cognitive function and provide social networks-- important in the treatment of Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

Wisconsin's public libraries have long provided valuable support to residents seeking to improve their career skills, change careers, and apply for jobs. While statewide unemployment is steadily decreasing, job seekers continue to rely on public libraries to assist them in not only the job search but also the job application process, as more employers require online forms. The job market has also led to interest in entrepreneurial business, and libraries have assisted by offering workshops, tools, and resources, often in the form of "makerspaces," to encourage the development of new skills, and meeting spaces more conducive for collaboration and project development.

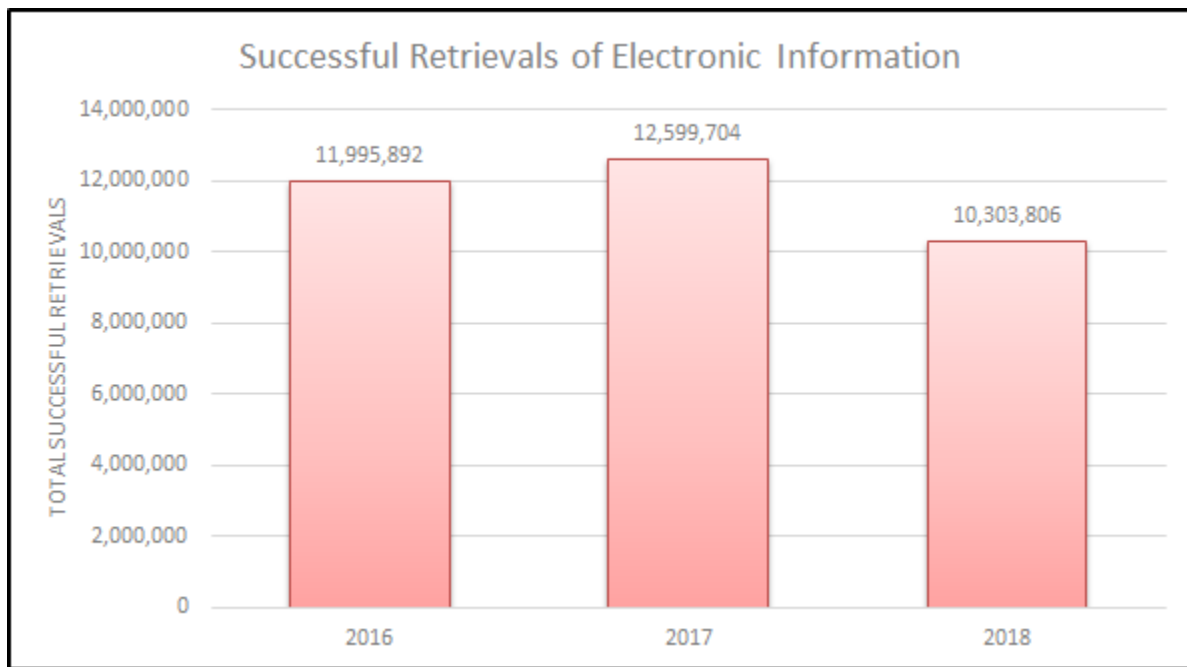
Besides the direct services libraries of all types provide to their constituents and customers, Wisconsin residents and businesses also benefit from cost efficiencies brought through high levels of coordinated interlibrary cooperation. Wisconsin's libraries cooperate through regional library systems and statewide services and organizations. Every year, libraries of all types throughout the state share millions of library items. This statewide sharing means that everyone in Wisconsin has access to over 22 million titles owned by Wisconsin public libraries.

Resource sharing goes beyond the sharing of books and physical materials. Wisconsin also benefits from electronic databases, e-books, and digital audiobooks that are available to residents and businesses through cost-effective centralized purchasing as well as statewide and regional consortia licensing.

Wisconsin has made great progress in providing statewide access to electronic resources through the BadgerLink program. Established by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction in 1998, BadgerLink, Wisconsin's Online Library, provides Wisconsin residents with licensed

content not available through regular search engines. BadgerLink can be accessed in libraries, schools, institutions, homes, businesses, and anywhere with internet access either automatically or after logging in with a Wisconsin public library card. BadgerLink's collection meets the educational needs of residents statewide and augments the physical and electronic collections cooperatively purchased by regional library systems, local libraries and school districts, and other organizations.

