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Introduction

The 2023-2027 West Virginia Library Services and Technology (LSTA) Act plan has two goals and seven outcomes that respond to future trends facing West Virginia's libraries. The goals and outcomes are designed to respond to one or more LSTA purposes and the focal areas.

The West Virginia Library Commission, a Division of the Department of Arts, Culture, and History, submits this Plan with a commitment to improving the lives of West Virginians.

Mission

The West Virginia Library Commission's mission is to enhance the capacity of public, academic, and school libraries to deliver resources, programs, and services that support learning for all West Virginians. The Library Commission is a Department of Arts, Culture, and History Division.

Needs Assessment

West Virginia public libraries serve many of the smallest communities in the State. The public library system comprises 179 outlets (including main libraries, branches, and bookmobiles.) Eighty-five of those serve populations that the U.S. Census Bureau would classify as rural, rural remote, or rural distant. Only forty-four outlets serve areas that are classified as cities.¹

In 2020, West Virginia's population became 39th in the nation, moving down from 37th in 2020. The chart below shows the percentage of West Virginia's population by age.² All age groups are forecasted to decline, while the people of West Virginians 65 and over are expected to grow. The shift in the population indicates a need for additional services for this age group, both in terms of social needs and recreational activities.

Age	2010 Population	2020 Population
0 - 5	103,970	91,920
5 - 19	334,350	309,140
20 - 24	118,220	111,130
25 - 44	457,940	429,100
45 - 64	541,610	479,520
65+	298,150	372,770
Total Population	1,854,240	1,793,580

Looking at West Virginia's ethnicity by the population percentage shows that West Virginia is not a diverse state.³

¹ United States Census Bureau, Decennial Census (May 24, 2022)

² 2021 State Profile West Virginia. Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

³ 2021 State Profile West Virginia. Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

Ethnicity - 2020	Percentage of West Virginia Population
White	92.98%
Black / African American	4.10%
American Indian	0.22%
Asian and Pacific Islander	0.93%
Hispanic	1.77%

The largest growing ethnic groups are Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino, predicted to be 6.8 percent by 2030.⁴

Internet Access

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that 78.9 percent of West Virginia households have a broadband internet subscription. For the remaining 21.1 percent, public libraries provide this service.⁵ The West Virginia Library Commission aided service by increasing the broadband speeds for 144 public library outlets.

Access to broadband services in the state is improving in underserved areas thanks to initiatives put into place at the State level due to American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds distributed to the state.⁶

Education

West Virginia public libraries will continue to assist citizens in achieving higher levels of education and job skills necessary for employment and workforce development. The priority of this focus requires library staff to have a wide range of skills. Unfortunately, the state remains among the lowest nationally in the number of Masters of Library Science degreed librarians employed per capita.

Education remains essential for citizens seeking employment in the state. Eighty-seven point six percent of the citizens aged 25 years and over are high school graduates or higher.⁷

Enrollment at institutes of higher education, public two-year institutions, or public four-year institutions continues to drop. For example, between the 2016/2017 and 2020/21 academic years, enrollment at the public four-year institutions dropped 7.926 percent, whereas it dropped 20.607 percent during the same period at the public two-year institutions.⁸

⁴ 2021 State Profile West Virginia.

⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, "West Virginia Quick Facts." Accessed June 30, 2022. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/WV,US/PST045221>

⁶ WBOY12 News Staff, "WV officials announce billion-dollar broadband plan to bring internet service to 200,000 more homes and businesses." Accessed June 30, 2022. <https://www.wboy.com/news/west-virginia/wv-officials-announce-billion-dollar-broadband-plan-to-bring-internet-service-to-200000-more-homes-and-businesses/>

⁷ U.S. Census Bureau

⁸ WV Higher Education Policy Commission "West Virginia Higher Education Almanac 2021." Accessed June 30, 2022.

https://www.wvhepc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/00_Almanac_2021_FINAL_22Feb2022_LowRes.pdf
2023-2027 WEST VIRGINIA LIBRARY SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY ACT PLAN

Goals

Goal 1 – Expand Access to Information

West Virginians need access to information and education resources for lifelong learning. The West Virginia Library Commission will strengthen and support West Virginia libraries by expanding access to information, facilitating resource sharing among libraries, and providing robust technological infrastructure.

