

State Superintendent's Report on Intertype Library Cooperation and Resource Sharing

2023-2025

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

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Compiled by
Bureau of Libraries
Division for Libraries and Technology
working title
Division of School and Library Operations
December 2025



Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
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Madison, Wisconsin

This report is available from:

BUREAU OF LIBRARIES
DIVISION FOR LIBRARIES AND TECHNOLOGY
Working Title
DIVISION OF SCHOOL AND LIBRARY OPERATIONS
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DECEMBER 2025
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

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Introduction

The State Superintendent of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is required by [Wis. Stat. § 43.03\(3\)\(d\)](#) to,

“submit to the council on library and network development a biennial report which describes the programs and policies to promote cooperation and resource sharing among public libraries, school libraries, other types of libraries and related agencies and to plan, coordinate, evaluate and set statewide priorities for the development of networks to enable library cooperation and resource sharing within this state and between this state and resource providers in other states carried out in the preceding biennium and the programs and policies to be carried out in the succeeding biennium.”

The Intertype Library Cooperation and Resource Sharing biennial report describes the DPI’s programs and policies that promote cooperation and resource sharing among all types of libraries. This report is a compilation of current and future activities from the following Wisconsin organizations, committees, programs, and projects about their work with the DPI and its Division for Libraries and Technology with the working title of Division of School and Library Operations.

Organizations and Committees:

Cooperative Children’s Book Center (CCBC)
South Central Library System Delivery Service
System and Resource Library Administrators’ Association of Wisconsin (SRLAAW)
University of Wisconsin (UW) System Interlibrary Loan
Wisconsin Library Association (WLA)
Wisconsin Educational Media and Technology Association (WEMTA)
WiLS
Wisconsin Public Library Consortium (WPLC)
Wisconsin Schools Digital Library Consortium (WSDLC)
Wisconsin Talking Book and Braille Library (WTBBL)

Programs and Projects:

Adult and Community Services
BadgerLink
Certification and Continuing Education Support
Digital Public Library of America and Digitization of Historical Materials
Foundations of Wisconsin Librarianship
Interlibrary Loan Services (ILL) and WISCAT

Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA)
Library Workforce Connection (LWC)
Public Library System Partnership
Tribal Libraries Support
Wisconsin Document Depository and Wisconsin Digital Archives
WISELearn
Youth and Inclusive Services

Federal Funding

The DPI faced financial uncertainty for most of 2025. The Bureau of Libraries at the DPI is Wisconsin's State Library Administrative Agency. A large portion of the Bureau of Libraries staff's work and services provided to the state are funded through the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to States program. This program is the largest source of federal funding support for library services in the United States. LSTA is administered at the federal level by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The grants support the purposes and priorities outlined in the LSTA and may be used for statewide initiatives and services or distributed through competitive subawards or cooperative agreements with public, academic, research, school, or special libraries or consortia.

On March 14, 2025, the White House issued an executive order to eliminate non-statutory components and functions of several federal agencies, including IMLS. The DPI experienced delays and uncertainty in drawing down awarded funds and receiving additional grant award notification for additional funds. In response to the executive order, Wisconsin joined other states in a lawsuit challenging the order's legality, which resulted in a preliminary injunction being placed on IMLS enabling discretionary grant funding to be restored and IMLS staff returning from administrative leave. On December 3, 2025, after a summary judgement in favor of the lawsuit, IMLS announced the reinstatement of all terminated IMLS grants.

The DPI received notification for the full amount of the LSTA Grants to States 2025 award on June 16 in the amount of \$3.2 million. This award will allow the Bureau of Libraries to continue working to empower libraries to best serve their communities through September 2026.

IMLS is awaiting reauthorization (this was supposed to occur by October 2025), but appropriations can continue to be made by Congress in this situation.

2025-2027 Biennial Budget

On July 3, 2025, Governor Tony Evers signed the 2025-2027 budget bill into law as 2025 Wisconsin Act 15. Public Library System Aid funding is increased by \$1,000,000 SEG in FY26 and \$2,000,000 SEG in FY27 to support the operations and maintenance of public library services in Wisconsin. The Library Service Contracts funding is increased by \$619,200 SEG in FY26 and \$666,600 SEG in FY27 to fully fund the estimated costs of the library service contracts maintained by the department. BadgerLink, Wisconsin's online library, and Newsline for the Blind funding is increased by \$96,600 SEG in FY27 to provide sufficient funding for the contracts with BadgerLink vendors and to maintain Newsline for the Blind services.

Activities of Statewide Library Organizations

Numerous library organizations around Wisconsin make intertype library cooperation and resource sharing a reality. Working with the DPI, these organizations plan and implement programs to address local and state needs and compliment important national initiatives.

The Cooperative Children's Book Center

The [Cooperative Children's Book Center](#) (CCBC) is a unique examination, study, and research library of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The CCBC is also funded by the DPI through the [Bureau of Libraries](#). The CCBC was established in 1963.

Through its noncirculating collections and its services, the CCBC supports teaching, learning, and research related to children's and young adult literature and provides informational and educational services for pre-service and practicing teachers and school and public librarians across Wisconsin. This includes opportunities for hands-on book examination, curated book recommendations, and intellectual freedom information and assistance at the time of materials concerns or challenges. The CCBC is also known nationally and internationally for its work documenting diversity in the content and among the creators of the review copies it receives each year in its role as a statewide book examination center.

The CCBC is the primary resource on campus and in the state of Wisconsin for contemporary books published for children and young adults. CCBC resources include extensive reference materials about literature for the young and a wide range of books for children and adolescents, including a collection of new and recently published books, a comprehensive collection of recommended contemporary books, and historical literature from the 20th century.

The [CCBC website](#) provides full-text access to many national children's and young adult literature awards and recommended lists as well as specialized bibliographies from CCBC staff.

The CCBC offers special events throughout the academic year that provide opportunities to hear from authors and illustrators, as well as to interact with others who are interested in books for children and teens.

2023-2025 Activities

- **2023**
 - 27 group visits to the CCBC (819 librarians/educators served) for presentations by the CCBC staff and hands-on book examination
 - 13 outreach events around the state (642 librarians/educators served) at conferences and workshops including presentations by the CCBC staff and hands-on book examination
 - 9 virtual events (518 librarians/educators served) featuring presentations by CCBC staff
- **2024**
 - 24 group visits to the CCBC (1,145 librarians/educators served) for presentations by the CCBC staff and hands-on book examination
 - 12 outreach events around the state (760 librarians/educators served) at conferences and workshops including presentations by the CCBC staff and hands-on book examinations
 - 13 virtual events (1,044 librarians/educators served) featuring presentations by CCBC staff
- **2025**
 - 20 group visits to the CCBC (890 librarians/educators served) for presentations by the CCBC staff and hands-on book examination
 - 10 outreach events around the state (598 librarians/educators served) at conferences and workshops including presentations by the CCBC staff and hands-on book examination
 - 9 virtual events (602 librarians/educators served) featuring presentations by CCBC staff

2025-2027 Goals

- Continue providing resources and reference services to pre-service teachers and librarians and Wisconsin professionals in the field
- Develop additional database resources and features on the CCBC-Recommended Book Search in response to user needs and requests
- Expand collaboration efforts within the School of Education regarding reading and literacy, while also partnering with the iSchool, other campus stakeholders, and the DPI

South Central Library System Delivery Service

The South Central Library System operates a system-managed and operated delivery service. Due to its unique and long-term operation of material handling, sortation, and fleet equipment capacities, SCLS also coordinates delivery connections and cooperative delivery services to all statewide system headquarters, the University of Wisconsin System campuses, and several other schools, institutions, and customers around the state.