As of June 2019, BadgerLink provides 50 information and educational databases - many with access to full-text articles. Wisconsin residents value and use BadgerLink. Last year they successfully retrieved over 10 million resources using the BadgerLink databases.



The Wisconsin Public Library Consortium (WPLC) offers a cooperative collection of more than 220,000 copies of E-books, downloadable audiobooks, and streaming video available to public library cardholders. These titles were used more than 5 million times in 2018. This project is an example of successful statewide collaboration around collection development. WPLC also began a two-year pilot project in 2018 to provide the BiblioBoard platform statewide in an effort to help local libraries connect with authors.

Wisconsin libraries of all types have been leaders in the use of technology to increase the information available to library users. Wisconsin's Technology for Educational Achievement (TEACH) program has been instrumental in making high-speed Internet connections available to Wisconsin's schools and libraries. All Wisconsin academic, school, and public libraries now have Internet connections, and almost all now have high-speed Internet access. The fiber project funding came primarily from the federal E-rate program, which the TEACH program applies for to help support broadband and Internet connectivity in schools and public libraries.

The University of Wisconsin Libraries are committed to advancing teaching, learning and research through access to its world-class collections and exemplary cooperative services. The University of Wisconsin Libraries have a shared collection of more than 15 million volumes to support the research needs of faculty, staff, and students. UW Libraries make these resources available on site to the general public and will loan materials across the state through interlibrary cooperative agreements. The UW Libraries have successfully employed the concept of *One System, One Library* in order to maintain and improve a world-class collection. *One System, One Library* has allowed the UW Libraries to achieve efficiencies in collection management in an environment of flat or reduced budgets, rapidly increasing costs, and pressures for library space to support changing needs.

School districts receive an annual distribution of earnings from the Common School Fund. These funds are used to purchase library books and other instructional resources, digital and print, as well as computers for use in school libraries. The annual earnings of the Common School Fund are distributed on a per pupil basis each spring. Common School Fund aid now represents the only source of funding for the purchase of school library materials in many school districts. While Common School Fund aid has generally been stable, it has been threatened by legislative attempts to divert the funds going into the Common School Fund for other purposes.

Wisconsin libraries of all types are expanding services beyond the walls of their libraries by digitizing library materials and making them available on the Internet. With the help of DPI-awarded federal Library Services and Technology (LSTA) grants, many libraries have contributed to the over one million digital items available at Recollection Wisconsin (recollectionwisconsin.org), formerly known as Wisconsin Heritage Online.

STATISTICAL REPORT

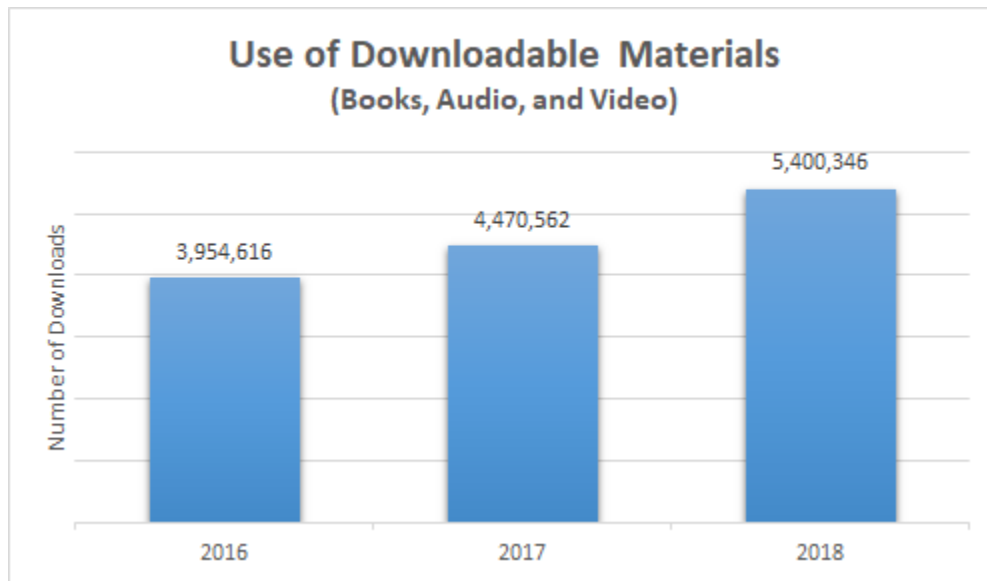
Wisconsin's libraries of all types provide a connection to the world of information, opportunities, and knowledge. Because the economy of the future is information-based, good libraries are critical to restore and maintain a healthy state economy, and to enrich the lives of Wisconsin residents.

