

# West Virginia Library Commission

## Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to States Program Implementation Evaluation Federal Fiscal Year 2018 - Federal Fiscal Year 2022

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Karen Goff, Executive Secretary and State Librarian



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*This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.*

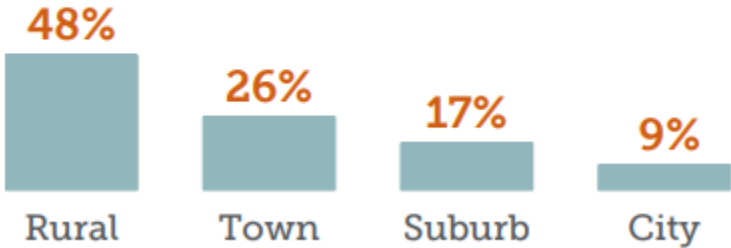
# EVALUATION SUMMARY

## Summary Introduction

The 2019 Public Libraries Survey (PLS) reported that West Virginia had a total of 97 public library jurisdictions employing 380.59 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff categorized as librarians (only 85.46 FTE are reported as having an American Library Association [ALA] accredited Master’s degree); similarly, the Academic Libraries Survey (ALS) reported that 38 institutions of higher education employ 127.74 FTE librarians. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics’ (NCES) Elementary/Secondary Information System (EISi), West Virginia’s 60 public school districts employ 208.69 full-time librarians.

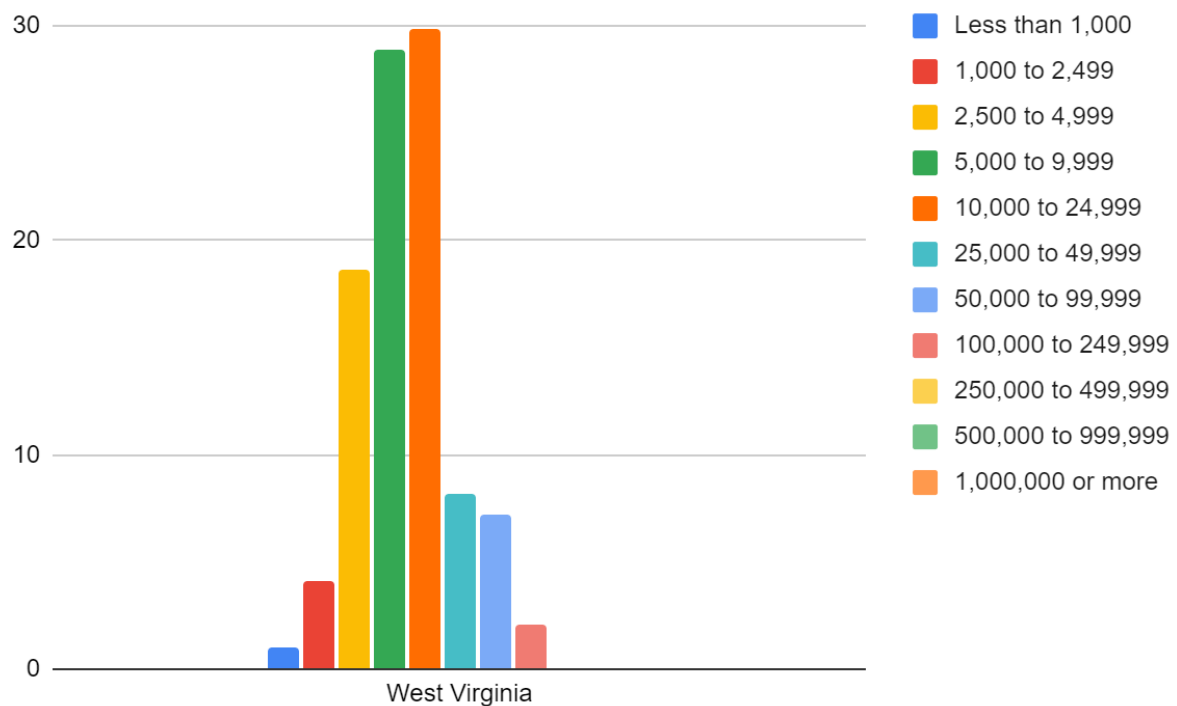
Total FTE public library staff was reported to be 652.97 FTEs working in 179 public library outlets (including main libraries, branch libraries, and bookmobiles).

### Public Library Outlets by Locale



Eighty-five of these libraries (47.5%) served areas classified by the U.S. Census Bureau as being rural. Of these, sixty-eight were in communities classified as being either “rural, remote” or “rural, distant.” Many of the remaining libraries are in small towns. Only forty-four of the outlets (24.6%) were in areas classified as cities

or suburban environments. The 2019 PLS identified forty-three (43) of the libraries (not counting bookmobiles) that occupied facilities of less than 2,000 square feet (SF). Eleven (11) of these were smaller than 1,000 SF. In short, to understand West Virginia’s LSTA program, one needs to recognize that the West Virginia Library Commission (WVLC) is attempting to serve many libraries that are small, under-staffed, and under-resourced.



**Percentage distribution of public libraries, by population of legal service area and state: FY 2019**

Given West Virginia’s population of 1,793,716<sup>1</sup>, the state’s annual Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to States<sup>2</sup> program allotment from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) of approximately \$1.43<sup>3</sup> million per year translates into \$0.80<sup>4</sup> per person on an annual basis. LSTA funds alone are inadequate to meet the library and information needs of West Virginia’s approximately 1.8 million residents. The West Virginia Library Commission’s challenge is to find ways to make \$0.80 per person transformative in terms of library services; to invest a relatively small amount of money to accomplish major results by strategically deploying funds and leveraging other public and private monies in support of high-quality library and information services.

There are only two goals in WVLC’s five-year LSTA plan entitled **West Virginia LSTA Grants to States Program 2018-2022**. They are:

**GOAL 1: Expand Access to Information**

**GOAL 2: Facilitate Collaboration, Leadership, and Innovation in the Library Community**

<sup>1</sup> United States Census Bureau, Decennial Census (April 1, 2020)

<sup>2</sup> The report will refer to the Library Services and Technology Act Grants to States program simply as LSTA throughout this report

<sup>3</sup> Four year LSTA Grants to States allotment average ((FFY [Federal Fiscal Year] 2018 State Allotment + FFY 2019 State Allotment + FFY 2020 State Allotment + FFY 2021 State Allotment) / 4)

<sup>4</sup> Four year LSTA Grants to States allotment average / United States Census Bureau Decennial Census (April 1, 2020)

The evaluation that follows attempts to assess the degree to which WVLC is making progress in a challenging environment.

## ***Retrospective Question A-1 Summary***

### **Agency’s Internal Assessment and Evaluator’s Assessment**

As part of the assessment process, the evaluators asked the West Virginia Library Commission Executive Secretary (State Librarian) and other key staff identified by the State Librarian to offer their joint appraisal of progress their agency had made toward achieving each of the two goals included in WVLC’s 2018-2022 five-year plan. The evaluators prefaced their request for this internal assessment by noting the fact that the state was only three years into the implementation of the five-year plan. Consequently, it was acknowledged that it was unlikely that any of the goals would be completely or finally achieved. The agency representatives were also encouraged to consider their trajectory toward successfully achieving their goals. This was obviously a difficult task given that at the time of the evaluation there were only hints of what might be achieved in a post-pandemic period.

Table 1 offers a summary of both the West Virginia Library Commission’s internal assessment and the evaluators’ conclusions.

<b>Table 1 - West Virginia Library Commission’s and Evaluators’ Assessment of Achievement</b>		
<b>GOAL</b>	<b>West Virginia Library Commission’s Internal Assessment</b>	<b>Evaluators’ Assessment</b>
<b>GOAL 1: Expand Access to Information</b>	Achieved	Achieved
<b>GOAL 2: Facilitate Collaboration, Leadership, and Innovation in the Library Community</b>	Achieved	Achieved

Appendix H includes a detailed financial picture of all the projects under each goal; a summary table is presented below.

### **Summary of West Virginia LSTA Expenditures for FFY2018-FFY2020**

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Goal Title</b>	<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Goal 1	Expand Access to Information	\$ 2,707,908.65	67.36%
Goal 2	Facilitate Collaboration, Leadership, and Innovation	\$ 1,305,931.82	32.48%
	LSTA PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION	\$ 6,424.74	0.16%
		<b>\$ 4,020,265.21</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

## **Evaluator's Goal 1 Summary**

### **GOAL 1: Expand Access to Information**

The LSTA-funded projects undertaken by WVLC in support of Goal 1 are extensive and diverse. They respond to a majority of the Measuring Success focal areas and to a large variety of the intents as well. Because of the breadth and depth of the projects undertaken successfully and the high degree of relevance of the projects carried out to the needs identified in the 2018 - 2022 LSTA Plan, the evaluator's conclude that West Virginia Library Commission has **ACHIEVED** Goal 1.

## **Evaluator's Goal 2 Summary**

### **GOAL 2: Facilitate Collaboration, Leadership, and Innovation in the Library Community**

The largest component of WVLC's efforts to fulfill Goal 1 (*Consortia Support*) continued throughout the entire evaluation period and, in fact, the consolidation of two of the consortia into a larger entity significantly improves the ease of the public's access to library resources. Both consulting activities and staff development activities were radically impacted by the pandemic; however, WVLC's response was exemplary. Essentially, WVLC quickly pivoted to embrace multiple virtual models and, if anything, delivered a higher level of service than was offered pre-pandemic.

It could be argued that WVLC only partly achieved Goal 2 due to the fact that it failed to meet some of the very specific criteria for individual projects that were outlined in the 2018 - 2022 Plan and that there were initiatives that were not launched due to funding realities. Nevertheless, the preponderance of the evidence suggests that great strides have already been made and that these strides are continuing. Based on the trajectory observed, the evaluators conclude that West Virginia Library Commission has **ACHIEVED** Goal 2.

**A-2. To what extent did WVLC's Five-Year Plan activities achieve results that address national priorities associated with the Measuring Success focal areas and their corresponding intents?** The "Crosswalk" chart that is presented in the 2018 - 2022 LSTA Five-Year Plan categories a number of the projects that are described as addressing multiple focal areas. This is, in part, due to the fact that many of the projects undertaken are in some ways dependent on each other. It could easily be argued that the *State Library Network* project is integral to almost everything else that WVLC has undertaken with LSTA funds in recent years. However, for the sake of clarity, the evaluators have aligned each project with a single focal area. This alignment is shown in the table provided in Appendix F.

Based on the evaluators' alignment, WVLC carried out projects and activities that addressed five of the six Measuring Success focal areas and seven of the fourteen intents. The Information Access, Institutional Capacity, and Lifelong Learning focal area were most prominent. The evaluators grouped a number of very similar projects together in their assessment. Had we not grouped six "consortia support" projects, the greatest amount of activity would be under the

Information Access focal area, with projects with this focus taking place in support of both of WVLC's two goals.

Projects that address three of the Measuring Success intents account for the lion's share of LSTA expenditures for the three-year evaluation period. The *State Library Network* project concentrates on the "improve the library's physical and technological infrastructure" intent and consumes almost thirty percent (29.2%) of total LSTA expenditures for the period. The multiple *Consortia Support* projects account for nearly another quarter of the total (24.88%) and serve the "improve the users' ability to discover information resources" intent. Finally, the *WV InfoDepot* statewide database project addresses the "improve the users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources" intent. Expenditures for database licensing and other costs associated with this activity accounted for 21.29% of total LSTA expenditures over three years. Together, the projects addressing these intents were responsible for over three-quarters (75.37%) of the LSTA expenditures.

**A-3. Did any of the following groups represent a substantial focus for WVLC's Five-Year Plan activities? (Yes/No)** No single project qualifies as being a substantial focus on the basis of the ten percent (10%) expenditure specified by IMLS in the evaluation guidelines. However, three project areas should be noted as approaching the substantial focus guideline. They are:

- Individuals that are unemployed/underemployed (6.31%)
- Individuals with disabilities (5.56%)
- Library workforce (5.20%)

The agency will disseminate the evaluation reports through its website and social media. The evaluators used a mixed methods approach. Data gathering included (a) interviews with agency staff members, (b) interviews with project managers for various SPR reported projects and activities, (c) focus group discussions with project teams, (d) focus group discussions with project and activity beneficiaries, (e) a broad based short survey for library staff and stakeholders with some knowledge and engagement with LSTA funded activities.