The delivery service at SCLS operates a system delivery operation that spans its 66 member locations at a frequency that ranges from 3 to 10 stops a week. 90% of the locations receive a minimum 5 days per week delivery.

For member locations, it is estimated the annual volume has a range of 10.5 to 11.25 million transfers and return trips of unique titles via the delivery service. All these items are hand-sorted by a highly experienced, senior team of employees.

SCLS employs 19 full-time employees along with another 12 part-time employees (eq 3.5 FTE). These staff members collectively have over 200 years of experience in their current positions.

For statewide delivery, SCLS estimates additional transfers and returns of unique titles with partners at an additional 900,000 pieces per year.

2023-2025 Activities

- Beginning in early 2023, SCLS had fully recovered from the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Full service and frequencies had been re-established or revised to meet updated demands. Volumes returned to a near-normal amount, but with a definable reduction in material transfer counts overall.
- In early 2023, SCLS had been fully preparing for the joining of all departments under a single roof at 1650 Pankratz in Madison. Delivery would be the last department to occupy their new location in January of 2024.

- Cooperative delivery handling was organized with Monarch, Winding Rivers, and Southwest Library Systems. These efforts sought to distribute resources and responsibilities to valued statewide partners.
- In the time from 2023 to 2025, SCLS had a significant transition of staffing that included several departures of long-term employees and their experience. During early 2024, SCLS added a number of new staff as well as new roles for some others. That has led to a broader coverage of responsibilities and significant upgrades to operational efficiency.

2025-2027 Goals

- SCLS Delivery looks to maintain all operational capacities as well as remain ready to entertain evolution in delivery coverage and capability.
- SCLS Delivery remains an active participant and leader in delivery coordination efforts statewide with the regular data recording, monthly meeting, and cooperative operations within the WPLC umbrella.
- Additional efforts are to continue to maintain a similar staffing structure for local delivery coverage. However, it appears there may be opportunities to consolidate and respond to evolving statewide delivery to accommodate a slight decline in volume as well as a reduction in physical stops and/or frequencies. SCLS Delivery will take note of these and re-evaluate annually to gauge the viability of each of the three primary statewide routes and look for at least two route reductions (in labor hours) while working in internal consolidations or statewide cooperative efforts to maintain robust delivery coverage to all partners and their constituents.

System and Resource Library Administrators' Association of Wisconsin

The System and Resource Library Administrators' Association (SRLAAW) includes administrators from all fifteen Wisconsin Public Library Systems and directors of each system's resource library. Meeting roughly four times a year, the association addresses statewide legislative, policy, and operational issues affecting public library services. Its objectives are to improve statewide library service quality, support communication among systems and resource libraries, provide a forum for system-related issues, and convey system concerns to government agencies.

2023-2025 Activities

Wisconsin Public Library Staff Compensation Study

Wisconsin public libraries identified a need for consistent data on staff salaries and position classifications to guide recruitment and retention decisions. Using LSTA funding provided through the DPI, SRLAAW commissioned a statewide compensation study in May 2022, with Southwest Library System serving as fiscal agent. After developing an RFP and selecting Carlson Dettmann Consulting, the workgroup created position descriptions, gathered library contacts, and designed the survey. Released February 1, 2023, and extended through March 31, the survey collected responses from 308 libraries and resulted in a final [summary report](#).

Library System State Budget Process

SRLAAW collaborated with the Wisconsin Library Association (WLA), its Library Development and Legislation Committee (LD&L), and the DPI to create a unified budget request for library systems during the 2023–2025 period. This partnership aligned system needs, statewide priorities, and legislative strategy, strengthening the case for sustained investment in technology support, resource sharing, professional development, and statewide infrastructure.

2025 Speak Up for Libraries Campaign

A March 14, 2025, executive order called for eliminating IMLS functions, threatening the primary federal funding source for libraries. The Wisconsin Bureau of Libraries also faced significant staffing losses. SRLAAW led a statewide advocacy response supported by a marketing cohort of system staff. The campaign produced a [public information website](#), a staff toolkit for social media assets, and widespread media engagement. Over 12,000 postcards were sent to Wisconsin's congressional delegation. Most IMLS funding has since been restored, and prospects for continued support have improved.

2025-2027 Goals

Agile Responsiveness

Recent events, including the IMLS advocacy effort, demonstrate SRLAAW's ability to coordinate statewide expertise and respond quickly to emerging challenges. Strengthening this capacity remains a priority.

Continued Advocacy for Libraries

SRLAAW will continue supporting WLA and statewide partners in shaping the DPI budget requests and advocating for robust state and federal support for libraries.

SRLAAW's Role in the Statewide Library Landscape

With changing statewide structures—such as increased system director collaboration and expanded Wisconsin Public Library Consortium (WPLC) responsibilities—SRLAAW is reassessing its role among organizations advising state agencies and local communities on library issues.

University of Wisconsin (UW) System Interlibrary Loan

The Council of Universities of Wisconsin Libraries (CUWL) operates a shared management and discovery system that facilitates resource sharing between UW campuses. The UW libraries use a variety of software and tools to manage interlibrary loan and electronic document delivery across the system to improve access and reduce costs. These existing systems promote uniform and shared processes, support, and consistent user experience in the UW community. The UW libraries also focus on collaborative development of book, serial, and electronic resource collections.

2023-2025 Activities

- Implemented Rapido for resource sharing on 11 UW campuses.
- Configuration for direct resource sharing with WISCAT and SWITCH consortia.
- Participant in the statewide delivery service, sharing physical resources.
- UW Campuses are the Area Research Centers in their communities, providing access to local historical and genealogical documents.
- Offer community borrower cards to residents at UW campuses.
- Instructional content created by UW staff made available in WISELearn.
- Digital collections made available via Minds@UW.
- Individual campus partnerships with public, school libraries, and communities such as hosting high school researchers, History Day, Big Reads.

2025-2027 Goals

- Replace legacy IP authentication system with SSO for access to library electronic materials.
- Expand resource sharing partnerships for direct, unmediated borrowing and lending between library systems.
- Renew agreement with SCLS to provide statewide delivery services.
- Review and comply with new ADA Title II web accessibility rule.
- Direct support of Open Education Resources creation and adoption.

Wisconsin Educational Media and Technology Association

The Wisconsin Educational Media and Technology Association (WEMTA) is a professional organization that supports school library media and instructional technology professionals across Wisconsin. Its mission is to empower educators to provide high-quality learning experiences in an information-rich world by fostering leadership, offering professional development, advocating for digital learning and information literacy, and building partnerships within the educational community.

2023-2025 Activities

- Permanent Endowment Trust (PET) Scholarship Program offering support to conference attendees.
- Professional Development webinars – offered monthly.
- Intellectual Freedom support, including quarterly Intellectual Freedom Forums.
- Advocacy and legislative work around protecting the Common School Fund, often the sole source of funding for school libraries.
- WEMTA awards program – Administrator of the Year, Excellence Award, Forward Award, Lifetime Achievement, Special Service, ISTE Making IT Happen, Intellectual Freedom Award (with WLA).
- Annual Sponsorship Program launched June 2025.