Wisconsin has:

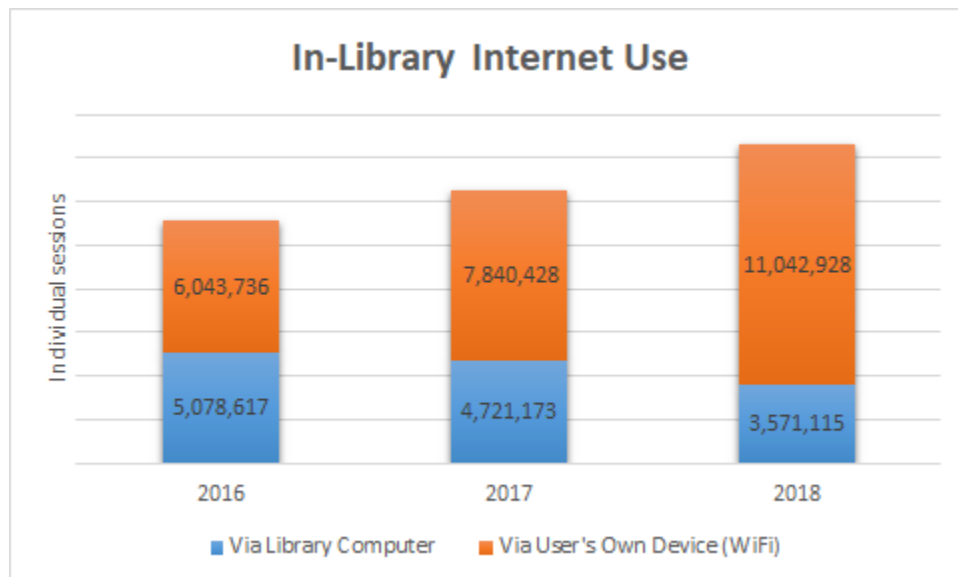
- 381 public libraries providing 466 facilities that serve 5.81 million state residents, 3.25 million of which currently hold active library cards.
- 16 regional public library systems coordinating services among those libraries, providing leadership and training, and promoting resource sharing and technology.
- approximately 2,000 public school library media centers serving about 859,000 students.
- hundreds of academic and special libraries serving students, professionals, businesses, and others.
- library services at 19 Adult institutions (18 male, 1 female), one Juvenile facility (Lincoln Hills/Copper Lake School), 14 male Correctional Centers, two female Correctional Centers, and four Department of Mental Health (DHS) Mental Health Institutions.

Although circulation of print materials has declined steadily over the past several years, most services provided by Wisconsin's public libraries have significantly increased, validating their

relevance to Wisconsin communities. This includes the download of digital materials offered by Wisconsin's public libraries. The chart below reflects a 36.6 percent increase in the download of digital materials from 2016 to 2018.