This evaluation would be remiss if it did not acknowledge the increased funding that the state agencies have received through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES) and the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA). The West Virginia Library Commission, like every other state agency, has been successful in disbursing these one-time additional sources of funding. Often with the same level of staff they had before, they successfully dispersed twice the amount of the LSTA funding as the annual funding stream was augmented with this one-time infusion of support. A big thank you to all parties involved for helping our communities and libraries thrive during the unprecedented times of COVID-19.

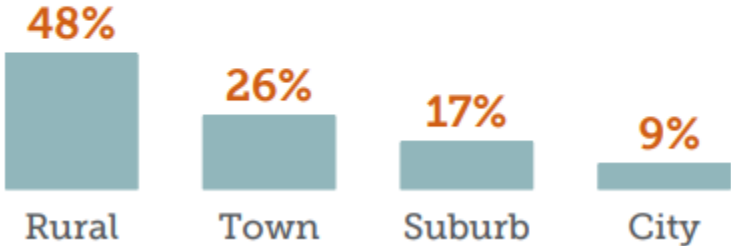
# EVALUATION REPORT

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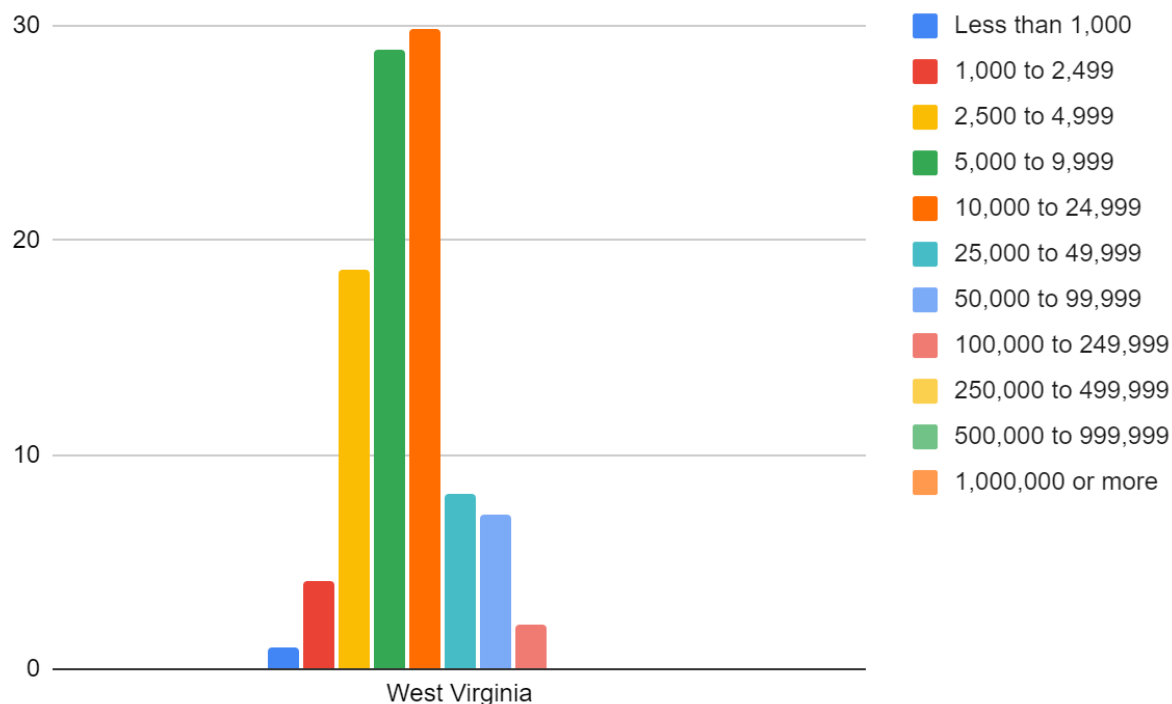
### Public Library Outlets by Locale



outlets (including main libraries, branch libraries, and bookmobiles). Eighty-five of these libraries (47.5%) served areas classified by the U.S. Census Bureau as being rural. Of these, sixty-eight were in communities classified as being either “rural, remote” or “rural, distant.” Many of the remaining libraries are in small towns. Only forty-four of the outlets (24.6%) were in areas classified as cities or suburban

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The challenges that WVLC faces in transforming library services in West Virginia are immense. However, LSTA funding plays a significant role in this effort. One respondent to the web-survey of the library community that was conducted by the evaluators as part of our evaluation summarizes the situation well. They said:

<sup>5</sup> United States Census Bureau, Decennial Census (April 1, 2020)

<sup>6</sup> The report will refer to the Library Services and Technology Act Grants to States program simply as LSTA throughout this report

<sup>7</sup> Four year LSTA Grants to States allotment average ((FFY [Federal Fiscal Year] 2018 State Allotment + FFY 2019 State Allotment + FFY 2020 State Allotment + FFY 2021 State Allotment) / 4)

<sup>8</sup> Four year LSTA Grants to States allotment average / United States Census Bureau Decennial Census (April 1, 2020)

“We cannot do without the services provided to us. Without them the library cannot afford the modern library services. We would have to go back to the level of library service that was given back in the 1960's.”

There are only two goals in WVLC’s five-year plan entitled **West Virginia LSTA Grants to States Program 2018 - 2022**. Each of the goals is stated below and LSTA-funded activities carried out in support of the goal are described. Finally, the evaluators’ assessment of whether each goal has been achieved, partially achieved, or not achieved is presented.

## **Goal 1 Retrospective Assessment - Access to Information**

### **GOAL 1: Expand Access to Information**

#### **Goal 1 Description and Discussion**

Following are the titles of the projects and the total amount of LSTA FFY 2018 – FFY 2020 funding that was expended on activities undertaken in support of Goal 1.

#### **Goal 1 Projects & Expenditures**

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	<b>THREE YEAR (FFY 2018, FFY 2019, FFY 2020) EXPENDITURE TOTAL</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL LSTA EXPENDITURES</b>
<b>State Library Network</b>	\$1,174,045.54	29.20%
<b>WVInfoDepot.org/ Statewide Resources</b>	\$855,846.63	21.29%
<b>Learning Express Library / Job &amp; Career Accelerator</b>	\$253,590.42	6.31%
<b>WV Library for the Blind and Print Disabled</b>	\$223,624.51	5.56%
<b>Literacy Programs</b>	\$187,307.28	4.66%
<b>Annual Summer Reading Program Support</b>	\$13,494.27	0.34%
<b>GOAL 1 TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,707,908.65</b>	<b>67.36%</b>

Goal 1 expenditures represent 67.36% of West Virginia’s total LSTA allotment for the FFY 2018 – FFY 2020 period.

#### **State Library Network**

The *State Library Network* project is the most costly and arguably the most important LSTA-funded initiative carried out by WVLC in pursuit of both of the goals that appear in the **West Virginia LSTA Grants to States Program 2018-2022**. Because this project ensures the availability of broadband Internet access and technology support to the majority of West Virginia’s public libraries (142 sites are serviced), this project has a tremendous impact on most of the other initiatives that receive LSTA funding. Most notable are the impacts of this project on the second, third, and fourth most costly projects: *Consortia Support* (Integrated Library Systems [ILS]), *WV InfoDepot (Statewide Database Access)*, and *LearningExpress Library/Job & Career Accelerator* (Digital Job and Career Resources). Bundled together, these four projects

ensure that West Virginians can discover the information resources they want and need and, in turn, access them (either physically by using the integrated library systems or virtually through the access to e-resources). LSTA funding for the four projects amounts to over 80% of West Virginia's LSTA Grants to States allotment for FFY 2018, FFY 2019 and FFY 2020. Additionally, access to the State Library Network even has an impact on staff development/library capacity issues in that it enables library staff to access the expanding resources provided through the Niche Academy platform.

The State Library Network project has a long history and has involved both state and federal funding. However, the project is notably changed from when it was reviewed as part of the 2013 - 2017 five-year evaluation. At the time of the earlier evaluation, the network was supported by a corps of in-house WVLC staff. At the beginning of the new review cycle, the service was transitioned to the West Virginia Office of Technology (WVOT). This move was motivated by a desire on the part of the State of West Virginia to further consolidate its information technology (IT) operations. The transition has not been completely seamless. The differing expectations of both the libraries served and the Office of Technology has resulted in some dissatisfaction with the change.

As part of our evaluation, QualityMetrics turned to library technology specialist Carson Block to examine West Virginia's network services most closely. A statement from his assessment is probably as good a summary available. The report says, "WVOT has done a good job with technology infrastructure duties, but has experienced some challenges with technology support for libraries." In the past, technology support was at a personal level triggered by a phone call to a specific WVLC staff member who likely knew the requesting library's facility because they had literally been on-site to install hardware at some point. Under WVOT critical needs are reported to a service desk and non-critical incidents are routed to technicians via an email link has been a difficult change for some libraries. The frustration is captured by a quote from one librarian who said:

"It's absolutely infuriating that libraries have to jump through these hoops to get the service we need and used to have!!! We need to go back to the old system where libraries had their dedicated techs who knew libraries!"

That said, some notable things have been accomplished during the evaluation period. A pilot project to assess a potential change in broadband providers was completed and a complete transition to the new provider is now complete for the 142 libraries that are part of the network. These libraries, which have had 100mps service now have the potential for 500mbps service and efforts are underway to install new switches that will enable all libraries to enjoy this level of connectivity.

The cost of providing this service will continue to be controversial. One respondent to the web survey of the library community that was available between October 5 and November 22, 2021 expressed the opinion that:

“West Virginia uses these funds (LSTA) to patch a desperate lack of local funding for most of our public library systems.”

However, survey respondents also offered the alternative viewpoint captured in this comment:

“In retrospect, (name of library) serves its community better because of the support of the statewide network facilitated with LSTA funds. Supporting email service, websites, and hardware and software needs has been invaluable to our community by enabling (name of library) to communicate with patrons and our fellow libraries for interlibrary loan, promoting services, and public access computing.”

Mr. Block’s assessment demonstrated that a large number of technological incidents are being handled in a timely and technologically sound fashion. WVOT is supporting what the evaluators believe has been demonstrated to be a critical need given the realities of West Virginia’s library landscape. We concur with Mr. Block’s recommendation that, “(The) West Virginia Library Commission and the West Virginia Office of Technology continue to leverage the economy of scale offered by IT consolidation, but spend more effort to strengthen their shared focus on customer service and create stronger and more accountable systems to serve the technology needs of libraries in the state.”

*WVInfoDepot.org (the project is called Statewide Resources in the 2020 SPR)*

The West Virginia Library Commission uses a combination of LSTA and state funds to support WV InfoDepot, West Virginia’s statewide database project. The bulk of InfoDepot’s resources consist of EBSCO’s A-Z suite of offerings. These offerings are supplemented by access to World Book’s Early Learning resources aimed at the school market. West Virginians can access the databases at their libraries, from their homes, school, or work. Authentication for WVInfoDepot.org resources are achieved through IP authentication for within the library and a username/password combination for remote use.

Although database usage dropped significantly as the pandemic unfolded and many libraries closed their doors, usage has rebounded quickly and appears to be headed back toward pre-COVID-19 levels. The tables below display statistics for both the EBSCO and World Book products.

<i>WV InfoDepot EBSCO Database Use</i>	SUM of Product Database Sessions	SUM of Total Searches	SUM of Total Full-Text Requests
October 1, 2018 - September 30, 2019	9,843,701	13,478,364	8,753,432
October 1, 2019 - September 30, 2020	5,991,959	8,986,531	7,661,192
October 1, 2020 - September 30, 2021	8,733,242	11,880,749	8,136,458

<i>WV InfoDepot World Book Database Use</i>	SUM of Product Database Sessions	SUM of Total Searches	SUM of Content Views
October 1, 2018 - September 30, 2019	42,345	45,829	273,172
October 1, 2019 - September 30, 2020	33,952	35,058	147,477
October 1, 2020 - September 30, 2021	28,748	46,524	280,880

WVLC has undertaken a two-pronged approach to increasing the use of databases that includes additional promotion of the service and providing additional opportunities for library staff members to become more comfortable and proficient in introducing these resources to their patrons. In response to questioning about the rebound in use, the WVLC staff member responsible for the WV InfoDepot program said:

“We started some new promotions to increase awareness, we did some technological things to make the databases easier to use, and we added a lot of new tutorials to Niche Academy.”