2025-2027 Goals

- Increase membership (by 10%).
- Increase participation on WEMTA committees.
- Update Policies and Procedures Manual.
- Improve financial outlook through the Annual Sponsorship Program, increase conference sponsorship opportunities.
- Continue to develop the quarterly Digital Dispatch as a communication tool and advertising opportunity.

Wisconsin Library Association

The Wisconsin Library Association (WLA) is a statewide, member-driven, non-profit that empowers Wisconsin's libraries and the people who work in them. WLA represents public, academic, school, and special libraries, as well as library trustees, Friends groups, students, and other stakeholders. Through professional development, leadership training, statewide advocacy, and recognition programs, WLA strengthens Wisconsin's library ecosystem and promotes equitable access to information and lifelong learning for all residents.

2023-2025 Activities

- Annual WLA Conference – delivered one of the state’s largest library professional gatherings with keynote speakers, breakout sessions, and networking.
- Section Conferences – including Wisconsin Association of Academic Libraries (WAAL) and Wisconsin Association of Public Libraries (WAPL).
- WLA on the Road (Pilot)– launched a regional engagement model to expand access for rural and small libraries.
- Leadership Development Institute – cohort learning, applied projects, and mentorship with experienced Wisconsin library leaders.
- Statewide Advocacy – led Library Legislative Day and coordinated advocacy for funding, digital access, and intellectual freedom.
- Youth Services Section (YSS) Performers Showcase - hosted an annual live showcase of storytellers, musicians, science educators, and other youth performers to help libraries evaluate options for summer reading and youth programming.
- Awards & Recognition – administered statewide awards, including Library of the Year, Librarian of the Year, Paralibrarian of the Year, and others.
- Membership Engagement – expanded communications, supported Sections.
- Partnerships & Public Presence – strengthened relationships with the DPI, library systems, higher education, Friends & Foundations, and partners.

2025-2027 Goals

- Expand Access and Engage New Members – grow participation from all library types, support small and rural libraries, early-career professionals, and paraprofessionals.
- Strengthen WLA’s Advocacy Ecosystem – advance year-round advocacy for funding, intellectual freedom, and digital access.
- Grow Professional Learning & Leadership Pathways – grow the Leadership Development Institute and mentorship.
- Build Organizational Sustainability – diversify revenue, modernize member services, and strengthen operational capacity.
- Elevate the Profile of Wisconsin Libraries – statewide storytelling and partnerships focused on community impact.

WiLS

[WiLS](#) is a non-profit membership organization that facilitates collaborative projects and services to save its members time and money and to advance library service, primarily in the state of Wisconsin. WiLS members are primarily libraries,

but the organization also works with cultural institutions, government agencies, and other non-profits to develop partnerships and projects. General membership is free. There is a subscription fee to participate in the cooperative purchasing service, and other services operate on a cost-recovery model.

WiLS offers services and activities in these primary areas:

Cooperative Purchasing: WiLS Cooperative Purchasing Services manages the complete life cycle for electronic content purchases and other vendor direct product discounts.

Consulting: WiLS consults with libraries to identify goals, develop projects, and turn their ideas into action. WiLS provides planning, research, and data services, and connects libraries with expertise within the library community and beyond.

Consortia Management: WiLS manages several consortia, including the [Wisconsin Public Library Consortium](#), the Wisconsin Schools Digital Library Consortium, WISPALS (a consortium of technical college libraries), the Horticulture Library Consortium, and Recollection Wisconsin, a statewide digital cultural heritage portal in partnership with the [Digital Public Library of America](#). WiLS provides services to these consortia based on their needs, including fiscal agency, process and project management, and communication and meeting facilitation.

Learning Opportunities: WiLS provides educational and professional development opportunities via its free and virtual WiLSWorld Shorts series throughout the year on various topics of interest to members.

Digital Projects: WiLS coordinates digital preservation training for cultural heritage practitioners across the state through various grant-supported projects. Recent projects have included supporting tribal libraries in digitizing collections and language preservation efforts and supporting a Digital Stewardship Learning Community to facilitate group learning in WebJunction's Digital Collections Stewardship course.

2023-2025 Activities

- Helped WiLS members get the resources they need at pricing they can afford through WiLS' cooperative purchasing program.
- Developed [MyWiLS orientation toolkits](#) for K-12 library media specialists and academic library staff to help transfer institutional knowledge between outgoing and incoming staff in regards to their subscription services and resources procured through WiLS.
- Partnered with libraries on strategic planning, data collection and analysis, staff development, and other custom projects. Developed a new phase in the strategic planning process to focus on activation and meaningful

assessment, as well as experimenting with community stakeholder interviews.

- Led two rounds of the [Small Library Strategic Planning cohort](#) learning and hands-on strategic planning opportunity that helps libraries in small communities of 5,000 people or fewer learn about their community's needs and aspirations and use that knowledge to craft strategic directions for the next 3-5 years.
- Consulted on a potential ILS merger with Northern Waters Library Service and the Wisconsin Valley Library Service.
- Developed a [Public Library System Merger Guide](#) for the DPI.
- Facilitated the [City Library Collective](#) to bring mid-size city libraries across the state together to address common issues and use collective knowledge to improve their organizations and services to their communities. In 2024, the CLC published a [report on its Strengthening Staff](#) Project as a culminating piece for their two-year research project aimed at enhancing overall job satisfaction and security among library staff.
- Held a number of [webinars](#) aimed at sharing expertise with members on a variety of topics including: managing book challenges, social work principles in libraries, trends in electronic resources for post-pandemic libraries, and data services.
- Relaunched the Culture Keepers Convening in 2024 as an annual event for learning and connection for Wisconsin's Native Nations' librarians, archivists, museum curators, and cultural heritage workers.
- Launched the [Culture Keepers Collective](#) designed to bring together cultural preservation professionals from across Wisconsin's Native Nations to collaborate on digital preservation of culturally significant collections including resources for language revitalization and preservation, and to serve as a community of practice.
- Authored the [Wisconsin Library Data Landscape Project: Final Report](#) which assessed Wisconsin's public library data ecosystem.
- Awarded 17 [Ideas to Actions grants](#) to member organizations in 2023 and 2024.

2025-2027 Goals

The goals for WiLS are taken from its Strategic Plan for 2022-2027, which includes three primary goals:

1. **Strengthening and Building Community:** WiLS supports its members by creating engaging opportunities that strengthen collaborations and strategic partnerships that are viewed by its community as vital and essential.

2. **Fueling Innovation:** WiLS helps its members, its profession, and its own organization continuously seek out new ideas and ways of doing things more efficiently and cost-effectively.
3. **Supporting Organizational Health and Sustainability:** WiLS is invested in the long-term health and sustainability of its member community and organization. WiLS designs services to strengthen staff and boards, build capacity, and ensure continuity of operations.

The Wisconsin Public Library Consortium

The Wisconsin Public Library Consortium (WPLC) brings together expertise and resources to support collaborative work resulting in greater equity and affordability for Wisconsin public libraries and their communities. The WPLC collaborates with partners outside of the public library community in two distinct areas:

The **WPLC Delivery Workgroup** makes budget and policy recommendations related to statewide intersystem delivery service to the WPLC Board for formal approval. Consequently, the intersystem delivery network provides service for public libraries, as well as K-12 school and academic libraries throughout the state.