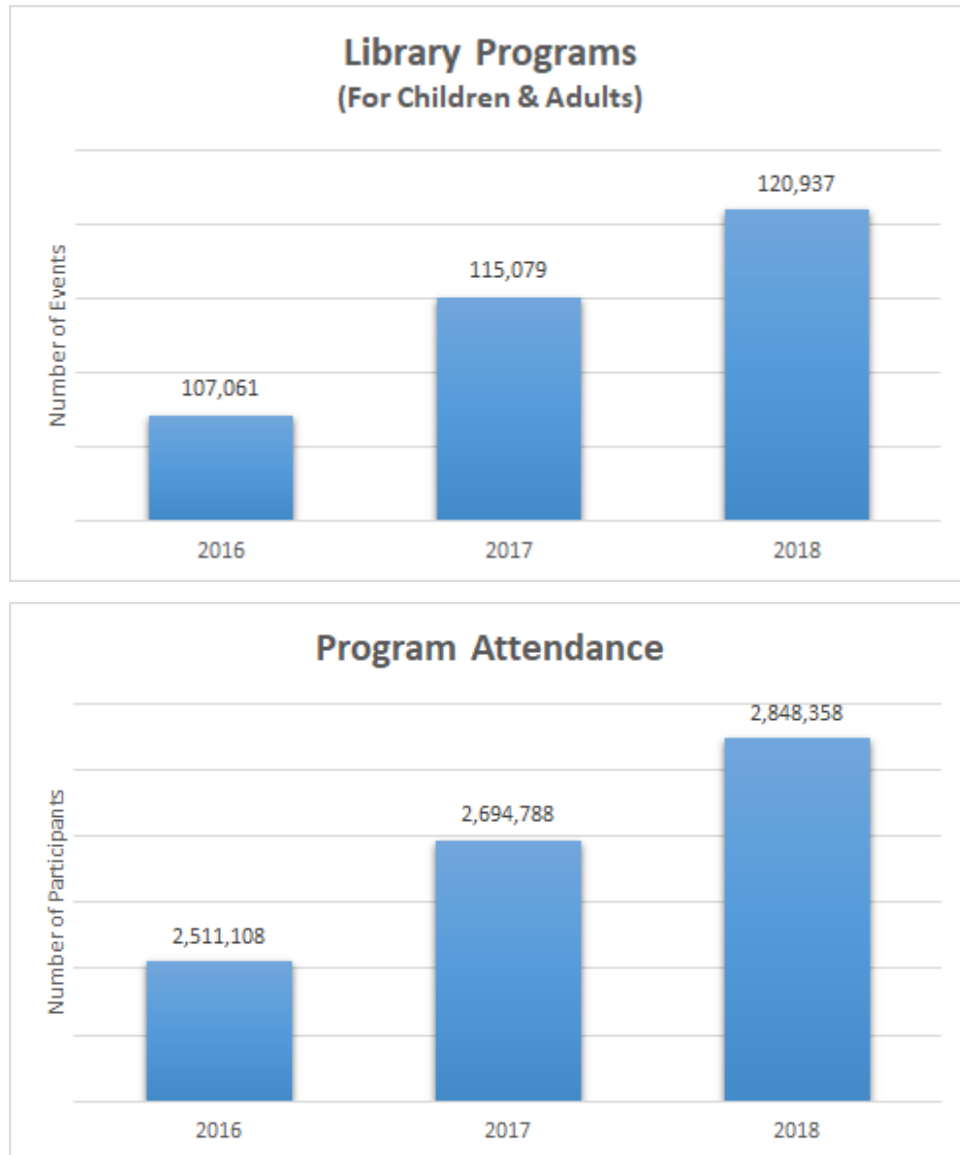
Use of internet workstations in public libraries has steadily decreased, but use of public library wireless services has markedly increased, yielding a significant overall net increase in internet use in public libraries. The chart below reflects a 31.4 percent increase in overall internet use supplied by public libraries, when considering internet access via the library's public computers and wireless access via the library user's own device combined. Clearly, libraries are a valued source of internet for those who cannot access it at home.