One respondent to the web-based survey conducted by the evaluators provided their perspective which was echoed by several others who specifically identified InfoDepot when asked which LSTA services had been most impactful:

“Databases have become expected services by our patrons. Without LSTA funding, it would be difficult to afford those necessary aspects of library service.”

West Virginia, like most states offering major statewide database programs, is always concerned about the return-on-investment (ROI) on their licensing fees. WVLC appears to be quite active in using the data that they receive from their vendors to look for ways to increase use and value to the people of the Mountain State. The evaluators found numerous evidence that usage data was applied to decision-making in regards to staff development, promotion, and interface/access improvements. While *LearningExpress* and *Job & Career Accelerator* are

treated as a separate LSTA projects (a discussion of the project follows this section), having these tools available is an additional example of WVLC's efforts to provide online services that meet academic and general needs (EBSCO), school needs (World Book Early Learning), and public library needs (LearningExpress/Job & Career Accelerator).

### *Learning Express Library/ Job & Career Accelerator*

WVLC has offered the LearningExpress Library and Job & Career Accelerator as a component of WV InfoDepot for quite a number of years. This initiative was elevated from being an activity under the statewide databases to separate project status due to the prominence given to employment issues in the 2018 - 2022 five-year plan. The web-based survey of the library community revealed that, among the public library community, this pair of resources is ranked the highest. Multiple survey respondents cited LearningExpress Library specifically when asked to identify LSTA-funded projects that have been impactful in their communities. A few samples from the survey follow:

“Access to various databases had been essential for our patrons with a particular emphasis on LearningExpress Library. This particular database has been invaluable for patrons seeking further or higher education by allowing access to important guides and practice tests for GED, ACT, ASVAB, etc. The availability of these resources is paramount considering print materials covering these topics generally don't stay in the library for very long.”

Another respondent added:

“The biggest impact for our Adult patrons is (access to) Learning Express Library and Job & Career Accelerator. The practice tests offered have helped both students and adults in acquiring new skills and supplementing the knowledge already learned. The ease of creating resumes has helped many in our community.”

Like the other WV InfoDepot databases, LearningExpress Library usage also fell sharply as the pandemic unfolded. However, unlike some of the other databases, this tool has not yet experienced the rebound witnessed with the EBSCO and World Book content. However, a look at detailed usage statistics offers a fascinating glimpse at the West Virginia employment market. Although it is based on a very small sample and findings obviously cannot be generalized to the entire population of unemployed and underemployed West Virginians, there was a definite shift in what portions of the LearningExpress Library were most frequently accessed. Pre-pandemic, the “College Preparation Center” component was most frequently searched. As the pandemic has unfolded, there has been a definite shift to the “High School Equivalency Center” garnering the most hits. While it would be pure speculation to suggest why this shift has occurred, this curious fact may warrant further investigation.

**Categories** x

- All tutorials
- eBooks and Audiobooks
- Health Information
- History and Genealogy
- Homework & Research Help
- Job and Career
- Legal Information
- Magazines and Newspapers
- Social Media
- Technology
- Test Prep
- WVInfoDepot Resources

Computer Skills with DigitalLearn

How to Write a Professional Email

How to Write a Professional Email

LearningExpress Library: Getting Ahead in School and in Your Career

LinkedIn – Social Networking for Job Seekers and Professionals

Resume Writing 101

Resume Writing 101

Searching for Jobs Online with Indeed

LearningExpress Library Usage	SUM of New Sessions	SUM of New Registrations	SUM of Page Hits
October 1, 2018 - September 30, 2019	13,095	2,114	132,120
October 1, 2019 - September 30, 2020	6,272	953	99,384
October 1, 2020 - September 30, 2021	5,788	891	95,560

***WV Library for the Blind and Print Disabled***

The West Virginia Library for the Blind and Print Disabled (WVLBPD) serves as West Virginia’s regional arm of the Library of Congress (LOC) National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS) program. While the program has a longstanding record of success, the period of time covered by this evaluation has been an extremely active and productive span. The introduction of the Duplication-on Demand (DoD) program has been transformative for many of the program’s patrons. Circulation of cartridges loaded with multiple titles requested on an individual basis has jumped to an extraordinary degree (174.24%) between October 1, 2017 and September 30, 2020 according to statistics provided by NLS. The importance of DoD is considerable in West Virginia as can be seen from the use statistics below.

STATE: WEST VIRGINIA	Oct. 1, 2017 - Sept. 30, 2018 FY 2018	Oct. 1, 2018 - Sept. 30, 2019 FY 2019	Oct. 1, 2019 - Sept. 30, 2020 FY 2020	TOTAL FY 2018 - FY 2020	Percentage Difference FY 2018 - FY 2020
Braille Readers (Individuals)	204	127	84	415	-58.82%
Cartridge Readers (Individuals)	1,809	1,463	1,399	4,671	-22.66%
BARD Braille Readers (Individuals)	31	44	33	108	6.45%
BARD Audio Readers (Individuals)	190	249	231	670	21.58%
Braille Circulation (excluding magazines)	4,703	1,107	605	6,415	-87.14%
Cartridge Circulation (excluding magazines)	91,820	187,190	251,806	530,816	174.24%
BARD Braille Downloads (Books Only)	1,134	605	960	2,699	-15.34%
BARD Audio Downloads (Books Only)	25,787	32,501	31,304	89,592	21.39%
<b>TOTAL Readers*</b>	<b>2,234</b>	<b>1,883</b>	<b>1,747</b>		
<b>TOTAL Circulation</b>	<b>123,444</b>	<b>221,403</b>	<b>284,675</b>		
Estimated State Population	1,817,004	1,804,291	1,792,147		
Readers as a Percentage of State Population	0.12%	0.10%	0.10%		
Circulation per Reader	55.26	117.58	162.95		
Statistics derived from data received from NLS					
Braille statistics provided to NLS from Free Library of Philadelphia					

While the state's Braille and Audio Reading Download usage is certainly respectable, issues related to broadband access in the state place a limit on the number of users who can take advantage of the service and the degree to which the download service can be used. It is likely that DoD service will remain the prevalent model of service delivery for some time to come.

West Virginia has also been active in completing the LOC recall process and the 2020 SPR indicates the process is all but complete. WVLC noted in the SPR that they witnessed an increase in the number of requests for local and state information as a result of the pandemic. Usage of state newspapers made available to program users through NEWSLINE soared to over 121,000 contacts. While the use of national publications through this service also increased, growth in this area was much smaller than that experienced in regard to local and state publications.

It also appears that the West Virginia Library for the Blind and Print disabled is more successful than many other NLS regional outlets in connecting with local libraries. In the web-survey of the library community conducted by the evaluators, six respondents cited the West Virginia Library for the Blind and Print Disabled as having an impact on their library and the people their library serves. Several specifically mentioned the lending of deposit collections of large print materials coordinated by WVLPD. The evaluators believe that this service establishes a connection that



strengthens the idea that there is a library continuum of service that exists for library patrons who gradually lose their sight (from standard print to large print and from large print to talking books). One survey respondent said it simply and directly:

“We have many patrons that have taken advantage (of WVLPD services), quite a few within the last two years, that have accessed the resources that are provided for the blind. This is a wonderful program that helps so many that would not be able to do so without this access.”

During the three year period covered by this evaluation, nineteen public libraries participated in the deposit collection program and approximately 1,000 items were loaned to local libraries each year. While requests and circulation dropped during the peak of pandemic-related facility closures, usage of the program has now rebounded to pre-pandemic levels.

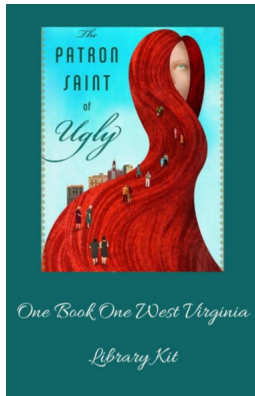
In addition to interviewing the Special Services Director at WVLC, the evaluator also spoke with the sub-regional librarian at the West Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind. The sub-regional library provides talking book services to six counties and was recently recognized by NLS for “innovatively serving patrons during the COVID-19 pandemic.” Many talking book services were conducted from a picnic table outside the school when access to the facility was restricted. The evaluators also had the opportunity to interview a teen-aged lifelong talking book program user who is planning to become an electrical engineer. This young man is currently involved in the pilot program to test the new NLS Humanware refreshable Braille reader.

In summary, WVLPD offers both standard talking book services as well as extended services to effectively and efficiently reach an otherwise underserved population.

### *Literacy Programs*

Many of WVLC’s LSTA-funded efforts provide for basic connectivity and access to electronic resources of one type or another. The Literacy Programs project is the Library Commission’s way of underscoring the fact that:

“Encouraging a love of reading for entertainment and learning is a core value for West Virginia libraries. The Library Commission encourages activities through sponsorships for the Appalachian Heritage Writers Program, the West Virginia Book Festival, a statewide book discussion group, and special weeks designated throughout the year.”



This project celebrates both West Virginia's historical literary legacy as well as alerting libraries and the public of new and upcoming literary talent in the Mountain State. The state's One Book One West Virginia activity is particularly notable for its collaborative approach and its innovative implementation. The effort is an extension of Shepherd University's Appalachian Heritage Writer-in-Residence program and combines this project with a somewhat unique approach to a statewide "One-Book" initiative. The 2021 One Book One West Virginia centered around Marie Manilla's **The Patron Saint of Ugly**.

Participants from throughout the state were afforded free access to a downloadable digital copy of the book for a two-month period.

Other Literacy Programs include a Family Read Week and a National Library Week media kit to help local libraries promote literature and literacy-related activities.



### *Annual Summer Reading Program Support*

Although the Annual Summer Reading Program Support project amounts to a very small amount of total LSTA expenditures (\$13,494.27 over the three-year period), it has an outsized impact, especially on the numerous small libraries in the state. Several survey respondents mentioned this project as being one of the most impactful to their library and to the people their library serves.

"The greatest impact the LSTA funds had on our little rural library was helping to fund our summer reading program which is so helpful because we are so removed from large towns where children have so much more to do."



The assistance provided through this project is quite modest. WVLC typically supplies libraries with the Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP) manuals and offers training and planning opportunities for library staff in conjunction with West Virginia Library Association conferences bolstered by regionally-based training on this topic during the winter months. Although the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted some training activities and had a negative effect on the number and extent of many local summer reading efforts, WVLC responded positively by providing additional resources and training opportunities related to

virtual programming. An additional online summer reading activity guide that included virtual programming content was also developed.

## **Goal 1 Conclusion - Retrospective Question A-1**

### **A-1. To what extent did WVLC's Five-Year Plan activities make progress towards Goal 1?**

The LSTA-funded projects undertaken by WVLC in support of Goal 1 are extensive and diverse. They respond to a majority of the Measuring Success focal areas and to a large variety of the intents as well. The *Network Support* project alone directly affects Information Access and Institutional Capacity in major ways. The project indirectly impacts the staff development aspect of Institutional Capacity by ensuring the platform needed for virtual training. It indirectly impacts Economic and Employment Development by enabling access to the LearningExpress Library and other WV InfoDepot resources.

Other Goal 1 projects such as *WV InfoDepot* and the *Library for the Blind and Print Disabled* "expand access to information" both to the general public and to a specific set of underserved populations. Finally projects such as *Literacy Programs* and *Annual Summer Reading Program Support* promote lifelong learning for West Virginians of all ages.

A combination of staff shortages and pandemic realities meant that WVLC was unable to launch some of the initiatives that had been described in the 2018 - 2022 LSTA Plan. Specifically, the *Connecting West Virginia* project patterned on Ohio's Guiding Ohio Online program did not take place. However, even in this regard, a good faith effort was made to fulfill the spirit of Goal 1 by adding a link to DigitalLearn.org to the WV InfoDepot site.

Because of the breadth and depth of the projects undertaken successfully and the high degree of relevance of the projects carried out to the needs identified in the 2018 - 2022 LSTA Plan, the evaluator's conclude that West Virginia Library Commission has **ACHIEVED** Goal 1.