The **Historical and Local Digital Collections Committee** considers ways to leverage collaborative projects and partnerships to foster enhanced digital access and preservation services for these collections. Partners in the WPLC's digital preservation efforts include Recollection Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Historical Society, and the Digital Public Library of America.

The Wisconsin Schools Digital Library Consortium

The Wisconsin Schools Digital Library Consortium (WSDLC) is a shared collection of over 70,000 eBooks, audiobooks, and magazines accessible through the Sora app (from OverDrive) and are available to Wisconsin school districts schools at a cost of \$1.68 per student. The WSDLC serves nearly 500,000 students in over 300 districts around Wisconsin. WiLS serves as the project manager and fiscal agent for the WSDLC.

2023-2025 Activities

- Created a support toolkit/network for WSDLC facing materials challenges (Goal #1).
- Connected with national media outlets to promote WSDLC to a wider audience (Library Journal, Computers in Libraries).
- WSDLC is an active participant in the OverDrive Partners Advisory group which provides feedback on new features for OverDrive apps.

- Cross promoted WSDLC membership to coop members at conferences and through promotional materials.
- Evaluated staff capacity for WSDLC and worked with OverDrive to maximize “hands on board.”
- Reevaluated training materials and made changes based on members’ needs for WSDLC.
- Created more training opportunities: member-lead and from OverDrive on new, prominent features. Also, good collection hygiene (early returns).
- Created a WSDLC Toolkit for new members.
- Provided Advantage (individual district and school account) purchasing training and opportunities throughout the membership year.
- Created the “WSDLC Member Causerie” to highlight member library staff.
- Developed three-year budget/member pricing.
- Began developing special/curated collections to enhance the student experience (beginning readers collections; hi/lo collection; comics and graphic novels collection).

2025-2027 – Goals

- Strengthening and Building Community within the WSDLC is an ongoing goal of WiLS as project managers.
- Fueling Innovation: WiLS helps the WSDLC Board, Selection Advisory Committee and WSDLC Members seek out new ideas and ways of doing things more efficiently and cost-effectively.
- Supporting Organizational Health and Sustainability: WiLS is invested in the long-term health and sustainability of the WSDLC and works to design services that strengthen staff and boards, build capacity, and ensure continuity of operations.

The Wisconsin Talking Book and Braille Library

The Wisconsin Talking Book and Braille Library (WTBBL) is a regional library of the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled/Library of Congress in Washington, DC. WTBBL provides free library services for the print disabled across the entire state of Wisconsin. Services include physical materials such as free talking book machines, audiobooks on digital cartridge, braille materials, e-braille readers, headphones, and more.

WTBBL also offers the BARD application allowing patrons to download books onto their personal devices as well as the new DA2 talking book machine that is Wi-Fi and Bluetooth capable. Physical materials are mailed to patrons via USPS at no cost to them. They are also able to mail materials back free of charge.

WTBBL has no due dates, no overdue fees, and services available for anyone with a qualified print disability in Wisconsin. WTBBL is located in Milwaukee and can be reached by email at wtbbl@milwaukee.gov, by phone at (414) 286-3045 or 1-800-242-8822, and by fax at (414) 286-3102.

2023-2025 Activities

- Hundreds of outreach events across Wisconsin and beyond.
- Tours.
- Online presentations to senior living groups, teachers, education professionals, advocates for the print disabled, and more.
- Support for annual events such as the Vision Walk, Braille Games, and White Cane Day.

2025-2027 Goals

- Continuously exploring new and diverse outreach opportunities. It is an ongoing challenge to increase awareness of WTBBL's existence, so the organization is always seeking out new routes to spread the word.
- WTBBL is hoping to build relationships with teachers and gain footing within Milwaukee Public Schools to enhance students' experience, specifically those with print disabilities, including reading disabilities.

Projects and Services Managed by the DPI

On July 28, 2025, the DPI's Library Services Team began operating under the new name – Bureau of Libraries. The name change is part of State Superintendent Jill Underly's new organizational structure for the DPI. The Bureau of Libraries is part of the Division for Libraries and Technology which, under the new structure, is working under the title of the Division of School and Library Operations. The Bureau of Libraries manages the following programs and services delivered in conjunction with the Wisconsin library community.

Adult and Community Services

The DPI invests in the belief that strong libraries are an integral part of strong communities. As such, adults in the community must find value in their local library, and libraries must work within the community to understand its aspirations and provide the services that best help people attain their goals.

2023-2025 Activities

The Play Make Learn 2023, 2024, and 2025 Conference: The DPI has been a long-term supporter and sponsor of the Play Make Learn conference held each year in Madison, Wisconsin (financial support made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services).

- The Play Make Learn Conference promotes high-quality learning opportunities for educators, researchers, developers, designers, foundation leaders, policy makers, museum and library professionals, and school leaders who are dedicated to promoting making, gaming, and playful learning. The conference aims to engage their audience in cutting-edge learning science ideas and experiences; communicate state-of-the-art design, education, and research; demonstrate new and upcoming games and technology; and network to spark new projects in the following themes: playful learning, games for learning and positive social impact, making and makerspaces, STEAM education, arts integration in formal and informal spaces, research/practitioner partnerships, and more.
- The Play Make Learn conference keeps growing; demographics of audience attendees continue to expand, both in the fields they represent and how far they travel. Attendees and presenters have joined Play Make Learn from across the United States and other countries, including Canada, Germany, Taiwan, Kingdom of Bahrain, India, Australia, China, the U.S. Outlying Islands, the Netherlands, and more. Attendance increased from 250 to 300 in 2023, and again from 300 to 350 in 2024 and 2025; the Play Make Learn conference has continued to reach its registration cap each year for four years now.
- Multiple Bureau of Libraries staff members have attended and participated in Play Make Learn 2023-2025; activities included coordinating pre-conference workshops, being on the conference organizing committee, attending, emceeding the event, offering remarks during plenary sessions, moderating panel presentations, offering a panel presentations, chairing the Conference Experience subcommittee, and more.
- Demographics of librarian attendees have significantly increased year-over-year; the conference has become a focal point of participation for many librarians in Wisconsin.

The PolarVR Library Fellowship and NSF Grant Project: Beginning in 2022, a collection of 12 to 16 different librarians from diverse regions throughout the state of Wisconsin have been annually engaged in a collaborative partner project titled “Virtual Reality Expeditions in your Library,” colloquially referred to as “PolarVR.” This National Science Foundation grant-funded research/practitioner partner project includes collaborators from multiple agencies and subject matter

specialties, including Wisconsin librarians, a liaison from the Bureau of Libraries at the DPI, multiple UW-Madison professors, Field Day Learning Games, WID Virtual Environments Group, the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation, PolarTREC, the Wisconsin Center for Education Research (UW-Madison), the Institute for Learning Innovation, and more.