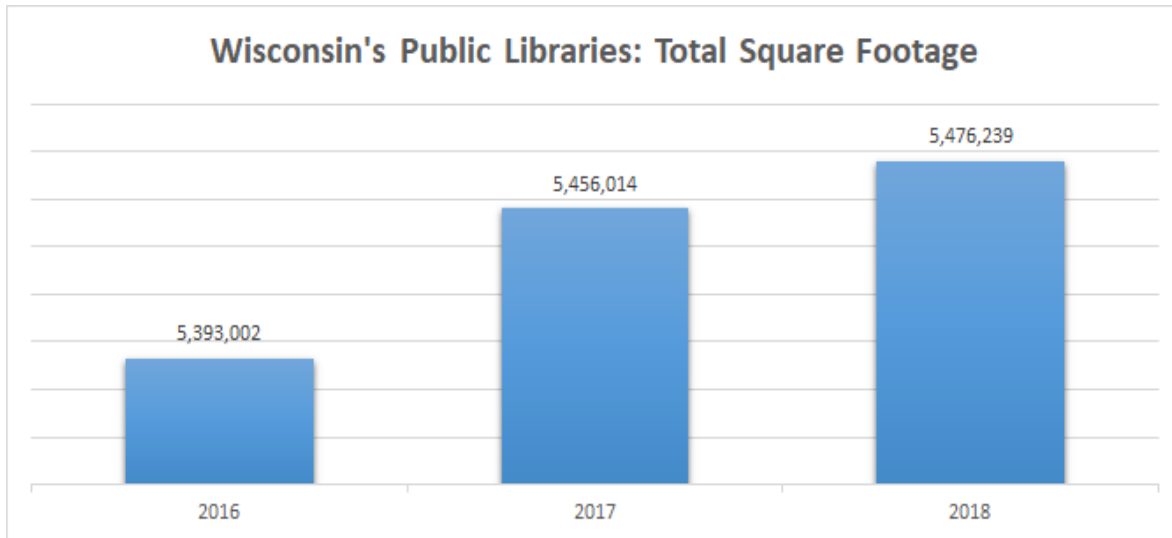
Programming is another area of strength in today's Wisconsin libraries. Programming for children, teens, adults, and senior citizens have evolved into core library services, and have now

expanded into multigenerational events, drop-in activities for those families whose schedules do not allow for attendance at traditional programs, memory cafes, wellness programs, job fairs, and much more.

The following charts demonstrate the success of public library programs. The first chart reflects an overall 13.0 percent increase in the total number of public library programs. The second chart reflects an overall 13.4 percent increase in attendance at public library programs. This implies that residents from all types of Wisconsin communities seek free, high quality educational and entertaining programming and value Wisconsin public libraries as providers of such events.



Public libraries continue to expand, despite fiscal challenges. The following chart illustrates an increase of over 83,000 total square feet of library space, which was the result of the expansion of 32 of Wisconsin’s public libraries between 2016 and 2018.



The data provided above reinforces public libraries as not just a conduit for books and information seeking, but as a gathering space, where the daily needs of information exchange and internet services are provided.

CHALLENGES

1. Funding – The public library funding model is a combination of Federal, State, and local funding. Community libraries receive most of their funding from municipal and county budgets. Their annual budgets are supplemented through State funding distributed through public library systems, especially for technology services, broadband and digital collections. Wisconsin receives nearly \$3 million annually in federal funding through LSTA and IMLS, which is primarily used for state-wide initiatives that leverage cooperative purchasing. Many public libraries have experienced reductions in local funding due to budget pressures on local government. State funding was reduced 10% in 2010 and has not been reinstated in a permanent fashion. Federal funding for libraries is always on the chopping block. The loss of nearly \$3 million in annual funding would have a significant negative impact on library services across the state because it is unlikely the State budget or local budgets would fill the gap.
2. Increased requirements for technology skills – Businesses require job applications and benefits to be conducted online, and more government forms and processes are only available online. Librarians need to keep up with changing technology in order to teach technology skills to their community members.
3. Broadband – The increased demand for high speed internet for people who do not have access at home will continue to be a challenge. It is important that the State continue to invest in broadband access so that it is affordable and available to all Wisconsin residents.

4. Adequate staffing to support student learning – Public schools have cut back on the number of school media specialists in recent years.
5. University of Wisconsin Libraries - UW libraries are challenged to maintaining academic resources to support undergraduate and graduate students as well as faculty research since there has been no State increase in 17 years. The university research enterprise brings in hundreds of millions of dollars to the State through research grants and will lose its competitive edge if libraries cannot support the research needs.
6. Common School Fund – This is the primary source of funding for school libraries to purchase resources (print and electronic) and it must be protected.