## ***Goal 2 Retrospective Assessment - Library Community***

### ***GOAL 2: Facilitate Collaboration, Leadership, and Innovation in the Library Community***

#### **Goal 2 Description and Discussion**

Following are the titles of the projects and the total amount of LSTA FFY 2018 – FFY 2020 funding that was expended on activities undertaken in support of Goal 2.

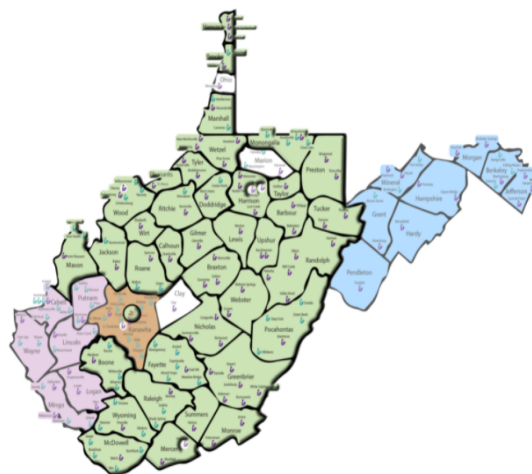
## Goal 2 Projects & Expenditures

PROJECT TITLE	THREE YEAR (FFY 2018, FFY 2019, FFY 2020) EXPENDITURE TOTAL	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL LSTA EXPENDITURES
<b>Consortia Support</b>	\$1,000,090.23	24.88%
<b>Library Capacity Building and Core Competencies</b>	\$208,882.08	5.20%
<b>Assist libraries in the ability to plan, implement, and evaluate their capacity to provide library services</b>	\$57,596.46	1.43%
<b>Consortia Cataloging Support</b>	\$39,363.05	0.98%
<b>GOAL 2 TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,305,931.82</b>	<b>32.48%</b>

Goal 2 expenditures represent 32.48% of West Virginia’s total LSTA allotment for the FFY 2018 – FFY 2020 period.

### *Consortia Support* (multiple projects)

The Consortia Support projects (projects involving six separate entities over the three year evaluation period) are part of a long-term strategy by WVLC to “allow libraries to share collections and (enable) citizens to locate needed materials.” Over the course of more than a decade, WVLC has devoted both state and LSTA funds to help build and strengthen integrated library system consortia through technology upgrades, technical support, direct funding to the libraries managing the systems to defray costs, cataloging assistance, and relevant training.



Although this has been a costly endeavor (just over \$ 1 million in LSTA funding over the course of the three year evaluation period), the strategy has clearly worked. With the recent merger of two of the ILS consortia, five groups now provide services to libraries in fifty-two (52) of West Virginia’s fifty-five counties. The largest of the consortia, the West Virginia Library Network (WVLN) is the recently merged group, which includes among its members 65 library systems (108 main and branch facilities), five (5) academic libraries, and one school library. The one single-county consortium (Kanawha County) serves the state’s most populous county and includes 11 public library facilities and 38 K-12 libraries.

The consortia enable the public to locate the vast majority of library holdings in the state and facilitate the sharing of resources between and among libraries of all sizes. One of the

respondents to the web-based survey of the library community underscored the reality of the situation when they said:

“The Consortia support is a necessity for libraries in the state of WV. This is a great financial support for the small rural library.”

Another added:

“Without this support our library would not have been able to maintain our place in the consortia.”

While another survey respondent offered the opinion that all costs associated with ILS services should be considered a local responsibility, the reality is that many, if not most of West Virginia’s libraries, lack the financial wherewithal to do so without the subsidies that have been provided. The *Consortia Support* projects squarely address two of the Measuring Success focal areas. They increase Institutional Capacity (by Improving the libraries’ physical and technological infrastructure as well as improving library operations) and the projects improve Information Access (by improving users’ ability to discover as well as to obtain resources).

### *Library Capacity Building/ Core Competencies* (multiple projects)

For purposes of this assessment, the evaluators have combined five very similar and overlapping projects under the single title *Library Capacity Building/Core Competencies*. The projects combined for evaluation are:

- FFY 2018 - Assist libraries in the ability to plan, implement, and evaluate their capacity to provide library services
- FFY 2018 - Library Core Competencies for Staff, Directors, Trustees, and Volunteers
- FFY 2019 - Library Capacity Building
- FFY 2019 - Library Core Competencies
- FFY 2020 - Library Capacity and Core Competencies

The work conducted in the five separately named projects during the three year evaluation period includes three (3) related components that are separated or mixed in different years. They are:

- Continuing education/ staff development
- Scholarships/ reimbursements for professional conferences and training
- Consulting assistance.

The introduction to this evaluation provided statistics taken from the 2019 Public Libraries Survey (the most recent national compilation available) indicating that West Virginia public libraries had 380.59 FTE staff considered to be “librarians.” However, of this number, only 85.46 FTE ( or 22.45%) held an American Library Association accredited master’s degree. With fewer than eighty-six formally-trained librarians staffing 179 library outlets and with the majority of degreed librarians working in the largest of the libraries, it is clear that West Virginia faces a

challenge in regard to core competencies. This is certainly not to say that there isn't a large corps of highly competent non-degreed librarians in West Virginia. However, it is to say that proactive measures must continue to take place to ensure that library users are served by individuals with the knowledge and the skills necessary to offer twenty-first century library service.

WVLC addresses these needs with the three-pronged attack mentioned above - continuing education/staff development, scholarships/ reimbursement for professional conferences and training, consulting assistance. All three aspects have been supported with a combination of state and LSTA funds. LSTA funds have typically been used to underwrite the costs associated with one consulting position, funding of costs associated with acquiring educational tools and content, and scholarships/ reimbursements. One full-time consulting position was included in each of the three years. The scholarships that have been awarded cover a wide variety of needs. For example, five libraries received scholarships for staff to pursue the Carl Vinson Institute of Governments Library Financial Management Certification. Other scholarships enable library staff to attend the Computers in Libraries Conference. Others got training in the fundamentals of cataloging. LSTA funds expended for other continuing education/ staff development purposes varied as well from subscriptions to tools such as LibGuides, and LibCal to payment of the costs for use of the Niche Academy platform. After reviewing the activities that resulted from these projects and the impact that these activities had, the evaluators are impressed with the extremely high return on investment that was achieved.

Each of the components of these activities were heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Targets established for the number of in-person consulting visits (the 2018 - 2022 Plan called for visiting 58 libraries annually) were quickly set aside and both individual and group interactions moved to a virtual model. New mechanisms were developed for communication and WVLC staff turned their librarian skills toward identifying and disseminating the best information possible on topics ranging from handwashing to masks and from remote work policies to coping with stress. A web page entitled **COVID-19 Support for Libraries and Librarians** was quickly developed, deployed, and updated as new information became available. One librarian expressed their appreciation saying:

“Our library and many others would not be able to function without this support. It is one of those hidden services provided without recognition.”

The dependence of libraries on information from WVLC is further demonstrated by statistics related to consulting contacts.

Individual Consulting Contacts	
FFY 2018	1,131
FFY 2019	1,474
FFY 2020	1,480



## COVID-19 Support for Libraries and Librarians: Policies and Procedures

Tools to help West Virginia libraries and librarians in response to COVID-19.

[Policies and Procedures](#)

[WV Coronavirus Resources](#)

[Vaccine Information](#)

[Funding](#)

[Internet Access & Remote Work Support](#)

### West Virginia Statewide Guidance

- [Questions about Funding?](#)  
See the "Funding" tab linked above for answers to frequently asked questions about library funding during the COVID-19 emergency.
- [WV West Virginia Library Commission Guidance Statement 2020-01: Remote Work Policies](#)  
This statement provides information for Boards and Directors developing remote work policies.
- [WV West Virginia Library Commission Guidance Statement 2020-02: Reopening the Library](#)  
This statement provides information for Boards and Directors to develop a reopening plan for the library.
- [COVID-19 Waiver Request Form Fiscal Year 2020-2021](#)  
Fillable PDF form to apply for a COVID-19 Waiver of a Library Commission Administrative Rule requirement or requirements. Form does not apply to non-compliance resulting from situations that pre-date the COVID-19 crisis. Form revised June 17, 2020.
- [Face Covering Toolkit](#)  
Posters and social media shareables from the WV DHHR to help you communicate face mask guidance with staff and visitors.
- [Legal Aid of West Virginia: Coronavirus/COVID-19](#)  
Numerous resources to help anyone dealing with coronavirus-related issues in West Virginia including information on schools, students, unemployment, sick leave, health insurance, and much more.
- [Office of the Governor COVID-19 Actions & Executive Orders](#)  
Includes links to reopening guidelines for different types and sizes of businesses.

A direct response to the reality that most West Virginia public library workers lack formal training in library and information science is the Public Librarian Certification Program (PLCP). Although components of the program are still under development, the Basic Certification track is now in place. The Niche Academy platform has enabled WVLC to make a wide array of course offerings available to library staff regardless of their location and has facilitated the tracking of progress toward certification. Following is the framework of the PLCP program as described on the WVLC website:

*To help meet the needs of ongoing continuing education for West Virginia library staff so they may provide professional library service, the West Virginia Library Commission is developing a three-level Public Librarian Certification Program (PLCP) comprised of online courses, archived webinars, workshops, and special institutes.*

Library personnel who do not have formal training in library science should start with the **Basic Certification** track, which includes introductory coursework in these core areas: *Fundamentals of Librarianship, Collection Development, Organization of Materials, Management, Programming & Services, and Technology.*

**Intermediate Certification** will build on the work done at the basic level. It allows the participant to explore topic areas in more depth by choosing electives in each subject area. **Intermediate Certification** requires an additional 16 courses over the Basic Level completed over one year.

**Advanced Certification** requires completion of 16 additional courses over the Intermediate Level. An extra year is given for the completion of the Advanced level requirements.

The impact of the pandemic and the deployment of training using the virtual Niche Academy platform is clearly apparent in the following chart. Furthermore, it appears that now that the library community has become more comfortable in this environment, use of the resources will continue at a very high level.

NICHE ACADEMY Page Views	Sum of Views
October 1, 2018- September 30, 2019	527
October 1, 2019- September 30, 2020	2284
October 1, 2020- September 30, 2021	7275

One web-survey respondent offered their assessment of the importance of the staff development component:

“The training... provided for my

staff has been absolutely invaluable. We would be lost without it.”

### *Consortia Cataloging Support*

The final project undertaken in support of Goal 2 is *Consortia Catalog Support*. The project is a specific extension of WVLC’s long-term strategy to “allow libraries to share collections and (enable) citizens to locate needed materials” that was mentioned earlier in the section on *Consortia Support*. In short, WVLC has invested both LSTA dollars and state funding to ensure the quality of the bibliographic records that are created and maintained by the state and LSTA supported ILS consortia.

The support provided has taken the form of support for subscription fees for OCLC’s CatExpress, consulting assistance and advice on cataloging and bibliographic record conversion, and both direct and indirect training opportunities provided for consortia staff. The project is relatively simple and straightforward and continues using a variety of funding sources (no FFY 2020 LSTA dollars were expended,) however, the work described for the project continues..

## **Goal 2 Conclusion - Retrospective Question A-1**

### **A-1. To what extent did WVLC’s Five-Year Plan activities make progress towards Goal 2?**



The largest component of WVLC's efforts to fulfill Goal 1 (*Consortia Support*) continued throughout the entire evaluation period and, in fact, the consolidation of two of the consortia into a larger entity significantly improves the ease of the public's access to library resources. Both consulting activities and staff development activities were radically impacted by the pandemic; however, WVLC's response was exemplary. Essentially, WVLC quickly pivoted to embrace multiple virtual models and, if anything, delivered a higher level of service than was offered pre-pandemic.

It could be argued that WVLC only partly achieved Goal 2 due to the fact that it failed to meet some of the very specific criteria for individual projects that were outlined in the 2018 - 2022 Plan and that there were initiatives that were not launched due to funding realities. Nevertheless, the preponderance of the evidence suggests that great strides have already been made and that these strides are continuing. Based on the trajectory observed, the evaluators conclude that West Virginia Library Commission has **ACHIEVED** Goal 2.