- The project focuses on utilizing libraries as informal education spaces to offer newly developed polar research-inspired virtual reality experiences to better reach rural and Latine Wisconsin community members.
- Three brand new, polar research-inspired virtual reality experiences have been developed with librarian input as a part of the project and have been implemented in libraries from 2023-2025.
- Advisement and consultation from Latine bicultural/bilingual experts are included in the project to help librarians with Latine outreach in their communities. Polar research experts are also available to help design resources surrounding the research that can be included in library programming.
- Each Fellowship librarian is invited to attend the annual Play Make Learn workshop (travel, lodging, and registration paid for) and receives a free Oculus Quest 3 virtual reality headset to use in their library.
- The DPI Liaison serves as an implementation specialist to help libraries offer programs to their communities; the DPI Liaison also assists with research and literature that manifests as a part of the project.

The National Games & Libraries IMLS-funded Grant Project: In 2024, the DPI's Bureau of Libraries, in collaboration with the Washington State Library, applied for and were successfully awarded a \$250,000 Institute of Museum and Library Services "National Leadership Grant for Libraries." The money is being spent on a three-year, three-phase project (2024-2027) focused on research and best practices development related to Games-Based Library Services (GBLS). The project is formally titled *Empowering & Innovating Games-based Library Services: National Best Practices for Gaming Collections & Programming* but is colloquially referred to as the *National Games & Libraries Project* (NGLP).

Phase/year one of the project is wrapping up toward the end of 2025, with the DPI and Field Day Learning Games (the project's contracted research lead from UW-Madison) developing a robust literature review of past and contemporary Games-based Library Services. Information gleaned from the literature review will be used to conduct comprehensive national research about Games-based Library Services being offered throughout America. The American Library Association Games & Gaming Round Table and the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies will be helping the project promote the research and acquire participants. The Washington State Library offered numerous replicable/scalable Games-based

programs and opportunities to Washington libraries throughout 2024-2025, capturing “what worked” and “what didn’t” along the way, to eventually be included in phase three’s deliverable: a Games-based Library Services toolkit.

2025-2027 Goals

- Play Make Learn 2026: The Play Make Learn Conference committee will continue to rely on the DPI Liaison as a core member of conference planning operations. The Committee is expanding to include other diverse voices throughout the UW-Madison campus. The 2025 conference was the first time a “theme” was offered as a part of conference proceedings: “Exploring ‘breaking’ and ‘messiness’ as a part of education, research and design.” The conference received overwhelmingly positive support over having conference themes and will continue to offer themes in 2026 and 2027. The conference is hoping to increase the attendance cap to welcome more people internationally.
- The PolarVR Project: 2026 is likely to be the last “Fellowship” year of the PolarVR Project. Three games have been developed and implemented in various Wisconsin libraries, just as the project promised. The PolarVR Team will review research and data acquired throughout the project in 2026; but the PolarVR Team may apply for a grant project extension to continue PolarVR work beyond 2026.
- National Games & Libraries Project: Phase/year two of the project (2025/2026) will see Washington State Library expand its replicable/scalable programming to multitype libraries of different sizes to determine best practices for local, regional, and statewide implementation of newly offered Games-based Library Services. Meanwhile, the DPI and Field Day Learning Games will coordinate a yearlong “Fellowship” (community of practice) of working Wisconsin librarians to intimately troubleshoot pathways for developing and offering effective games-based library programs and collections.
- National Games & Libraries Project: Phase/year three of the project (2026/2027) will see WiLS (the project manager) pull together what has been learned, developed, discovered, and determined throughout phases one and two to create a comprehensive digital online toolkit centered on research and best practices and highlight how libraries of varying sizes and scales (state libraries, library consortia, individual libraries, etc.) can successfully implement Games-based Library Services in their operations. The digital toolkit will be housed online and offered for free to any parties of interest throughout the nation.

BadgerLink

From personal interest to educational research, BadgerLink is Wisconsin's online library, providing Wisconsin residents with licensed trustworthy resources. The resources are designed to provide a foundational collection serving all Wisconsin residents, augmenting those available through K-12 schools, public libraries, public and private universities and technical colleges, medical and health-care facilities and practitioners, and state agencies.

The Bureau of Libraries provides leadership, consultation, technical assistance, and training to the Wisconsin library community on best practices and effective use of the resources. Staff are responsible for overall strategic planning, budgeting, procurement, contracts, and resource configuration, access, and maintenance. BadgerLink celebrated 25 years in 2023.

2023-2025 Activities

- Updated the procurement collection areas based on an evaluation of community needs, existing usage data, and the overall BadgerLink budget.
- Completed the resource procurement for FY 2025 contracts, including three Request for Proposals and five Request for Bids; configured new resources for access; and developed training and promotional materials. Many of the previously provided resources remained the same, however new resources included: Britannica Early Elementary & Young Children (Britannica); Education Source, Hobbies & Crafts Source, Home Improvement Source, Library & Information Science Source, and Points of View Reference Source (all from EBSCO); and Chilton Library (Gale).
- Updated the BadgerLink Advisory Group model to follow a flipped classroom approach focused on four general topical areas: resources/content, user experience, training, and outreach. Selected new Advisory Group members for the 2025-2026 cohort, and in the spring of 2025, members developed and prioritized workgroup activities to review current resource functionality, content, and features; and review professional learning around BadgerLink resource evaluation.
- Gathered BadgerLink impact stories from Wisconsin libraries and the broader user community demonstrating the value and importance of statewide resources. Most stories were published and shared through the BadgerLink website.
- Worked with a UW practicum student to assist with account data cleanup.
- Addressed the professional development needs of the library community with BadgerLink training sessions presented at Foundations in Wisconsin Librarianship Workshop, Tech Days, Wisconsin Association of Public Libraries (WAPL) Conference, Wisconsin Educational Media and

Technology Association (WEMTA) Conference, and Wisconsin Library Association (WLA) Conference.

- Created resource guides and asynchronous training materials based on requested needs of library community.

2025-2027 Goals

- Continue the BadgerLink Advisory Group 2025-2026 cohort and make any adjustments to the group model in planning for future cohorts.
- Plan for future resource procurement or updates to collection areas based on community needs, existing usage data, and BadgerLink budget. Research learner-centered pedagogy to improve upon BadgerLink training offerings for all types of learners.
- Continue innovative engagement efforts and promotion of BadgerLink resources within Bureau of Libraries collaborations as well as the broader agency.

Certification and Continuing Education Support

Wisconsin residents are better served when library staff have access to quality continuing education (CE) to help build the skills and expertise they need to effectively serve their communities. Directors of Wisconsin public libraries and public library systems are also required to complete continuing education activities to qualify for Wisconsin Librarian Certification.

The Bureau of Libraries facilitates continuing education for library staff through direct collaboration with public library system CE coordinators and by providing grant funding to library systems for statewide CE programs and resources.

2023-2025 Activities

- Facilitated monthly meetings to coordinate the work of public library system staff providing CE resources to their member libraries and regional partnerships such as Southeastern Wisconsin Libraries (SEWI) and Northeastern Wisconsin CE Partnership (NEWI).
- Provided grant support for statewide collaborative CE programming, including annual events like virtual Trustee Training Week, Tech Days, and the Wild Wisconsin Winter Webinar series.
- Provided funding and participated in presentations for the Wisconsin Library Buildings & Spaces project.
- Provided New Director Training Camp for new public library directors, a three-day in-person workshop that introduces attendees to the statutory requirements for public libraries in Wisconsin. This event was coordinated

and presented by Bureau of Libraries staff with additional presentations by public library system staff.