OPPORTUNITIES

1. Collaboration among libraries to share resources and expertise has been a game-changer for continuing to improve services in the face of declining funding.
2. Collaboration among public library system services to share resources, expertise and funding.
3. Increased collaboration between public libraries and Workforce Development Boards will provide better support for retraining displaced workers and for assisting with career development.
4. Technology applications will continue to be adopted in order to improve the quality and efficiency of library services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

COLAND makes the following recommendations to Superintendent Carolyn Stanford Taylor:

1. Continue to support and fund pilot programs and collaborative projects among systems to achieve the Vision for 21st century library systems.
2. Advocate for sustainable funding for libraries at the federal, state, and local level.

3. Support increased use of technology to provide equitable access to learning resources for all Wisconsin residents.
4. Support the value of library education and development of library staff.
5. Support the value and continued need of the Common School Fund to fund school libraries and support increased staffing for school libraries.

COLAND GOALS 2017-2019

COLAND members develop and implement goals and objectives that are important to all Wisconsin libraries and information services. The following narrative identifies the five goal areas and the results for 2017-2019.

Goal 1. To support the recommendations of the Public Library System Redesign project and to assist with communication of the plan and activities to ensure that comprehensive, accurate and timely information about the system restructuring is conveyed throughout the Wisconsin library community.

Results: In August of 2015, State Superintendent Dr. Tony Evers appointed an ad hoc 10-member Steering Committee and a DPI staff liaison to oversee a process endorsed and recommended by the Council on Libraries and Network Development (COLAND). In order to gather information on how best to serve library patrons of Wisconsin, the Steering Committee created a number of workgroups made up of library professionals from throughout the state to complete this work. Highlights of this PLSR process:

- Workgroup reports were completed and submitted to the Steering Committee in April of 2018.
- Using the workgroup reports as a foundation the Steering Committee submitted their Recommendation Report to the Superintendent of DPI in February of 2019.
- COLAND held 5 listening sessions throughout the state, including one virtual session, as one final round of feedback regarding the project.
- At the May 10th meeting of COLAND, feedback from those sessions was presented to State Superintendent Carolyn Stanford Taylor.

With the Recommendation Report now in the hands of DPI, COLAND will continue to monitor the progress of these recommendations and will provide timely feedback and suggestions to DPI regarding implementation of the recommendations. The Steering Committee Recommendation Report can be found here:

https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/pld/Final_PLSR_Recommendation_Report_Overview_March_2019.pdf.

Goal 2. To support and encourage library professionals to form alliances with local, state, and national decision makers to demonstrate the value of libraries in education, literacy, employment, entrepreneurship, and digital access.

Results. In 2015 the U.S. Employment and Training Administration sent a memorandum to state and local workforce development boards, workforce agencies and American Job Centers asking them to collaborate with public libraries to complement and extend the career and employment services available to job seekers and unemployed workers. To that end, efforts have been made to bring public libraries and workforce development resources together to assist job seekers. Over the past couple of years the following have occurred:

- The Department of Public Instruction and Department of Workforce Development have had regular meetings to talk about ways that public library resources can be leveraged to help assist in workforce development initiatives.
- A discussion panel was held at the state library convention about workforce development issues.
- A Laura Bush Grant application was submitted to help with workforce development. DPI was the lead applicant, with participation also from WLA, DWD, WWDA, LLS and RCWS.
- Wisconsin was successful with the Laura Bush Grant, entitled LAWDS: Libraries Activating Workforce Development Skills.
- The LAWDS Project Advisory Council includes representatives from 8 organizations and was launched this past spring.

COLAND will continue to work with DPI on workforce development issues and will provide feedback to the LAWDS Project Advisory Council.

Goal 3. To encourage the conversations related to ebooks, cooperative contracts, access to digital information, and other information technology development.