Outcome 1: Users access libraries that understand and respond positively to the diverse needs of different geographical locations, cultures, ages, abilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, and educational levels.

Outcome 2: Users access desired information and educational resources and services in various formats.

Outcome 3: Users benefit from and engage in programs that promote all types of literacy, including reading and technology skills.

Goal 2 – Facilitate Collaboration, Leadership, and Innovation in the Library Community

The West Virginia Library Commission will strengthen and support libraries through advisory support, continuing education, and programs to help library staff, directors, and trustees strengthen their ability to meet the demands of their communities.

Outcome 1: Libraries provide users with improved services through resource sharing.

Outcome 2: Library staff and vested partners are trained and have competencies to meet library users' current and future needs with evolving services and resources.

Outcome 3: Libraries have a technology infrastructure that is flexible and innovative.

Outcome 4: Libraries have support for ongoing development to provide continually improved services.

Projects

The following projects or activities will implement the goals and outcomes in West Virginia's Library Services and Technology Act Plan. The Library Commission has defined the focal area

or intent, the output measurements, anticipated impact and benefit, any partnerships, the timeline for the activity, and methods of evaluating the project or activity.

Goal 1, Outcome 1: Expand access to Information - Users access libraries that understand and respond positively to the diverse needs of different geographical locations, cultures, ages, abilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, and educational levels.

Project or Program: Services to the Blind and Print Disabled

Description: The West Virginia Library Commission Special Services Section is the regional library of the National Library Service/Library of Congress network of cooperating libraries. Public library services in alternative formats are delivered to meet the needs of the blind, visually impaired, or those with learning disabilities. In addition, the Section aids individuals who are not comfortable with digital formats or do not have home internet access by offering custom download services.

Focal Area and Intent: Information Access / Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources.

Target Audience: Individuals unable to read regular print, hold a book, or turn pages due to temporary or permanent physical limitations; those without access to internet or reliable internet services.

Target Partners: West Virginia Division of the National Federation for the Blind, West Virginia Department of Education, West Virginia Bureau of Senior Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

Timeline: Ongoing

Output: Number of consultations; Number of items circulated.

Impact: Libraries will receive increased support for their programs and services to unreached community populations.

Evaluation Targets: The Special Services Section will increase awareness of the program with non-traditional library users. Due to outreach activities, the number of registered borrowers will increase by 10% over the plan period. In addition, circulation statistics will show a 5% increase in usage for both large print and digital collections.

Goal 1, Outcome 2: Expand access to Information - Users access desired information and educational resources and services in various formats.

Project or Program: Expand access to libraries' archival, unique, and audio-visual materials.

Description: The West Virginia Library Commission will explore new programs and services to expand access to the state's unique collections housed in libraries.

Focal Area and Intent: Informational Access / Improve users' ability to discover information resources.

Target Audience: Citizens; Libraries

Target Partners: Archives and History, a Division of Culture and History, Public Libraries, Marshall University, West Virginia University, and other local cultural heritage organizations.

Timeline: The project begins in October 2023.

Output: Number of new digital items; Number of new educational resources created; Number of existing educational resources enhanced.

Impact: Users will report they find digitized primary sources that they can use. Educators indicate that content has been incorporated into lessons.

Evaluation Targets: Survey, feedback forms, and statistics collected to be determined.

Project or Program: Learning Express Library and Job & Career Accelerator

Project Description: These online services provide access to computer skill-building tutorials, practice exams for K12, undergraduate, graduate, professional, and employment tests, electronic books, complete job search functionality, and application assistance to all West Virginians.