- Released a new edition of the Certification Manual for Wisconsin Public Library Directors.
- Awarded grant funds that provide access to Homeless Training by Ryan Dowd, which has been utilized by hundreds of libraries throughout Wisconsin.

2025-2027 Goals

- Continuing support for New Director Training Camp, statewide CE programming, and Homeless Training access.
- Explore additional ways to support statewide and regional collaboration on CE activities and on CE tracking for public library and public library system directors. Consideration will be given to potentially shifting funds being spent on current (less popular) CE activities to acquire an LMS (Learning Management System) which would allow the DPI and regional CE Consultants to much more easily coordinate, offer, and archive online trainings/webinars focused on sundry CE topics.

Digital Public Library of America and Digitization of Historical Materials

Recollection Wisconsin connects cultural heritage institutions statewide to preserve, promote, and facilitate digital access to Wisconsin's rich history through collaboration and shared infrastructure. Recollection Wisconsin is a statewide, multitype consortium managed by WiLS and governed by six core partners: the DPI, the Wisconsin Historical Society, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee Public Library, and Marquette University. Recollection Wisconsin additionally serves as the state service hub for the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) enabling Wisconsin's cultural heritage to be discovered on a national scale.

As of December 2025, 272 Wisconsin institutions, some representing multiple contributors such as library systems, have provided more than 700,000 metadata records providing discoverability to photos, text, audio recordings, and videos representing Wisconsin's history.

2023-2025 Activities:

- Advocated for and received funding through the Wisconsin state budget. Currently, \$300,000 per year is allocated to sustaining and growing Recollection Wisconsin.

- The Foundations Working Group, in collaboration with its Governing Board and Steering Committee, successfully drafted, refined, and finalized a mission statement, vision statement, and set of organizational values.
- The Recollection Wisconsin Digitization Initiative placed library practicum students with cultural heritage organizations for the dual benefit of preserving materials through digitization and fostering the next generation of cultural heritage professionals.
- The All Together Now Metadata Initiative working group conducted in-depth research and began crafting guidelines for updated metadata practices. These guidelines aim to ensure that the language used to describe materials reflects the richness of voices and stories represented in the collections.
- Enhanced and expanded a Digital Readiness Toolkit to incorporate guidance and best practices on digitizing and sharing audiovisual content.
- Continued to engage with the DPLA Hubs Network nationwide through participation in the DPLA Network Council, Advisory Council, working groups, and member meetings.

2025-2027 Goals

- Expand thematic digital collections to build digital collections focused on specific topics of interest, collaborating with multiple contributors to digitize and share content that highlights Wisconsin’s rich history.
- Enhance user experience for educators by conducting a user experience study that explores how this group engages with Recollection Wisconsin collections. The findings will allow Recollection Wisconsin to make informed improvements to ensure resources meet their needs effectively.
- Create a statewide subject vocabulary. Drawing on work already underway in the All Together Now initiative, developing a shared controlled vocabulary of culturally relevant subject terms will provide a unified approach to metadata, enhancing the discoverability of digital collections across the state.
- Launch a new website. A redesigned Recollection Wisconsin website will improve accessibility, usability, and engagement, offering a more intuitive and welcoming platform for users to explore the state’s rich cultural heritage.

Foundations of Wisconsin Librarianship

The School Library Education Consultant (Office of Literacy) and the Public Library Consultants (Bureau of Libraries) actively collaborate on activities that support and model collaboration between school and public libraries.

2023-2025 Activities

- Hosted and facilitated the *Foundations of Wisconsin Librarianship: Essential Skills for Library Media Specialists and Public Library Staff* three-day workshop for 63 attendees in August 2024. The workshop introduced essential skills, resources, and strategies for working in school and public libraries. On Day One, school and public staff worked separately, focusing on their role in each institution. In the evening, the groups joined together to begin networking and building relationships for future collaborations. On Day Two, guest presenters from the Cooperative Children’s Book Center and PBS Education addressed the full group.
- Hosted and facilitated the *Foundations of Wisconsin Librarianship: Essential Skills for Library Media Specialists and Public Library Staff* three-day workshop for 60 attendees in July 2025. The workshop introduced essential skills, resources, and strategies for working in school and public libraries. On Day One, school and public staff worked separately, focusing on their role in each institution. In the evening, the groups joined together to begin networking and building relationships for future collaborations. The evening event included a presentation on Games and Learning and hands-on games learning presented by staff from the University of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Historical Society, PBS Wisconsin, Wisconsin Science Festival, and Milton School District. On Day Two, a guest presenter from PBS Education addressed school media specialists, and a guest presenter from the Cooperative Children’s Book Center addressed both groups.
- Connecting Wisconsin libraries in partnership with Wisconsin Library Association and WEMTA.
- Funding and professional learning for implementation of an online reading engagement tool, Beanstack, for public and school libraries. The contract ended in January 2024.

2025-2027 Goals

- Provide learning opportunities for new public and school library staff promoting collaboration.

Interlibrary Loan Services and WISCAT

Wisconsin libraries rely on interlibrary loan (ILL) to obtain materials their patrons need that are not available from their own collections. ILL is a core service provided by most Wisconsin libraries and is necessary to provide all Wisconsin residents equitable access to library materials.

WISCAT software combines a statewide bibliographic database, a virtual catalog of library holdings, and an interlibrary loan management system used by nearly 500

Wisconsin libraries of all types. The Bureau of Libraries negotiates and manages the contract for the WISCAT software and provides training and technical support to WISCAT users. This software is also leveraged by BadgerLink to provide authentication to licensed resources.

In addition to resource sharing within the WISCAT software platform, the Bureau of Libraries contracts with the Milwaukee Public Library and the University of Wisconsin-Madison to give WISCAT libraries access to materials in the rich collections of these institutions.

The Bureau also maintains a contract with the nonprofit global library organization, OCLC, to search and request items from other academic and out-of-state libraries on behalf of WISCAT libraries. This helps ensure all Wisconsin residents have access to the largest possible pool of materials no matter where they are in the state.

2023-2025 Activities

- Funding for the WISCAT platform was added to the state biennial budget, reducing the need for federal funding to support this service required by state statute.
- Expanded the WISCAT training program by providing more asynchronous training materials for participating libraries, such as a recorded, special webinar focused on WISCAT's ISSI (Inter-System Sharing Initiative) functionality.
- Created calendar bookings links making it easier for libraries to book training sessions with Bureau of Libraries staff.
- Optimized multiple internal workflows for referring ILL requests virtually at the statewide clearinghouse.
- Continued to eliminate the annual WISCAT licensing fee to remove barriers to libraries' participation in interlibrary loan.
- Provided compelling data on the value of WISCAT to participants and the library community.
- Met regularly with Auto-Graphics, the WISCAT software vendor, to ensure the system is working optimally and as efficiently as possible for Wisconsin libraries; to communicate desired enhancements; and to ensure issues were resolved as quickly as possible.
- Expanded library ILL expertise through ILL coordinators throughout the state.
- Researched technological tools and protocols for improving efficiencies in WISCAT, at the state, library system, and library level.
- Investigated ways resource sharing and interlibrary loan can allow for greater library discovery for Wisconsin residents.