## **Retrospective Assessment Questions A-2 and A-3**

### **Retrospective Question A-2**

**A-2. To what extent did WVLC's Five-Year Plan activities achieve results that address national priorities associated with the Measuring Success focal areas and their corresponding intents?**

WVLC carried out projects and activities that addressed five of the six Measuring Success focal areas and seven of the fourteen intents. The Information Access, Institutional Capacity, and Lifelong Learning focal area were most prominent. The evaluators grouped a number of very similar projects together in their assessment. Had we not grouped six "consortia support" projects, the greatest amount of activity would be under the Information Access focal area, with projects with this focus taking place in support of both of WVLC's two goals.

Projects that address three of the Measuring Success intents account for the lion's share of LSTA expenditures for the three-year evaluation period. The *State Library Network* project concentrates on the "improve the library's physical and technological infrastructure" intent and consumes almost thirty percent (29.2%) of total LSTA expenditures for the period. The multiple *Consortia Support* projects accounts for nearly another quarter of the total (24.88%) and serves the "improve the users' ability to discover information resources" intent. Finally, the *WV InfoDepot* statewide database project addresses the "improve the users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources" intent. Expenditures for database licensing and other costs associated with this activity accounted for 21.29% of total LSTA expenditures over three years. Together, the projects addressing these intents were responsible for over three-quarters (75.37%) of the LSTA expenditures.

## **Retrospective Question A-3**

**A-3. Did any of the following groups represent a substantial focus for WVLC's Five-Year Plan activities? (Yes/No)**

No single project qualifies as being a substantial focus on the basis of the ten percent (10%) expenditure specified by IMLS in the evaluation guidelines. However, three project areas should be noted as approaching the substantial focus guideline. They are:

- Individuals that are unemployed/underemployed (6.31%)
- Individuals with disabilities (5.56%)
- Library workforce (5.20%)

The unemployed/underemployed are the focus of the ongoing *LearningExpress Library/ Job and Career Accelerator* project. Individuals with disabilities are served through the *WV Library for the Blind and Print Disabled* project, which is West Virginia's implementation of the Library of Congress National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled program. Finally, a group of projects that address core competencies and the human resources aspect of library capacity building focus on the library workforce.

## **Process Questions B-1, B-2, and B-3**

### **Process Question B-1**

**B-1. How has WVLC used any data from the State Program Report (SPR) and elsewhere (e.g., Public Libraries Survey) to guide activities included in the Five-Year Plan?**

WVLC has actively used data gathered for the SPR for decision-making purposes. The best example of this is in regard to the *WV InfoDepot* database project. WVLC devoted greater effort to both promotion of the program and training for library staff to increase their comfort using these resources.

### **Process Question B-2**

**B-2. Specify any modifications WVLC made to the Five-Year Plan. What was the reason for this change?**

The Plan was not amended nor were there any changes or modifications to the Plan itself. The original goals remained unchanged; however, several anticipated projects were not undertaken due to staff constraint and pandemic realities. In other instances, there were changes made to how projects were delivered, again, primarily due to COVID-19 considerations.

### **Process Question B-3**

**B-3. How and with whom has WVLC shared data from the SPR and from other evaluation resources? How has WVLC used the last Five-Year Evaluation to inform data collected**

## **for the new Five-Year Evaluation? How has WVLC used this information throughout this five-year cycle?**

Data and information gathered for SPR reporting is shared with staff in program areas impacted by LSTA projects. Specific relevant information and statistics are also shared with West Virginia Library Commission members and with the library community at meetings and via written communications. Information is shared with the State Legislature and the public through WVLC's Annual Report.

## **Methodology Questions C-1, C-2, C-3, and C-4**

### **Methodology Question C-1**

**C-1. Identify how WVLC implemented an independent Five-Year Evaluation using the criteria described in the section of this guidance document called Selection of an Independent Evaluator.**

To ensure rigorous and objective evaluation of the West Virginia Library Commissions' (WVLC) implementation of the LSTA Grants to States program, WVLC, in cooperation with eight other state library administrative agencies (SLAAs) in the northeast United States, participated in the issuance of a joint Request for Proposals (RFP) for a "Cooperative Library Services and Technology Act Five-Year Plan Evaluation 2018-2022" through the Council of State Library Agencies in the Northeast (COSLINE). The RFP was issued on June 14, 2021 with proposals due by July 12, 2021.

As a result of a competitive bidding process, QualityMetrics LLC, a library consulting firm headquartered in Silver Spring Maryland, was awarded the contract to conduct the independent LSTA evaluation. QualityMetrics LLC does not have a role in carrying out other LSTA-funded activities and is independent of those who are being evaluated or who might be favorably or adversely affected by the evaluation results.

QualityMetrics LLC has in-depth evaluation experience and demonstrated professional competency in conducting LSTA Grants to States evaluations. QualityMetrics Director and Chief Executive Officer Dr. Martha Kyrillidou, carried out more than 20 such evaluations for the 2013-2017 cycle. In addition, QualityMetrics associate consultant, Bill Wilson, has been part of a total of more than 50 LSTA evaluations spanning each five-year cycle since 2002, both as a partner in Himmel & Wilson, Library Consultants and as a research consultant with QualityMetrics.

Principal consultant Dr. Martha Kyrillidou has deep experience in library evaluation over her 22 years of service at the Association of Research Libraries (ARL). Dr. Kyrillidou has taught Research Methods and Assessment, and Evaluation courses at the University of Maryland and at Kent State University, and has extensive practical experience in mixed methods, evaluation, and outcomes assessment. Martha is a current member of the Library Statistics Working Group

(LSWG), chair of the NISO Z39.7 standard committee, and is active in mentoring the next generation of public library staff and evaluators.

Mr. Wilson has extensive experience with federal funding programs for libraries dating back to the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) in the 1970s, having served several terms on Wisconsin's LSCA Advisory Committee. He later administered Wisconsin's implementation of the LSCA program as Wisconsin's state librarian in the 1990s at the time that LSCA was ending and LSTA was beginning. As a state librarian, he had many interactions with other state library administrative agencies. Mr. Wilson has also completed extensive graduate/doctoral-level coursework in statistics and research methods.

## **Methodology Question C-2**

**C-2. Describe the types of statistical and qualitative methods (including administrative records) used in conducting the Five-Year Evaluation. Assess their validity and reliability.**

QualityMetrics, LLC deployed a mixed methods protocol for data collection that is multi-faceted and rigorous. Reviewing demographic data, quantitative PLS data, and State Program Report (SPR) data formed the basis of our knowledge from the stage of responding to the RFP for an independent evaluator and throughout the evaluation process. Providing a cloud-based storage space for WVLC to deposit additional data and files and reflect on the program was the basis of our initial interaction. After conducting an initial Zoom conference call with representatives of the West Virginia Library Commission at the beginning of the evaluation process and a second phone call to discuss the agencies self-reflection on whether its goals have been achieved, partly achieved, or not achieved, the evaluators stayed in regular touch (monthly sessions) with the agency as the evaluation team was gathering data. In addition to updating WVLC leadership on progress, the sessions were used to resolve emerging questions and to solicit additional relevant information. Data gathering included (a) interviews with agency staff members, (b) interviews with project managers for various SPR reported projects and activities, (c) focus group discussions with project teams, (d) focus group discussions with project and activity beneficiaries, and (e) a broad based short survey for library staff and stakeholders with some knowledge and engagement with LSTA funded activities. The survey collected primarily qualitative contextual information about past activities and future needs.

While no on-site visit to the State Library was conducted during this evaluation period, both of the primary investigators for QualityMetrics (Dr. Martha Kyrillidou and Mr. William Wilson) had visited the West Virginia Library Commission in Charleston, WV as part of the 2013-2017 LSTA evaluation cycle and consequently were somewhat familiar with WVLC's operation. Virtual (Zoom) one-on-one interviews were held with the agency State Librarian and with key staff engaged in LSTA and in specific projects carried out under the LSTA Five-Year Plan. The Five-Year Evaluation is a summative assessment and as such the availability of the SPR data was extremely useful, more so than other times.

The evaluators have observed that COVID-19 realities have in some ways strengthened the state library agency role - during a time of crisis the profession and the communities were seeking advice and often turned to the state library agency for answers. Many SLAAs responded by holding frequent and regular statewide community meetings with various groups which elevated the importance of the LSTA activities even when they were disrupted by the pandemic. Creative solutions were identified in most instances as most programs had to turn into virtual delivery for most of the pandemic period. In some ways, the record of virtual programming is more evident and its impact more readily documented. However, we do run the danger of minimizing the adverse effects on marginalized communities which often are more difficult to reach during times of crisis such as COVID-19 presented.

The toll on the mental health of our communities has also been evident as these restrictions are establishing new norms for interacting in person. Student learning and well being have been concerns as the education life cycle was disrupted. Opportunities to help students catch up with unfinished learning were plentiful and many state library agencies, including WVLC, have adjusted or augmented their database offerings to help home-schooled children and teens. Monitoring community behaviors took place frequently during the pandemic, often resulting in people feeling over-surveyed in many instances.

A web-based survey targeting the library community was conducted between October 5 - November 22, 2021. The survey provided some supplementary quantitative information as well as considerable qualitative information. Additional corroborative evidence from comments collected in the survey served to triangulate the evidence gathered.

Validity and reliability analysis reflect a positivist worldview and in a qualitative naturalistic approach they are being redefined with some divergent views on whether and how one ensures quality and rigor in qualitative inquiry. The notion that naturalistic inquiry needs to exhibit quality, rigor, and trustworthiness is more widespread nowadays.

The evaluators engaged in numerous conversations through Zoom and phone interviews. The quality and rigor of the phone interviews in the LSTA evaluation of WVLC's LSTA implementation has been enhanced by references to external website links, google maps, internal triangulation and, in some instances, by asking interviewees to allow the conversation to be recorded with assurances for confidentiality by the evaluators. Quality and rigor were also enhanced by having two evaluators attend most focus groups and interviews. Shared note-taking was available in real time through shared google documents and drive access. This approach has allowed evaluators to refine their inquiry and tailor it as knowledge of WVLC's LSTA program was accumulating from one interaction to the next. Recorded conversations also allow the evaluators to reflect and refine their interpretations in a reliable manner. The validity of the inquiry was strengthened with the informed selection of the subjects by the WVLC leadership team and staff.

### **Methodology Question C-3**

#### **C-3. Describe the stakeholders involved in the various stages of the Five-Year**

## **Evaluation. How did QualityMetrics in cooperation with WVLC engage them?**

Numerous small-group virtual sessions and telephone interviews were conducted with librarians and other persons with knowledge of LSTA-funded initiatives in West Virginia. Oftentimes, these interactions were enhanced by virtual tours of their library buildings and physical facilities through Google Maps. One-on-one interviews were also conducted with a number of consumers of the Library for the Blind and Print Disabled program.

The focus groups and interviews provided both qualitative evidence and context that supplemented a review of agency-supplied statistical data and information and data submitted in the form of the State Program Reports (SPRs).

Interviewees shared their knowledge of LSTA utilization, enhancing interactions and depth and quality of the conversations. Furthermore, principal investigators Martha Kyriallidou and Bill Wilson conducted both separate and joint interviews and group sessions and shared and discussed their observations in order to develop a shared understanding of the meaning of the library experience in West Virginia and how it was supported by WVLC with LSTA support. Both investigators participated in many of the agency interviews, allowing for the concept of triangulation to be implemented as evaluators debriefed and compared interpretations and understandings.

## **Methodology Question C-4**

### **C-4. Discuss how WVLC will share the key findings and recommendations with others.**

As in the past, information from the five-year evaluation will be shared with the West Virginia Library Commission Commissioners. The Commissioners will also be provided with State Program report (SPR) data when it is submitted to IMLS, results of surveys of public libraries regarding specific projects and activities, and with internal project and activity evaluations. Relevant information from the evaluation will also be distributed to members of the library community both in meetings and through written communications. WVLC will convey evaluation findings to the public and to the West Virginia State Legislature primarily through the WVLC Annual Report.

## **Closing Thoughts**

The pandemic had a profound impact on the agency operations and on the West Virginia Library community. WVLC became quite adept at electronic communications and will continue to utilize all communications means to strengthen idea sharing and collaborations.