Focal Area and Intent: Employment and economic development / Improve users' ability to use resources and apply information for employment support

Target Audience: Adult and teen population and working population, including unemployed and underemployed

Target Partners: Workforce West Virginia, Volunteer West Virginia, West Virginia Library Association

Timeline: Ongoing

Output: Number of sessions; Number of searches; Number of retrievals.

Impact: Users report increased knowledge from the use of digital content.

Evaluation: The Library Commission will promote Learning Express Library and Job & Career Accelerator resources and usage through flyers, brochures, etc., during the plan period. Staff will use data to monitor the tool's effectiveness and additional promotional needs. In addition, staff will provide training through on-site visits, webinars, and conference sessions. Surveys will be distributed to participants after each session to determine the training benefits and make modifications as needed.

Evaluation Targets: Seventy-five percent of the public library respondents will indicate a better understanding of the products and feel more confident in answering patron questions.

Project or Program: WVInfoDepot.org

Description: WVInfoDepot.org provides statewide access to licensed, full-text periodicals and reference resources on various topics such as current events, legal issues, social issues, health information, reading suggestions, and more. It is available to all citizens from any internet-connected device and helps lessen the impact of low local public library funding throughout West Virginia.

Focal Area and Intent: Information Access / Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources

Target Audience: General Public; Libraries

Target Partners: West Virginia Department of Education, West Virginia Public Libraries, West Virginia Library Association

Timeline: Ongoing

Output: Number of sessions; Number of searches; Number of retrievals.

Impact: Users report increased knowledge from the use of digital content.

Evaluation: The Library Commission will promote resources and usage through flyers, brochures, etc., during the plan period. Staff monitoring data will modify outreach services as needed. In addition, staff will provide training through on-site visits, webinars, and conference sessions. Surveys will be distributed to each participant after sessions to determine the training benefits and make modifications as needed.

Evaluation Targets: Increase overall usage and customer satisfaction by 20% in five years.

Goal 1, Outcome 3: Expand access to Information - Users benefit from and engage in programs promoting all literacy types, including reading and technology skills.

Project or Program: Annual Summer Reading and Learning Program Support

Project Description: The Library Commission will support in-person and virtual summer reading and learning programs to encourage children and families to read for learning and maintain skills during school vacations. The Library Commission will maintain a membership in the Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP). As a member, manuals and other materials will be supplied to public libraries.

Focal Area and Intent: Lifelong learning / Improve users' general knowledge and skills

Target Audience: Citizens; Libraries

Target Partners: West Virginia Department of Education, West Virginia Library Association

Timeline: Ongoing

Output: Number of children, teen, and adult participants; Number of programs; Average length of the program; Amount of time spent reading.

Impact: Participating libraries will report stories from the staff and citizens on how the summer program has positively (or negatively) impacted youth, families, and the library staff.

Evaluation: The Library Commission will annually implement a statewide evaluation project based on Project Outcome. Participants will be evaluated after individual programs, summer reading, or both to determine the benefits. In addition, the participating libraries' participation and circulation statistics will be collected and monitored annually for outreach services.

Evaluation Targets: The number of programs offered by libraries for summer reading will increase annually by 3%. Circulation statistics will show a 5% increase in usage of children's collections. Surveys indicate that program participants found 75% of summer reading programs beneficial.

Project or Program: Expand and enhance existing reading, learning, and literacy programs through the West Virginia Center for the Book

Description: Through the West Virginia Center for the Book, the Library Commission will develop, promote, or enhance existing reading, learning, and literacy programs. The Center for the Books projects will include but are not limited to the Appalachian Heritage Writer-In-Residence Program through Shepherd University, the West Virginia Book Festival, West Virginia Family Read Week, One Book One West Virginia statewide book discussion group, and the West Virginia Indie Author Project.

Focal Area and Intent: Lifelong learning / Improve users' general knowledge and skills

Target Audience: General Public; West Virginia Libraries; Non-profit reading and writing associations.

Target Partners: Shepherd University, Writing non-profit organizations, West Virginia Department of Education

Timeline: Ongoing

Output: Number of participants; Number of presentations; Average length of programs.