2025-2027 Goals

- Host in-person gathering for statewide ILL/ILS Coordinators with Auto-Graphics staff.
- Continue to expand asynchronous training resources for WISCAT participants.
- Continue advocating for public, school, correctional, and other WISCAT libraries in national resource sharing forums and discussions. Keep interoperability and affordability at the forefront.
- Investigate opportunities to expand the regional delivery and resource sharing networks with neighboring states.

Library Services and Technology Services Act

The Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) is the federal grant program supporting libraries in Wisconsin. The Bureau of Libraries implements the LSTA's Grants to States program on behalf of public libraries in Wisconsin. The LSTA program is administered at the federal level by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

2023-2025 Activities

Most programs and services managed by the DPI Bureau of Libraries are supported by LSTA funds, including most of the staff positions on the team. Beyond the larger program and service areas already being covered in this report, the following are specific projects that were supported by 2023 and 2024 LSTA funds:

- Funds were provided to all 15 systems to support "Core System Services" and increase technology tools use and resources capacity in libraries. These funds were distributed using a formula that recognizes the need for additional funding to fully serve sparsely populated areas of the state.
- Funding support to increase efficiency, effectiveness, and affordability of statewide delivery provided by the South Central Library System.
- A Data Landscape study identifying the data needs of librarians throughout the state and barriers to effective use of data. This work resulted in a successful data dashboard pilot that will be funded by library systems moving forward.
- In collaboration with WiLS, created a System Merger document outlining lessons learned and steps to be taken to voluntarily merge library systems moving forward.
- Continued support of a statewide backup system to protect participating library systems from cybersecurity threats.

- Professional Learning scholarships enabling Wisconsin library workers to take advantage of opportunities to increase their skills and ability to serve Wisconsin residents.
- Funding to support libraries in joining shared Integrated Library System consortia throughout the state to increase the number of library materials available to Wisconsin residents, especially in rural areas.

2025-2027 Goals

The following goals are from the 2023-2027 Wisconsin LSTA 5-year Plan:

- Wisconsin residents have easy access to information, tools, resources, people, and spaces to make learning, exploration, and discovery possible for all individuals and communities statewide.
- Wisconsin library staff are equipped with tools and support to serve the needs of their communities.
- Wisconsin libraries cultivate connections and collaborations with other libraries, organizations, and stakeholder groups to engage community members, address equity challenges, maximize strengths, and implement impactful, scalable ideas.

The Library Workforce Connection

While the Libraries Activating Workforce Development Skills (LAWDS) project officially "ended" in December of 2022, librarians and workforce development specialists involved in the collaboration collectively identified the immense value of an ongoing statewide partnership. Beginning in January of 2023, LAWDS participants agreed to continue meeting monthly under the rebranded moniker, The Library Workforce Connection (LWC).

The LWC is a workforce development workgroup consisting of library system directors, regional library consultants, workforce development specialists, and more. The group aims to showcase successful workforce development and service-related initiatives, which could be utilized in libraries throughout the state and troubleshoot evolving workforce development challenges. The LWC is an excellent way for librarians and other specialists throughout the state to collaborate and stay in-the-know about workforce development opportunities in the field. The group took a break in mid-2025 to recalibrate long-term goals and plans and expects to reconvene beginning in 2026.

2023-2025 Activities

- 2023-2024: Offered three in-person Workforce Development Collaboration Workshops in different, diverse regions of the state (central

Wisconsin, northern Wisconsin, and northeastern Wisconsin, respectively); the workshops focused on bringing together intersectional stakeholders by hosting both librarians and local workforce assistance specialists, sharing useful resources, and showcasing opportunities for collaboration.

- 2023-2024: Hosted unique speakers each month at the LWC workgroup meetings; these speakers include both workforce-activated librarians and other workforce assistance specialists from diverse regions throughout the state, allowing the workgroup to collectively benefit by learning about local programs, resources, and initiatives.
- 2023-2024: Updated the [Library Staff Resources to Assist Wisconsin's Workforce](#) to reflect the workgroup's rebranding. Also updated the related [Training Webinars and Guides](#) page to include new Upcoming Workforce-Related Webinars and Workshops section, and Past Employment-Related Resources and Recordings to offer a one-stop shop pathway for interested stakeholders to learn about upcoming opportunities and refer to past recordings and resources. The new digital pipeline allows for easier and more focused promotion of regional and statewide workforce development Continuing Education opportunities, webinars, and workshops.
- 2025: Offered four different county-based workforce development and social services connections meetings for librarians and workforce development specialists in the Southwest Library System. These meetings fostered new relationships and communication pathways for regional agencies collaborating with local libraries in trying to better meet workforce development and social services assistance needs. The Library Workforce Connection took a hiatus as of mid-2025 to recalibrate the long-term goals and structure of the group.

2025-2027 Goals

- 2026-2027: The Library Workforce Connection workgroup is aiming to reconvene early in 2026 with a new structure, new goals, and more concrete plans for the development of ongoing workforce development/social services assistance-related opportunities.
- The group plans to pare down its monthly meeting membership to coordinate a more intimate community of practice focused on workforce development needs; with a nimbler and more intention-driven group, the Library Workforce Connection will be able to supply working Wisconsin librarians with monthly updates regarding state, regional, and national opportunities, professional development events, continuing education sessions, and more.

Public Library System Partnership

The DPI-System Directors weekly Tuesday meeting first started to coordinate responses at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and has become a foundation for how collaboration happens across the state between the DPI and Wisconsin's fifteen public library systems. The regular communication provided at this meeting has facilitated the progress of efforts related to the goals and recommendations of Public Library System Redesign, now as part of ongoing LSTA-supported projects.

DPI-System partnership meetings allow for thoughtful discussion and intentional coordination about a wide range of activities being led by the Bureau of Libraries staff, system staff, and member libraries, and among various partnerships of library stakeholders throughout the state. These meetings allow system directors to:

- Explore common issues and share best practices
- Brainstorm effective responses to emerging issues
- Discuss system administrative and service standards
- Ask questions related to statutory requirements and other legal guidelines
- Provide feedback to guide various Bureau of Libraries efforts
- Develop ideas and collaborative projects

2023-2025 Activities

- Continued a regular meeting schedule with DPI staff and public library system directors.
- Included system staff members and other guests as appropriate to discuss more nuanced topics such as technology, circulation, shared cataloging, and professional learning.
- Assisted system directors in developing coordinated responses to intellectual freedom challenges, large public records requests, and sudden changes to the availability of delivery vendors.
- Facilitated a system directors' retreat in conjunction with the DPI's WISEdata conference in March 2025, where system directors and Bureau of Libraries staff brainstormed ideas and identified priorities for DPI/system collaborative efforts in the coming year.
- Supported the mental health of public library system directors.

2025-2027 Goals

- Discuss and increase collaboration in service delivery between library systems.
- After the completion of a revised edition of Wisconsin's Public Library Standards, investigate the development of Public Library System Standards.

- Further strengthen the relationship and responsiveness between the DPI and Wisconsin’s public library systems.

