

The Wisconsin Library Ecosystem

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What is an Ecosystem?

“any system or network of interconnecting and interacting parts, as in a business”

- *Dictionary.com*

In Wisconsin, the public library ecosystem includes:

- State Library Agency (DLT), State Statutes, COLAND
- Regional Public Library Systems
- Local Governments: Counties, Cities, Villages, Towns, Tribes
- Library Boards
- Library Director and Other Staff
- Friends, Foundations, the Community

Wisconsin Statutes: Chapter 43

The legislature recognizes:

- Importance of free access to knowledge, information and diversity of ideas
- Critical role played by public, school, special and academic libraries
- Major educational, cultural and economic asset
- Importance of public libraries to the democratic process
- Most effective use can occur only through interlibrary cooperation

COLAND

State Superintendent

Dept of Public Instruction (DPI)

Division for Libraries & Technology
Library Services Team

Public Library Systems

Municipal
Libraries

Joint
Libraries

Consolidated
Co. Libraries

Tribal
Libraries

At the State Level

Role of the State Superintendent (Wis. Stat. sec. 43.03)

- Promote, assist, and plan the development and improvement of school and public library services
- Develop statewide priorities for networks that enable cooperation and resource sharing
- Plan and coordinate library services to groups with special needs
- Accept and disburse federal grants and state aid
- Develop a statewide resource sharing tool
- Disseminate information regarding continuing education activities for librarians, trustees, support staff, and others

At the State Level

Role of the Division (Wis. Stat. sec. 43.05)

- Offer continuing education programs for public libraries & library systems, school libraries, and institutional libraries
- Provide consulting and informational services to public libraries, municipalities, systems, school districts, state agencies and officers, and institutional programs
- Collect library statistics and conduct studies and surveys of library needs throughout the state and report and publish the findings
- Recommend and distribute standards for public libraries, school library programs and facilities, and institutional library programs

At the State Level

Role of the Division (Wis. Stat. sec. 43.05 - 09)

- Establish standards for and issue certificates to public librarians
- Approve the establishment of public library systems
- Maintain a resources for libraries and lifelong learning service
- Establish standards for public library systems
- Administer aid to library systems (state and federal)

At the State Level

Role of Council on Library and Network Development (s. 43.07)

- 19-member, governor-appointed council; both professional and public members
- Advises the State Superintendent and the Division on the policies, activities, budget, and overall direction of the state's programs for public and school libraries and network services
- Makes recommendations to the division regarding standards for certification of librarians and standards for library systems
- Reviews and recommends DPI budget request to the governor
- Receives complaints, suggestions, and inquiries regarding the programs and policies of DPI relating to library and network development

At the State Level

Role of the Wisconsin Library Association (WLA)

- Wisconsin's professional association for library workers of all types
- The division for public libraries is the Wisconsin Association of Public Libraries (WAPL)
- The division specifically for trustees is Wisconsin Library Trustees & Friends (WLTF)
- A special committee of WLA is the Library Development & Legislation Committee (LD&L)

At the Regional Level: Public Library Systems

- Formed around counties (s. 43.15)
- Public libraries join by agreement, must maintain eligibility to participate
 - Certified Director must work at least 10 hours per week in the building
 - Open to the public at least 20 hours
 - Spend at least \$2,500 on library materials
- Range in size from 1 county to 10 counties
- Governed by a board appointed by counties
- Majority of funding comes from State Aid (s. 43.24)
 - Some services in partnership with members for additional fees (automation systems, delivery) or on a cost recovery basis

At the Regional Level

Role of Public Library Systems

Library systems MUST provide the following to receive state aid (s. 43.24):

- Technology and resource sharing planning
- Referral or routing of reference and interlibrary loan requests
- Electronic delivery of information and physical delivery of library materials
- Training for member library staff and trustees
- Professional consultant services
- Support for library service to users with special needs
- Backup reference, information, and interlibrary loan services from the system resource library

At the Regional Level

Role of Public Library Systems

Library systems MUST provide the following to receive state aid (s. 43.24):

- Planning with other types of libraries in the system area
- Service agreements with all adjacent library systems
- Agreements with each member library that require those libraries to serve all residents of the system area on the same basis as local residents
- Other services to meet the needs of member libraries

Each is required by Statute but the level at which each system provides these services depends on staff capacity, funding and member library needs.

At the Regional Level

Ways a Library System Can Offer Support

- Provide Consult on Chapter 43 including the powers and duties of library board
- Provide continuing education and training for library board and staff members
- Assist with library director hiring, as requested
- Offer guidance on open meetings law, personnel, finance, planning, youth services, inclusive services, and other areas
- Help inform and educate county and municipal boards
- Communicate library issues with the Division
- Monitor library system membership and statutory compliance