This evaluation would be remiss if it did not acknowledge the increased funding that the state agencies have received through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES) and the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA). WVLC, like every other state agency, successfully disburses these one-time additional sources of funding. Often with the same level of staff they had before, library agencies successfully dispersed twice the amount of the LSTA

funding as the annual funding stream was augmented with this one time infusion of support. A big thank you to all parties involved for helping our communities and libraries thrive during the unprecedented times of COVID-19.

These additional funds are helping libraries and library staff get resources that are often not part of the regular LSTA program and their wishes regarding future funding for LSTA is influenced by the additional services they are able to offer. A recognition that library services need to continue in both in person and virtual environments means the need for additional resources that can support more of these new mixed modes, physical and digital, of operating in the future, including continued support for upgrading the technology and the physical infrastructure.

# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Acronyms

ACS - American Community Survey  
ALA - American Library Association  
ALS - Academic Libraries Survey  
ARL - Association of Research Libraries  
ARPA - American Recovery Plan Act  
BARD - Braille and Audio Reading Download  
CARES - Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act  
COP - Community of Practice  
COSLINE - Council of State Library Agencies in the Northeast  
CSLP - Collaborative Summer Library Program  
DoD - Duplication on Demand  
DPLA - Digital Public Library of America  
EISi - Elementary/Secondary Information System  
E-Rate - the schools and libraries universal service support program  
FFY - Federal Fiscal Year  
FTE - Full Time Equivalent  
ILS - Integrated Library System  
IMLS - Institute of Museum and Library Services  
IT - Information Technology  
LOC - Library of Congress  
LSCA - Library Services and Construction Act  
LSTA - Library Services and Technology Act  
LSWG - Library Statistics Working Group  
MLN - Mountain Library Network  
NAAL - National Assessment of Adult Literacy  
NCES - National Center for Educational Statistics  
NLS - National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled  
OBE - Outcome-Based Evaluation  
OCLC - Online Computer Library Center  
OPAC - Online Public Access Catalog  
PLCP - Public Librarian Certification Program  
PLS - Public Libraries Survey  
POP - Patron Outreach Project  
RFP - Request for Proposal  
ROI - Return-on-investment  
SF - Square Feet



SLAA - State Library Administrative Agency  
SPR - State Program Report  
STEAM - Science Technology Engineering Arts Mathematics  
STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math  
WVLC - West Virginia Library Commission  
WVLBPD - West Virginia Library for the Blind and Print Disabled  
WVLN - West Virginia Library Network  
WVOT - West Virginia Office of Technology

## **Appendix B: Interviewees/ Focus Groups/ Communications**

Karen Goff, West Virginia Library Commission (WVLC) Executive Secretary and State Librarian

Heather Campbell, WVLC Chief Financial Officer and Director of Library Development Services

Donna Calvert, WVLC Special Services Director

Gena Chatten, WVLC Digital Resources Librarian

Josh Spence West Virginia Office of Technology (WVOT) Chief Information Officer

Cindy Smith, WVOT Deputy Chief Information Officer

Donald Patterson, WVOT Deputy Chief Operating Officer and Director of Client Services

Danielle Emerick-Engle - West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and Blind and Sub-Regional Librarian

John Xander Holstein - Talking Book User

John Jackson - Talking Book User

# Appendix C: Bibliography of Documents Reviewed

## State Agency Sources

- SPR data (FFY 2018-2020)
- Stats Over Time (FY 2018 - 2020)
- Agency website and social media
- LSTA Plan 2018-2022

## Federal Government Publications

### Federal Agency Data Sources

- Institute of Museum and Library Services, [State Program Report \(SPR\) report](#)
- Institute of Museum and Library Services, [Public Library Statistics](#)
- Institute of Museum and Library Services, [State Profiles](#)
- Institute of Museum and Library Services [“Grants to States” Conference](#)
- Institute of Museum and Library Services, [State Library Administrative Agency Survey](#)
- National Center for Education Statistics, [Academic Libraries](#)
- National Center for Education Statistics, [Elementary and Secondary Information System](#)
- United States Census Bureau, [Decennial Census](#) (April 1, 2020)

### Evaluation Resources and COVID-19

- OECD/DAC and IEO/UNDP (2020) [Guidance Note: Good practices during COVID-19.](#)
- UNICEF Evaluation Office (2020) [Technical Note: Response of the UNICEF Evaluation Function to the COVID-19 Crisis.](#)
- WFP Office of Evaluation (2020) [Technical Note for Planning and Conducting Evaluations During COVID-19.](#)
- UNFPA Evaluation Office (2020) [Adapting evaluations to the COVID-19 pandemic.](#)
- UNDP Independent Evaluation Office (2020) [Event planning and implementation during COVID-19.](#)
- ILO Evaluation Office (2020) [Implications of COVID-19 on evaluations in the ILO.](#)
- FAO Office of Evaluations (2020) [Risk analysis and guidance for the management and conduct of evaluations during international and national level COVID-19 crisis and restrictions.](#)

### Other Resources

- Ethel Himmel and William J. Wilson. The Functions and Roles of State Library Agencies. American Library Association, Chicago, 2000.
- The Institute of Museum and Library Services. 2021. [Functions and Roles of State Libraries: 2000 and 2020.](#) Washington, DC: Institute of Museum and Library Services.

- The Institute of Museum and Library Services. (2021). [The Use and Cost of Public Library Materials: Trends Before the COVID-19 Pandemic](#). Washington, DC: The Institute.
- The Institute of Museum and Library Services. 2021. [Understanding the Social Wellbeing Impacts of the Nation's Libraries and Museums](#). 2021 Report. Washington DC: Institute of Museum and Library Services.
- The Institute of Museum and Library Services. 2021. [Functions and Roles of State Libraries: 2000 and 2020](#). Washington, DC: Institute of Museum and Library Services.
- Measures that Matter: [Workforce Development Literature Review](#), January 12, 2021.
- Pelczar, M., Frehill, L. M., Nielsen, E, Kaiser, A., Hudson, J., & Wan, T. (2021). [Characteristics of Public Libraries in the United States: Results from the FY 2019 Public Libraries Survey](#). Institute of Museum and Library Services: Washington, D.C. Results from the SDC E-Resources Survey (received January 2022).
- Sarah Mervosh, "[The pandemic hurt these students the most.](#)" In print "Pandemic widened U.S. Educational Gap into a Gulf, Research Suggests." *New York Times*, July 28, 2021, Section A, Page 13.
- The School Librarian Investigation: Decline or Evolution? <https://libslide.org/>

# Appendix D: Focus Group Questions

## Focus groups

### General Questions

1. What stands out as being the most effective use of LSTA in West Virginia over the last three years?
2. Are there specific examples of projects that you think were the most impactful on the lives of the citizens of West Virginia?
3. Are there specific changes in how LSTA funds should be expended in the future? Are there new or emerging needs that are unmet that need to be addressed?

### Potential Follow-up Questions

1. What type of programs work for library patrons and staff, in general?
2. What type of programs work for public library patrons, school and academic library clientele, and library staff specifically?
3. What do non-participating libraries and borderline participants need to be able to participate in, grant funded projects or statewide programs?
4. How will the library patrons and library staff be satisfied with the delivery of services?
5. What programs will result in cost savings for participating libraries?

### Outcome Questions

1. Will more patrons use the library services because of the grant programs?
2. Will there be an increase in community involvement in relation to the grant programs?
3. Will customer service improve due to staff training from LSTA funded events?
4. Will the statewide programs enhance libraries' abilities to serve patrons?

## Interview guidelines

1. Introductions (include that you are working for QualityMetrics, a library consulting firm headquartered in Silver Spring, Maryland, established in 2016). Ask them to tell you a bit about themselves.
2. Ask their familiarity with LSTA program. If they are unfamiliar you can provide some or all of the below info -
  - a. *The Library Services and Technology Act's (LSTA) "Grants to States" program is the single largest source of ongoing federal funding for libraries. Many states spend funds on a combination of statewide initiatives and on subgrants awarded to individual libraries to enable them to launch innovative efforts or to extend services to populations that are difficult to reach.*
  - b. *The LSTA program requires that each state conduct an evaluation of its LSTA program every five years. These evaluations are overseen by the Institute of*

*Museum and Library Services but are conducted by independent evaluators. QualityMetrics was selected to conduct the state-level evaluations for nine states in the Northeast and our company is also working with more than a dozen additional states and territories. The results of our review are due to be submitted to IMLS in March of 2022.*

3. FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT WORK FOR THE SLAA (who manage a project):
  - a. Ask them to talk about the particular grant/s they worked with. Allow them to lead the conversation in an exploratory fashion. Ask follow up questions.
  - b. Identify where there are materials or data from their projects that it would be useful for us to see.
4. FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT WORK FOR THE SLAA (high level stakeholder):
  - a. Go through the plan goal by goal, remind them of the goal wording and the percent of funds the state spent on it;, get their reflections on progress toward each goal.
  - b. Are there any future needs we should be emphasizing in the evaluation?
5. FOR SLAA STAFF on specific projects:
  - a. Ask them to talk about the particular programs they are responsible for.
  - b. Let them know the data available (SPR, output, etc.) and verify that there is no other data or materials they have that would be helpful to us. If they only listed outputs in the SPR outcomes data, ask about plans for outcome data in the future.
  - c. What do you see as the needs moving forward for the next seven years?
6. ALL: What impact have you seen LSTA dollars have on your state?
7. ALL: Is there anything you think we should have asked that we didn't?

# Appendix E: Web-Survey Instrument

West Virginia LSTA Survey 2021

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## WELCOME

Every five years, each state library administrative agency in the nation is required to conduct an independent evaluation of its implementation of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) "Grants to States" program. This evaluation must be submitted in order to qualify for ongoing Federal funding.

Following close on the heels of the evaluation is the requirement for the submission of a new state-level five-year plan for the LSTA program. QualityMetrics, Library Consultants is assisting the West Virginia Library Commission (WVLC) with the evaluation.

QualityMetrics has been gathering information and data from a number of different sources including the State Program Report (SPR) that WVLC submits annually to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), internal statistical and narrative reports, survey data, and personal interviews with WVLC staff as well as with representatives of the library community in the state. We'd like your help in assessing the impact of the LSTA program on your library and on the people that your library serves.

You are invited to share your thoughts and ideas by answering three short questions. The survey should take you no more than ten minutes to complete. The first question asks you to look back over the last few years and to consider how the LSTA program has benefitted libraries and library users. Second, we'd like to invite you to think about the future and to suggest new ways in which you think LSTA funds should be invested. Finally, we want to give you an opportunity to offer any other observations about West Virginia's LSTA program (positive or negative). Thank you in advance for helping the West Virginia Library Commission serve your community better!

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## BACKGROUND

West Virginia receives approximately \$1.3 million in LSTA Grants to States funding each year. The largest portion of this funding (about 56%) has been allocated to support Expanding Access to Information with programs such as WVInfoDepot.org, State Library Network, Literacy Programs, Annual Summer Reading Program Support, Learning Express Library/Job Career Accelerator, and WV for the Blind and Print Disabled.

The second largest and last portion (44%) of the budget supports Facilitating Collaboration, Leadership, and Innovation in the Library Community with programs such as Library Capacity Building, Library Core Competencies for Staff, Directors, Trustees, and Volunteers, and Consortia Support for Northern, Mountain, and Eastern Library Networks in addition to Western and Kanawha County Public Libraries.

LSTA dollars are used to supplement state and local funds and to foster creativity and innovation in meeting the needs of West Virginia's existing and potential library users and citizens.

1) Think back over the past three years (2018, 2019, and 2020). Which, if any, of the LSTA-supported programs mentioned on the last page have had the greatest impact on your library and on the people your library serves? How is library service in your community better because of the investment of LSTA funds?

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#### LOOKING FORWARD

2) Look ahead to the next five years (2023 - 2027). Are there changes in the way that LSTA dollars are invested that you think would significantly improve library services in West Virginia? If so, what are they and why do you think that the change(s) would make a difference. *(Note that LSTA funding cannot be used for building facilities or for lobbying purposes.)*

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#### OTHER COMMENTS

3) Please feel free to offer any additional comments about West Virginia's LSTA program. What do you like or dislike about the program? What could be improved? *(Note that your responses are confidential and comments will not be identified with an individual or with a specific library.)*

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## OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

4) The library that I represent is:

- A public library
- A school library
- An academic library
- A special library
- Other (Please specify below.)