Impact: Participating libraries will report stories from the staff and citizens on how the summer program has positively (or negatively) impacted youth, families, and the library staff.

Evaluation: Informational resources and training will be provided through targeted webinars, special training, and conference sessions. Participants will be evaluated after each session and six months to determine the benefits of the resources and/or training and make modifications to the programs as needed. In addition, staff will survey libraries annually regarding needs.

Goal 2, Outcome 1: Facilitate Collaboration, Leadership, and Innovation in the Library Community - Libraries provide users with improved services through resource sharing.

Project or Program: Integrated Library System (ILS) Maintenance Sub-Grants

Description: The Library Commission will provide annual sub-grants to maintain the state's four consortia-based integrated library systems.

Focal Area and Intent: Information Access / Improve users' ability to discover information resources

Target Audience: Libraries; General Public

Target Partners: Not applicable

Timeline: Ongoing

Output: Number of libraries participating; Number of items borrowed and lent to other libraries

Impact: Citizens will have access to view the collections of all public libraries in the state.

Evaluation: Executive boards for the consortia will be surveyed annually to gather satisfaction with the systems and grants.

Evaluation Targets: Ninety percent of the consortia boards surveyed will indicate satisfaction with the system and service. Participating consortia libraries will see a 5% increase in resource sharing each year.

Project or Program: Consortia Cataloging Support

Description: The Library Commission will aid public library cataloging efforts by 1) Coordinating cataloging training for all public libraries statewide; and 2) Consortia access to OCLC CatExpress for bibliographic records. These services allow libraries to provide accurate and timely bibliographic information through the consortium ILS while eliminating costs for the individual libraries.

Focal Area(s): Information Access / Improve users' ability to discover information resources.

Target Audience: Libraries; General Public

Target Partners: Not applicable

Timeline: Ongoing

Impact: Citizens will have access to view the collections of public libraries. Participating libraries will report stories from staff on how the service has positively (or negatively) impacted getting materials to the shelves.

Evaluation: Training will be provided through on-site visits, webinars, and conference sessions. Participants will be evaluated after each session to determine the benefits of the training and to make modifications as needed. OCLC CatExpress will be proved to each consortium with individual log-ins for each library. Staff will monitor log-in usage and bibliographic records downloaded monthly. In addition, staff will survey consortia members annually to assess the program's value.

Evaluation Targets: Ninety percent of the participants surveyed will indicate satisfaction with the training program and OCLC CatExpress.

Project or Program: West Virginia Library Delivery

Description: Libraries will have access to a statewide interlibrary loan and courier to facilitate resource sharing and other material distribution.

Focal Area and Intent: Information Access / Improve users' ability to discover information resources.

Target Audience: West Virginia Libraries and Citizens

Target Partners: West Virginia Purchasing Division

Timeline: The project begins on October 2023

Output: Number of participating libraries; Number of items moved through the courier.

Impact: Libraries can access a statewide courier to facilitate resource sharing and other material distribution. Libraries report courier services as good or very good on an annual survey.

Evaluation: The West Virginia Library Delivery project team will formulate evaluation methods during the first year of project implementation.

Evaluation Targets: To be determined

Goal 2, Outcome 2: Facilitate Collaboration, Leadership, and Innovation in the Library Community - Library staff and vested partners are trained and have competencies to meet library users' current and future needs with evolving services and resources.

Project or Program: Continuing Education for Public Library Staff, New Director Academy, Trustee Academy

Description: The Library Commission will work with library directors, staff, and trustees to identify and develop core competency training sessions on various topics to meet the diverse needs of library staff.

Focal Area and Intent: Institutional Capacity / Improve the library workforce

Target Audience: Library directors, staff, and trustees

Target Partners: West Virginia Library Association, United for Libraries

Timeline: Ongoing

Output: Number of trainings; Number of participants

Impact: Library staff report they increased their knowledge because of training. Library staff report information they received to help them continue or develop new library programs, policies, or services. Library staff report training has a positive impact on their behavior.