Results. The Wisconsin Schools Digital Library Consortium is a partnership of the CESA Network, DPI, and WiLS designed to create a strong, shared collection of ebooks and audiobooks for public schools based on the public library model, which minimizes duplication and maximizes collective purchasing power. Begun in 2014 with leadership and funding from DPI, community and vendor surveys were utilized to determine needs and interests of districts and vendor capabilities. A think tank of school media specialists and others with knowledge of K12 finances and technology was convened to further develop the proposed structure for the collection and consortium. An interim board of the partners and media specialists was established to develop policies and procedures with an intended start date of Fall 2017. Interested school districts are currently being sought for participation. Funding will come primarily from Common School Funds, so funds used by districts for digital materials can be redirected to this initiative or districts may identify other funds. There will be three collections: K-4, 5-8, and 9-12, consisting of fiction and nonfiction titles. The target cost for participants is \$2/student. For guidance, projects from other states have been reviewed and products from six vendors are currently being evaluated. For more information, please see: <http://www.wils.org/wsdlc/>

Goal 4. : To support the partnership with the Department of Corrections (DOC) and DOC Library Services and Educational Technology Coordinator.

Results. There are 19 Correctional Institutions with libraries, 3 Correctional Centers with staff that look after expanded resource rooms/law library as a small part of their duties, and 4 Mental

Health Institution Libraries in Wisconsin. The 19 Correctional Institutions use SirsiDynix EOS Integrated Library System (ILS), though they are currently in the process of adopting a new ILS, Follett's Destiny Library Manager.

The DOC's Bureau of Technology Management is putting into place a new OTIS (Offender Technology Infrastructure System) network. This system will be using RACHEL (Remote Area Community Hotspots for Education and Learning) devices to deliver high quality, secure offline educational materials to inmates in education programs, as well as develop kiosk mode solutions for our Electronic Inmate Law Library Services (currently using LexisNexis) as vendor, and developing approaches to deliver re-entry, employment, and transition resources in secure kiosk mode.

The DOC Library Services and Educational Technology Coordinator is working to communicate to DOC staff that "An inmate who is reading a book, is an inmate who is not causing you a problem."

There are several areas where this can be improved on:

- High quality donations: inmates are in need of good, quality nonfiction materials that will help keep them occupied and/or able to learn a new skill, ie, 'the realm of ideas'.
- eBook access: improved access to an electronic collection. Would prefer books that can be downloaded to a device, however there are currently very few tablets or secure laptops available. Audiobooks access would also be nice (for something like 'Chapter A Day') if the tablet/laptop issue could be resolved.
- Badgerlink access: finding an alternative way to access materials. The big issue is security, the inability to lock down sites/contact forms, etc.
- GED/HSED testing, Career and Technical Education: working very closely with DPI, GED Testing Service, Pearson VUE and 30 remote sites to keep the testing program in good order. Gently used GED Test prep materials are always welcome.

Goal 5. To support revisions to ongoing issues for school librarian licensing and professional standards, and advocate for adequate staffing of school libraries.

Results. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction approved new program content guidelines for the Library Media Specialist (1902) license in December, 2016. The license will be a stand-alone, bachelor's level program. School library media specialists will no longer be required to have a teaching license before pursuing licensure as a school library media specialist. The LMS license will be moved to the Early Childhood-Adolescence teaching category. Applicants will need to complete an approved LMS licensure program, but will not need any other teaching license. Existing teachers can add it on. The Instructional Technology Coordinator license is moved to obsolete status. The Department will develop a transition plan with the field based on programs being ready to prepare in the new content guidelines as early as the Fall of 2017. The DPI will be working with educator preparation programs to develop transition and implementation plan

The Department has developed a new optional Wisconsin Library Media Specialist evaluation rubric based on requests from school districts following the implementation of the Educator

Effectiveness system. The 2016-17 school year will be a pilot year for districts to use as part of their LMS evaluation process.

The Department is working with CESAs to train school library media specialists on the Future Ready Framework. It is based on extensive research and emphasizes collaborative leadership which is an integral part of systemic change. The [Wisconsin Digital Learning Plan](#) also places equity at the center of the gears. Understanding the importance of equitable access the US Department of Education also realized the value of [Future Ready Librarians](#). Aligning the school library planning process with the Future Ready Framework provides an opportunity to connect library programs with educational innovation in their own schools.