If you responded "Other" to the question above, please specify the type of library you represent in the text box provided below.

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5) My role in the library that I represent is:

- Director
- Manager or Department Head
- Youth Services Librarian
- Adult Services Librarian
- Technical Services Librarian
- Technology Specialist
- Library Trustee
- Other (Please specify below.)

If you responded "Other" to the question above, please specify your role in the library you represent in the text box provided below.

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Thank You!

Thank you for taking our survey. Your response is very important to us.

## Appendix F: Measuring Success Crosswalk Table

WEST VIRGINIA Measuring Success Focal Areas and Intents	West Virginia Library Commission - LSTA Evaluation 2018-2022									
	1.1 WInfoDepot.org	1.2 State Library Network	1.3 Learning Express Library / Job & Career Accelerator	1.4 WV Library for the Blind and Print Disabled	1.5 Literacy Programs	1.6 Annual Summer Reading Program Support	2.1-2.6 Consortia Support	2.7 Library Capacity Building and Volunteers	2.8 Assist libraries in the ability to plan, implement, and evaluate their capacity to provide library services	2.9 Consortia Cataloging Support
<b>Lifelong Learning</b>							YES	YES	YES	
Improve users' formal education										
Improve users' general knowledge and skills							YES	YES	YES	
<b>Information Access</b>	YES		YES			YES				
Improve users' ability to discover information resources						YES				
Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources	YES		YES							
<b>Institutional Capacity</b>		YES			YES					YES
Improve the library workforce										
Improve the library's physical and technological infrastructure		YES								
Improve library operations					YES					YES
<b>Economic &amp; Employment Development</b>			YES							
Improve users' ability to use resources and apply information for employment support			YES							
Improve users' ability to use and apply business resources										
<b>Human Resources</b>										
Improve users' ability to apply information that furthers their personal, family or household finances										
Improve users' ability to apply information that furthers their personal or family health & wellness										
Improve users' ability to apply information that furthers their parenting and family skills										
<b>Civic Engagement</b>					YES					
Improve users' ability to participate in their community					YES					
Improve users' ability to participate in community conversations around topics of concern										

## Appendix G: Targeted Audiences Crosswalk Table

WEST VIRGINIA Target Population Served												
	Library Workforce (current and future)	Individuals Living Below the Poverty Line	Individuals who are Unemployed/Underemployed	Ethnic or Minority Populations	Immigrants/Refugees	Individuals with Disabilities	Families	Children (aged 0-5)	School-aged Youth (aged 6-17)	General (aged 18-64)	Senior (aged 65+)	
1.1 WVInfoDepot.org	YES											
1.2 State Library Network	YES											
1.3 Learning Express Library / Job & Career												
1.4 WV Library for the Blind and Print Disabled					YES		YES	YES	YES	YES		
1.5 Literacy Programs						YES	YES	YES				
1.6 Annual Summer Reading	YES											
2.1 Consortia Support - Northern												
2.2 Consortia Support - Mountain												
2.3 Consortia Support - Western Counties												
2.4 Consortia Support - Kanawha County												
2.5 Consortia Support - Eastern												
2.6 Consortia Support - West Virginia												
2.7 Library Capacity Building	YES											
2.8 Library Core Competencies	YES											
2.9 Assist libraries in the ability to plan	YES											
2.10 Consortia Cataloging Support	YES											

## Appendix H: Expenditure Tables

WEST VIRGINIA LSTA PROJECT EXPENDITURE SUMMARY											
	State Goal Short Title	PROJECT TITLE/ Activities	FFY 2018	FFY 2019	FFY 2020	FFY 2018 LSTA EXPENDITURE	FFY 2019 LSTA EXPENDITURE	FFY 2020 LSTA EXPENDITURE	THREE YEAR (FFY 2018, FFY 2019, FFY 2020) EXPENDITURE TOTAL	PERCENTAGE EXPENDITURE WITHIN GOAL	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL LSTA EXPENDITURES
Goal 1	Expand Access to Information	WVInfoDepot.org/ Statewide Resources	X	X	X	\$ 259,309.95	\$ 252,426.14	\$ 344,110.54	\$ 855,846.63	31.61%	21.29%
		State Library Network	X	X	X	\$ 340,038.15	\$ 129,234.60	\$ 704,772.79	\$ 1,174,045.54	43.36%	29.20%
		Learning Express Library / Job & Career Accelerator	X	X	X	\$ 55,594.42	\$ 123,715.00	\$ 74,281.00	\$ 253,590.42	9.36%	6.31%
		WV Library for the Blind and Print Disabled	X	X	X	\$ 64,917.08	\$ 87,169.50	\$ 71,537.93	\$ 223,624.51	8.26%	5.56%
		Literacy Programs	X	X	X	\$ 61,299.11	\$ 65,720.07	\$ 60,288.10	\$ 187,307.28	6.92%	4.66%
		Annual Summer Reading Program Support	X	X	X	\$ 6,189.17	\$ 4,333.14	\$ 2,971.96	\$ 13,494.27	0.50%	0.34%
		GOAL SUBTOTAL				\$ 787,347.88	\$ 662,598.45	\$ 1,257,962.32	\$ 2,707,908.65	100.00%	67.36%
	State Goal Short Title	PROJECT TITLE/ Activities	FFY 2018	FFY 2019	FFY 2020	FFY 2018 LSTA EXPENDITURE	FFY 2019 LSTA EXPENDITURE	FFY 2020 LSTA EXPENDITURE	THREE YEAR (FFY 2018, FFY 2019, FFY 2020) EXPENDITURE TOTAL	PERCENTAGE EXPENDITURE WITHIN GOAL	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL LSTA EXPENDITURES
Goal 2	Facilitate Collaboration, Leadership, and Innovation in the Library Community	Consortia Support - Northern Library Network	X	X		\$ 91,524.72	\$ 115,082.98	\$ -	\$ 206,607.70	15.82%	5.14%
		Consortia Support - Mountain Library Network	X	X		\$ 96,003.24	\$ 100,803.40	\$ -	\$ 196,806.64	15.07%	4.90%
		Consortia Support - Western Counties	X	X	X	\$ 91,833.73	\$ 97,648.28	\$ 95,142.65	\$ 284,624.66	21.79%	7.08%
		Consortia Support - Kanawha County Public Library	X	X		\$ 77,855.23	\$ 77,855.00	\$ -	\$ 155,710.23	11.92%	3.87%
		Consortia Support - Eastern Library Network	X	X		\$ 74,697.00	\$ 69,429.00	\$ -	\$ 144,126.00	11.04%	3.58%
		Consortia Support - West Virginia Library Network			X			\$ 12,215.00	\$ 12,215.00	0.94%	0.30%
		Library Capacity Building/ Library Capacity Building and Core Competencies		X	X	\$ -	\$ 68,956.39	\$ 77,281.40	\$ 146,237.79	11.20%	3.64%
		Library Core Competencies for Staff, Directors, Trustees and Volunteers	X	X		\$ 50,938.72	\$ 11,705.57	\$ -	\$ 62,644.29	4.80%	1.56%
		Assist libraries in the ability to plan, implement, and evaluate their capacity to provide library services	X			\$ 57,596.46	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 57,596.46	4.41%	1.43%
		Consortia Cataloging Support	X	X		\$ 37,922.02	\$ 1,441.03	\$ -	\$ 39,363.05	3.01%	0.98%
		GOAL SUBTOTAL				\$ 578,371.12	\$ 542,921.65	\$ 184,639.05	\$ 1,305,931.82	100.00%	32.48%
		LSTA PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION	X	X	X	\$ 3,504.00	\$ 840.90	\$ 2,079.84	\$ 6,424.74	100.00%	0.16%
		GRAND TOTAL				\$ 1,369,223.00	\$ 1,206,361.00	\$ 1,444,681.21	\$ 4,020,265.21		100.00%

# Appendix I: Web-Survey Report

## WV LSTA Survey Summary

<https://app.alchemer.com/explorer/report-view/id/6544364/view/25232>

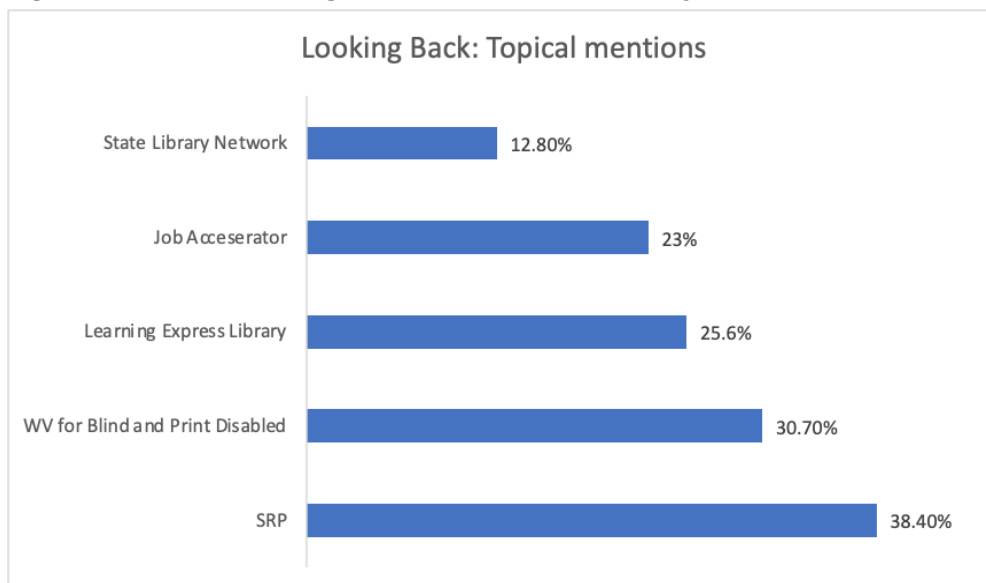
### Findings

The survey received 93 responses, 42 of which were complete. 100% (42) of 42 respondents work in public libraries. 100% of respondents (42) were library directors.

### Looking back

The first question asked respondents to think back over the past three years and discuss which LSTA-supported programs had the greatest impact on the library and the people the library serves. While examples of funded projects were provided for each area, respondents were not asked to specifically comment on each. We received 39 responses to this question. Programs praised as impactful at least two times were coded by response, and results can be seen in the figure below. Overall, programs and grants supporting lifelong learning were mentioned by 58.9% of respondents, with specific examples such as the Learning Express Library (25.6%) and Job Accelerator (23%). Programs that support increased access for community members such as the WV for the Blind and Print Disabled were mentioned by 30.7% of respondents. Finally, the support for summer reading programs (SRP) were praised as impactful by 38.4% of respondents. 12.8% of respondents indicated that the State Library Network was impactful, especially for more remote library locations and communities.

**Figure 3. Important programs from the last three years.**



A sample of comments from this question can be found below.