Evaluation: Informational resources and training will be provided through targeted webinars, special training, and conference sessions. Participants will be evaluated after each session and six months to determine the benefits of the resources and/or training and modify the programs as needed. In addition, staff will survey libraries annually regarding needs.

Evaluation Targets: The first year of the new training structure will be used to determine baselines. After that, there will be a 10% increase each year in completing the training. Seventy-five percent will indicate that the competency training will improve existing programs and services. Ninety percent of library staff participating in continuing education will provide better services to their libraries. Twenty percent of participants will start new services or programs.

Project: Technology Skills for Library Staff

Description: The COVID pandemic highlighted the need for library staff to have a high level of computer literacy skills to assist patrons who were making the shift to work or learn remotely and be knowledgeable in resources available to reduce the digital divide. The Library Commission will support initiatives that foster technology skills for all library staff.

Focal Area and Intent: Institutional Capacity / Improve the library workforce.

Target Audience: Library staff

Target Partners: West Virginia Library Association

Timeline: The project begins in October 2023.

Output: Number of trainings; Number of participants.

Impact: Library staff report they increased their knowledge because of training. Library staff report they are more comfortable assisting patrons with their technology-related questions. Library staff report training has a positive impact on their behavior.

Evaluation: To be determined

Evaluation Targets: To be chosen.

Goal 2, Outcome 3: Facilitate Collaboration, Leadership, and Innovation in the Library Community - Libraries have a technology infrastructure that is flexible and innovative.

Project or Program: E-Rate Consulting Services

Description: The West Virginia Library Commission will provide E-Rate consulting services to public libraries.

Focal Area and Intent: Institutional Capacity / Improve the library workforce.

Target Audience: Library staff

Target Partners: To be determined.

Timeline: Ongoing

Output: Number of consultations

Impact: Library staff report they increased their knowledge of the E-Rate process. Libraries receive FCC/USAC funding to offset technology or connectivity expenses.

Evaluation: To be developed.

Project or Program: Library Internet Services

Description: The West Virginia Library Commission will provide high-speed broadband services to public libraries on the West Virginia Office of Technology network.

Focal Area and Intent: Institutional Capacity / Improve the library workforce.

Target Audience: Library staff and citizens

Target Partners: West Virginia Purchasing Division, West Virginia Office of Technology

Timeline: Ongoing

Output: Average broadband upload and download speeds

Impact: Library staff report that broadband service can meet daily operating services, patron computing needs, and Wi-Fi services.

Evaluation: To be determined.

Goal 2, Outcome 4: Facilitate Collaboration, Leadership, and Innovation in the Library Community - Libraries support ongoing development to provide continually improved services.

Project or Program: Library Consultation Services Assist libraries in planning, implementing and evaluating their capacity to provide library services.

Description: The West Virginia Library Commission consults will assist libraries in planning, implementing, or evaluating their capacity to provide library services.

Focal Area and Intent: Institutional Capacity / Improve the library workforce.

Target Audience: Library directors, staff, and trustees

Target Partners: West Virginia Library Commission, OCLC WebJunction, United for Libraries

Timeline: Ongoing

Output: Number of transactions

Impact: Public library directors and trustees receive increased support to strengthen their first years in the position. New public library directors and trustees report information they received helped them during their first years.

Evaluation: Informational resources and training will be provided through on-site visits, webinars, and conference sessions. After each session, participants will be evaluated to determine the benefits of the resources and/or training and make modifications as needed. Site visits will be logged and monitored for trends used to prioritize or develop programs and activities. Libraries will be surveyed annually regarding the awareness and effectiveness of the consulting services provided.

Project: Library Mentorship Program

Project Description: The Library Commission and the West Virginia Library Association will collaborate to create a statewide mentoring program for professional and paraprofessional library staff.