Tribal Libraries Support

The DPI’s Bureau of Libraries fosters connections and offers support for the tribal libraries in Native Wisconsin:

- Arvid E. Miller Memorial Library and Museum
- Bad River Tribal Library
- Forest County Potawatomi Library
- Ho-Chunk Library (Waagax Hakiruxara Hosto)
- Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe University Library
- Menominee Tribal/County Library
- Oneida Community Library
- Red Cliff (Mazina’igan Wakai’igan)
- S. Verna Fowler Library

2023-2025 Activities

- In the spring of 2025, the DPI Bureau of Libraries heard Tribal Libraries in Wisconsin and throughout the country received grant award termination notices for IMLS’ Native American Basic Grants and Native American Enhancement Grants. These grants are distributed directly to tribal libraries and do not pass through the DPI.
- In staying true to the Bureau of Libraries’ mission of ‘Empowering Wisconsin libraries to best serve their communities,’ the Bureau convened a listening session to better understand how the loss of these funds would impact tribal libraries now and in the future. At the time, The Bad River Tribal Library immediately closed. Other libraries described the elimination of programs and potential for downsizing staff in the future. Affected libraries appealed the decision to terminate grants.
- Some of these grants were restored as of May 21, including the issue of FFY 2025 Native American Basic Grants.
- The last of the grants waiting for appeal were restored December 3, 2025.
- As a result, the Bureau of Libraries has provided two Bureau representatives to support COLAND’s Tribal Libraries Subcommittee.
- A Bureau of Libraries representative joined a nationwide Tribal Library Consultants Group to build relationships with tribal libraries in Wisconsin and extend support.

2025-2027 Goals

- Continue to build and strengthen relationships with tribal libraries serving their communities by continuing to serve on various committees.
- Assist in convening state-wide meetings when called upon by the tribal libraries.
- Build awareness of tribal library resources and available services.

Wisconsin Document Depository and Wisconsin Digital Archives

The DPI Bureau of Libraries is responsible for coordinating the Wisconsin Document Depository Program, which collects, distributes, and preserves state documents as defined [by Wis. Stat. § 35.81\(3\)](#) with the goal of documenting the activities of Wisconsin State Government. Under sections [35.81-35.84 of the Wisconsin Statutes](#), as amended by 1991 Wisconsin Act 285, state agencies are required to participate in the Wisconsin Document Depository Program by providing either print or electronic state documents to the program.

Print documents are distributed to designated [depository libraries](#) throughout the state. Electronic documents are digitally archived for long-term preservation and made accessible through the [Wisconsin Digital Archives](#). Designated depository libraries have the responsibility to promote awareness and provide access to state documents, regardless of format, to patrons seeking assistance with informational inquiries and research.

For over 120 years, Wisconsin libraries have been providing access to Wisconsin state documents distributed by the [Wisconsin Document Depository Program](#) giving historical perspective on the activities of Wisconsin state government.

2023-2025 Activities

- Convened designated depository libraries in fall 2023 and spring 2024 to get input for how the depository program and the General Responsibilities and Guidelines for depository libraries should be updated. Meetings helped establish how depository library work has changed with the transition of state documents from print to electronic. Libraries identified the need to redefine what it means to be a depository library if there were no more physical collections to maintain.
- Created program materials depository libraries can use to promote government documents and support the work of designated depository libraries. Materials include a Search Help for the Wisconsin Digital Archives web page to help users access content easier and a brochure and overview of the collection document for the Wisconsin Digital Archives.

- Updated the language and layout of the Wisconsin Digital Archives homepage to make it easier for users to access content.
- Rebranded the Wisconsin Digital Archives with a logo that better defines what is in the collection.

2025-2027 Goals

- Update the General Responsibilities and Guidelines based on feedback from depository libraries which will help redefine the work of depository libraries in an electronic world.
- Reconvene designated depository libraries to get ideas for additional training and outreach materials that can be developed to support the use of the Wisconsin Digital Archives.
- Reach out and engage non-depository libraries to promote the use of Wisconsin Digital Archives.
- Participate in the OCLC pilot rollout of the newly developed CTdm digital preservation suite. Provide feedback on workflows and processes.

WISELearn

The [WISELearn Resources Library](#) is a repository of high-quality, standards-aligned educational resources and professional learning materials representing the diversity of our global community. Many of the resources are authored, recommended, or submitted by Wisconsin teachers, administrators, librarians, and DPI consultants.

2023-2025 Activities

- Continued to streamline WISELearn as a repository, while ensuring alignment with [Wisconsin Statutes § 115.28\(27\)](#).
- Expanded collaboration with higher education and public libraries on Open Education Resources (OER). Attending quarterly state-wide meetings.
- The DPI worked to increase content of resources within the repository.
- Held two on-line training sessions and posted six training videos on WISELearn for all DPI staff to increase knowledge and usage.
- Utilized WISELearn as a resource for communities of practice in the Wisconsin library community. Bureau of Libraries staff moderate WISELearn groups for the Policy of the Month project, Wisconsin Games + Learning + Libraries cohort, and School Library Planning. Bureau of Libraries WISELearn groups rank as the most popular and frequently utilized throughout all the DPI as an agency.

2025-2027 Goals

- Continue to grow collaborative efforts with higher education and public library sectors around the state on OER and the use of the WISELearn repository.
- Use the results of a third-party review of WISELearn to update and increase usage of the platform.
- Increase the content of high-quality, standards-aligned educational resources.
- Deliver four new WISELearn training courses for DPI staff.
- Increase awareness of WISELearn to external partners.

Youth and Inclusive Services

The Division of Libraries and Technology interprets [Wis. Stat. § 43.24\(2\)\(k\)](#), “Promotion and facilitation of library service to users with special needs,” to encompass inclusive services. Inclusive library services are holistic, spanning library policies, collections, space, and services. Inclusive services reflect equity and accessibility for all members of the community. The Bureau of Libraries Public Library Consultants provide professional learning, consultation, and resource development on inclusive services topics.

2023-2025 Activities

- Based on the Public Library Association’s Inclusive Internship Initiative, developed a Teen Internship Pilot Program to fund library internships for local high school juniors or seniors. In 2023, participating public libraries received LSTA grant funding to offer six-week paid, mentored internships to students from diverse backgrounds, allowing them to experience the work of librarianship firsthand and to explore their talents and perspectives to impact their communities.
- In 2024, six libraries participated in the Teen Inclusive Internship Program and LSTA grant funding increased from six weeks to 12 weeks.
- In 2025, seven libraries participated in the Teen Internship Program.
- Facilitated two Building Community Based Summers (BCBS) cohorts in spring 2025 and fall 2025. BCBS participants work with trained facilitators and each other to consider summer programs and services through an equity-based lens. The BCBS learning framework empowers library staff to integrate equitable practices into their summer services and programming by examining how inclusive their current programs are, whether goals are being met, and what impact these efforts have on the community members who need them most.

- The DPI continued to develop, collect, vet, and organize Inclusive Services resources related to New Director Inclusive Services Consultations; and explored how said resources might help evolve the Inclusive Services Assessment and Guide from 2019, especially with the ongoing development of Public Library Standards.
- Explored statewide translation services as an option; will be considered again in the future.

2025-2027 Goals

- Expand the Teen Internship Program to include up to 10 libraries as funding allows.
- Facilitate a spring 2026 and a fall 2026 BCBS cohort.
- Present BCBS in-person workshops for libraries and library systems.
- In 2025-2027, the DPI has plans to review and revise the 2019 Inclusive Services Assessment and Guide – potentially as a part of the ongoing development of new Public Library Standards.