*We have had many needs and with the LSTA Funds it has helped us serve our patrons and community better. With laptops, hotspots, kindles and books we have become an important service throughout the pandemic and before that. We have been given a chance to keep up with our community by offering services that we would otherwise not be able to afford.*

*Funding for the state library network, on-line card catalog and databases have become expected services by our patrons. Without LSTA funding, it would be difficult to afford those necessary aspects of library service. The Blind and Print Disabled services are vital to reaching a part of the community that is underserved.*

*The training LSTA funds have provided for my staff have been absolutely valuable. We would be lost without them.*

*Webster Addison Public Library is a small library in a rural and rugged territory. Students and families here have very limited access to the internet. With the changes in the past with Covid issues and students needing to work from home, as well as parents, we have benefited greatly from the internet service provided and available at our libraries for the schools throughout our community. Our patrons are also very appreciative of the data they can access from WVInfoDepot.org. In the past 5 years we have also looked forward to any assistance with Summer Reading Programs - As this was not a program that was in force until 2015 in the local library, it has continued to grow each year (with the exception of the pandemic closure). Funding is decreasing yearly and we look forward to any assistance in these areas.*

*The training and support received for summer reading is vital to running a good summer reading program. The summer reading manuals eliminate the need to invent a program from scratch and always have ideas that can be adapted for smaller libraries. Learning Express Library and Job Career Accelerator provide our patrons with a wealth of information on various careers. Our patrons depend on the services of the Blind and Physically Handicapped. We have a Large Print rotating collection from the library commission as well as patrons that use the service for those that can no longer read print. This service provides those patrons the ability to enjoy their favorite reading material.*

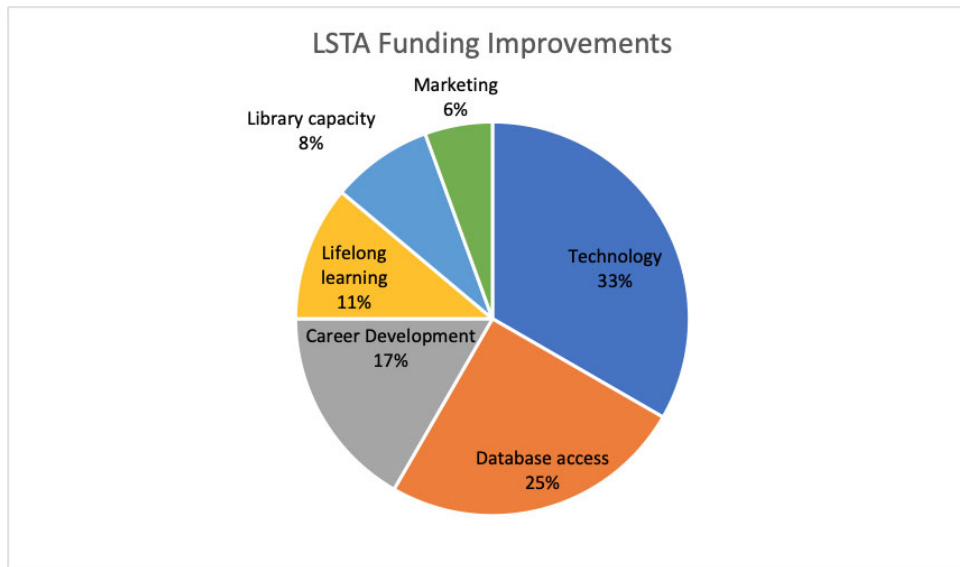
*Tech Support: including supplying hardware, software, internet connection, and fixing problems with computers and the internet. These services are vital to our efforts to serve our community. Many in our community do not have computers or internet due to costs or no internet service in their area. Databases: Gives our patrons access to research, career, and learning databases. Blind and Handicapped Services: A large percentage of our community have sight issues or are handicapped.*

## **Looking Forward**

Respondents were asked to think ahead to the years covered by the upcoming Five-Year Plan (fiscal years 2023 - 2027) and discuss changes in the way that LSTA dollars are invested that would significantly improve library services. We received 38 responses to this question. These responses will be examined in depth as part of the planning process for the next LSTA Five-Year plan; for now, several themes and quotes are included below.

Ideas for areas of expanded or new LSTA support include technology advancements, database access, career development for staff or additional staff, lifelong learning, library capacity, marketing resources, and partnerships with local school districts.

**Figure 4. Breakdown of suggestions for funding improvements.**



Some specific comments are below.

*Support the hiring and development of additional professional librarians. Many libraries across West Virginia struggle to attract quality professional directors, in turn the level of service in communities suffer greatly. Professionally trained library employees offer enhanced knowledge and a broader perspective involving library services therefore the library community benefits with a higher level of service.*

*With technology ever-important and ever-changing, programs and resources for technological innovation are becoming more necessary. Databases that could provide technological information for patrons on how to 3-D print, code, design websites, etc. would be a valuable resource.*

*Our library benefits from all that LSTA dollars provides. I believe digital records will become more important in the next five years. We need to make sure our patrons are technologically savvy and able to access databases. The staff will require training in order to assist.*

*I think that accessing a newspaper resource that can be available at a consortium rate (with perhaps LSTA aid) would be beneficial to our institution. We currently access those services through a library in Kentucky that has open access for the material that we do not have but would love to make accessing older newspapers easier for our community and for our staff. This is something that we access frequently and people are unsure of how to access a lot of this type of information. I also feel that an alternative to Overdrive that offers movies and music, such as Hoopla, would be a wonderful extension to the services that we provide. Base funding to go toward this endeavor would be beneficial and would cut down on the FY cost per library so that patrons could access this material, which is priced by usage and per capita. These may not be ideal contributions for LSTA but I can see the benefit of including something of this nature in our community and I am sure other libraries can as well, but may be hesitant because of the cost structures.*

*Small communities such as ours would always need assistance with personnel, however unlikely. We operate on a staff of 1 full time, 1 part time, and an outside agency worker. Also any childrens, teens, or adult technology classes and education would be a great advantage in providing our community knowledge to keep up with the ever changing demands of doing any type of business.*

*1) A stipend to Board Members 2) Meeting with Board Members at the Library to help them realize what being a Board Member is all about. The importance of the 'job.' 3) Develop a brochure of professionals and others who are willing to get involved with Libraries as well as locals. 4) Some direct funding for the Summer Reading Programs. This would allow funds for field trips and materials to keep the kids interested and improve participation. 5) Creating an information network of news, ads, TV etc that will keep us in the news. Part time staff who are usually working solo just can't keep promoting like we should. 6) Become more involved with the smaller libraries.*

Additional comments on LSTA funding are below.

*Less money in state staff services and more in Direct Service and affiliate services.*

*Strong points for the overall program: Summer Reading support Info Depot Support of Blind and Physically Handicapped Weaknesses: Core Competencies Leadership Training.*

*Likes: Public access to internet and wifi in the library. Technology databases Improvements: Assistance with digitization of records within library. Continued purchasing of databases provided by WVLC*



*Building maintenance and construction is the most often item mentioned by libraries across the state. As library buildings continue to age, there is a need for repairs and in some instances replacement.*

*We cannot do without the services provided to us. Without them the library cannot afford the modern library services. We would have to go back to the level of library service that was given back in the 1960's. Books would be about all we could offer our community.*

*I like the program and admire and envy what other states have been able to achieve with these funds. Unfortunately, WV uses these funds to patch a desperate lack of local funding for most of our public library systems. Most WV public libraries, especially those on the state network, have been divested of their basic responsibilities to provide adequate utilities, like Internet, and qualified, trained librarians with the skills in technology and training. As a result, they solely rely on the WVLC and LSTA funds to provide this basic library responsibility. I dislike that because these libraries have no other means of support or incentive to do so, that LSTA funds are not free for collaboration and/or innovation.*

*Running a one size fits all program like the WV Library Commission does not work well for everyone. Some libraries who choose to go their own way in terms of technology, Internet access, etc.; do not get the benefit of LSTA dollars simply because they don't participate in the offerings.*

*I have been complaining for years about the lack of innovation, the top-down control and nothing ever changes. We have a serious problem here with leadership and professional management. I really think that there should be a limit on how long any one program can be supported with LSTA so instead of continually doing the same thing and getting poor results, the management would move on to something else. They have been supporting the network, databases, and summer reading programs for decades when technology is changing, and they need to force libraries to be independent and think creatively with new programs. Libraries who do try new things do not do so because of the state library or LSTA funds, but despite them.*

## Appendix J: Databases in West Virginia

Prepared by Genya O’Gara, Library Consultant and VIVA Deputy Director

### Background

Statewide database programs are a crucial service supported at various levels by the vast majority of state library programs across the United States.<sup>9</sup> Meeting user needs in virtual as well as physical spaces is a critical component of state library services; even as physical visits and circulation decline at public libraries (a trend likely to be further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic), both the usage and availability of electronic resources has expanded.<sup>10</sup>

To understand the snapshot of the database resources and programs provided by the state agency, it is important to note that funding models for statewide databases have shifted considerably in the last few decades. For example, between 2000 and 2020 state libraries’ overall spending on statewide database licensing increased from 42.29 million to 74.04 million dollars (spent by 48 state libraries). Within this increase however, state libraries were very unlikely to be the sole source of support for statewide databases; in fact, in 2020, 89.6 percent of statewide database licensing was carried out by multiple entities and funding sources.<sup>11</sup> In an informal 2021 survey of state data coordinators, it was found that although the majority of states offer support for a statewide databases program (41 of 44 respondents), many of those are not managed through the state library (only 33 reported state library management). Thirty-six of these respondents also noted the existence of a local e-resource consortium in the state.

Often these statewide database programs are supported in part through LSTA funding, as well as state funding, library cost-shares, grants, and external, but often complementary, consortial programs.<sup>12</sup> Each statewide database program is approached, funded, and supported in slightly different ways. The following snapshots note where LSTA funds have likely supported a particular resource or platform to some extent, but they do not note what other funding or percentage of support this comprises, as this information is beyond the scope of the LSTA evaluation.

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<sup>9</sup> The Institute of Museum and Library Services. 2021. Functions and Roles of State Libraries: 2000 and 2020. Washington, DC: The Institute of Museum and Library Services, p.14.; Results from the SDC E-Resources Survey.

<sup>10</sup> The Institute of Museum and Library Services. (2021). *The Use and Cost of Public Library Materials: Trends Before the COVID-19 Pandemic*. Washington, DC: The Institute, p. 6.

<sup>11</sup> The Institute of Museum and Library Services. 2021. Functions and Roles of State Libraries: 2000 and 2020. Washington, DC: The Institute of Museum and Library Services, p.14.; Results from the SDC E-Resources Survey, p.14.

<sup>12</sup> Results from the 2021 SDC E-Resources Survey

**State: West Virginia**

**Project details/URLs:**

- 2019: <https://imls-spr.imls.gov/Public/Details/84168>
- 2018: <https://imls-spr.imls.gov/Public/Details/82540>
- WVInfoDepot.org
- In FFY 2018 & FFY 2019, \$511,736.09 was spent on database resources, comprising 19.90% of total LSTA expenditures.

**1. Table of Resources:**

*\*The italicized resource is free to use and not funded by LSTA.*

Vendor/Provider	Resource	Vendor/Provider	Resource
EBSCO	Alt HealthWatch	EBSCO	Newspaper Source
EBSCO	Business Source Elite	Niche Academy	Niche Academy
EBSCO	Consumer Health Complete	EBSCO	NoveList Plus
<i>PLA</i>	<i><a href="http://DigitalLearn.org">DigitalLearn.org</a></i>	EBSCO	NoveList K-8 Plus
EBSCO	Explora for Elementary Schools	EBSCO	Points of View Reference Center
EBSCO	Explora Magazines and Newspapers	EBSCO	Regional Business News
EBSCO	Explora Middle and High School	EBSCO	TOPICsearch
EBSCO	GreenFILE	World Book	World Book Online
EBSCO	Health Source – Consumer Edition	World Book	World Book Early Learning (Grades PreK+)
EBSCO	Health Source: Nursing/ Academic Edition	World Book	World Book Kids (Grades K+)
Learning Express	Job & Career Accelerator	World Book	World Book Student (Grades 5+)
Learning Express	LearningExpress Library	World Book	World Book Advanced (Grades 9+)
EBSCO	Legal Information Reference Center	World Book	World Book Discover (Grades 5+)
EBSCO	Library, Information Science, & Technology Abstracts		

## **2. Access/Scope/Population:**

Access to statewide database resources is provided through WVInfoDepot.org. These resources include full-text periodicals and reference resources on a wide variety of topics including current events, social issues, health information, reading suggestions, and practical education modules, such as Job & Career Accelerator and test preparation resources. All West Virginia residents, 1.729 million as of 2019 (US Census), may use these resources, which serve pre-k through adults, and include academic as well as general interest topics. Access is made available through library IP or via username and password.

## **3. URLs:**

West-Virginia-DBs spreadsheet constructed.

## **4. URLs usage:**

Usage statistics, as well as other tools for library staff, are made available through this web page: <http://wvinfodepot.org/index.php/library-staff/>. Usage statistics are shared via google drive, and are available for Ebsco products, Learning Express Library, WorldBook, and Job Accelerator:

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1wQSntWlyM\\_nC4np1N9cXHztJ\\_Z5FqTmL](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1wQSntWlyM_nC4np1N9cXHztJ_Z5FqTmL)[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1wQSntWlyM\\_nC4np1N9cXHztJ\\_Z5FqTmL](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1wQSntWlyM_nC4np1N9cXHztJ_Z5FqTmL). EBSCO usage is from 2019-2021, Learning Express Library, WorldBook, and Job Accelerator statistics date back to 2018. Analysis of changes in usage from 2017 forward for various products, particularly health resources, is detailed in associated project activity reports.