Focal Area and Intent: Institutional Capacity / Improve users' general knowledge and skills

Target Audience: Library directors, staff, and trustees

Target Partners: West Virginia Library Association

Evaluation: To be determined

Evaluation Targets: To be determined

Crosswalk

State Goal	IMLS Focal Area	IMLS Intent	Project
Goal 1 - Expand Access to Information	Information access	Improve users' ability to obtain and or use information resources	Services to the Blind and Print Disabled Expand Access to libraries' archival, unique, and audio-visual materials WVInfoDepot.org
	Employment and economic development	Improve users' ability to use resources and apply information for employment support	LearningExpress Library and Job & Career Accelerator
	Lifelong learning	Improve users' general knowledge and skills	Annual summer reading and learning program support West Virginia Center for the Book
Goal 2 - Facilitate Collaboration, Leadership, & Innovation in the Library Community	Information access	Improve users' ability to discover information resources	Integrated Library System Maintenance Sub-Grants Consirtia Cataloging Support West Virginia Library Delivery
	Institutional Capacity	Improve the library workforce	Continuing education for public library staff, New Director Academy, Trustee Academy Technology skills for library staff E-Rate consulting services Library Internet Services Library consultation services Library mentorship program

Evaluation

Activities to evaluate this plan's impact will take various forms, including surveys, formal and informal conversations, and usage log analysis. Activities with specific evaluation needs were listed with the activity. Data will be used to measure indicators demonstrating the impact of the plan, the Library Commission, and West Virginia libraries in communities.

The LSTA Coordinator will ensure that the plan and its activities work toward its intended outcomes. After each quarter and the grant year, the Library Commission will evaluate the impact of each program or activity and the plan's goals. Care will be given to multi-year programs and activities to ensure consistent measures so data may identify trends.

An evaluation consultant will be selected either by the Library Commission or as part of the state library administrative agency (SLAA) group to complete an independent evaluation of the Five-

Year Plan. In addition, the consultant will prepare an overall review of the progress made toward achieving the goals.

Partner Involvement

Roles, responsibilities, and timeframe of vested partner involvement are illustrated below.

Library Commissioners and other agencies will meet quarterly throughout the five years to advise on the priorities, needs, plans, policies, and evaluation of the goals and activities.

Library Commission top management will provide leadership in planning and evaluating the program and activities for the program. Meetings will be as appropriate.

On an ongoing basis, the LSTA Coordinator for the agency will advise management on the planning, programs, activities, and evaluation.

West Virginia libraries and the library association will have opportunities to periodically provide feedback through surveys and/or focus groups about the programs/services throughout the year.

Communication and Public Availability

Upon Institute for Museum and Library Service (IMLS) approval, the plan will be posted on the West Virginia Library Commission website (www.librarycommission.wv.gov) with an email link for comments. In addition, focus groups will be held around the state to discuss the plan and allow for comments.

The LSTA Coordinator will provide an activity report at the West Virginia Library Association fall conference. In addition, the information will be communicated to partners through the agency website and email listserv.

The Library Commission will provide opportunities for formal and informal comments throughout the year through web survey tools, site visits, and library activities.

Monitoring

The West Virginia Library Commission staff will continuously track the implementation of the five-year plan, prepare reports, and submit reports as required to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the Library Commission, the Office of the Curator for the Department of Arts, Culture, and History, and others.

The LSTA Coordinator will track sub-grantee projects by reviewing required regular reports and site visits. These reports may include mid-year status reports. Final reports will be required for all projects, including program and financial information. Reports will be reviewed by the Library Commission Chief Financial Officer, LSTA Coordinator, Library Section Director, and Curator of the Department of Arts, Culture, and History to determine compliance and progress.

IMLS will be notified of any amendments or modifications to the plan as they become evident. Notification of amendments or changes will be made to library vested partners through email, agency publications, the agency website, or other appropriate means.

Comments and Questions

Submit comments or questions regarding this plan to Heather Campbell Shock, LSTA Coordinator, by phone at (304) 558-2041 or email at heather.s.campbell@wv.gov.