



2024 Legislative Policy Statement

The Wisconsin Library Association affirms that:

- Wisconsin residents value and use libraries for business, cultural, educational, and recreational purposes
- Library information resources, a statewide knowledge network, and high-speed broadband access contribute to the state's economic growth, business planning, and workforce development
- Libraries provide Wisconsin residents with the essential information services they need to succeed at school, at work, and in their personal lives
- Libraries contribute to the quality of life of Wisconsin residents through lifelong learning opportunities
- Libraries support children and families with early literacy and reading readiness programs
- Libraries play a key role in independent learning, in classrooms, and home-based education
- Libraries deliver high value in a cost-effective manner through regional and statewide resource sharing

The Wisconsin Library Association supports state legislative policy that:

- Ensures all Wisconsin residents have the broadest possible access to information resources and materials
- Preserves the fundamental principle of publicly funded free and open access to library materials and services first established by Wisconsin law in 1872
- Affirms the right of local public library boards to independently determine local library policy, staffing, and services based on community needs
- Values privacy and confidentiality in the use of library materials and services, and promotes the privacy of library users
- Supports the development of print collections, learning tools, digital resources, and community engagement for libraries of all types
- Promotes regional and statewide sharing of library and information resources
- Provides robust affordable broadband networks for all Wisconsin residents to access technology
- Supports strong statewide leadership for library development and cooperation
- Supports sustainable funding of public libraries and public library systems by local governments, counties, and the state
- Promotes local and state taxing options that avoid adverse effects on libraries
- Provides incentives for library system collaboration and supports policies and actions that result in increases in efficiency and effectiveness

The Wisconsin Library Association supports the following legislative positions:

To enhance all Wisconsin libraries:

- Endorsement of publicly funded free and open access to library materials for all Wisconsin citizens
- Use of the Universal Service Fund for BadgerLink online resources and other statewide library services
- Sufficient, coordinated, and affordable broadband and Internet access
- Enhanced support for collaborative delivery of library materials, shared online catalogs and electronic databases, and other services offered to all Wisconsin residents through regional public library systems
- Continued support for statewide resource contracts: Wisconsin Talking Book and Braille Library, Cooperative Children's Book Center, interlibrary loan from the Milwaukee Public Library and the University of Wisconsin-Madison collections, and Recollection Wisconsin
- Sustained support for the Wisconsin State Law Library, the Theobald Legislative Library, and the Milwaukee County and Dane County Law Libraries
- Support for free and open access to government publications and documents

To enhance Wisconsin public libraries:

- Support for additional public library system aids to strengthen and enhance public library services at the local level
- Funding that provides citizen access from home, work, or school to electronically published materials on a wide range of subjects
- Increased allowable revenue limits and transportation aid for counties and local governments, to enable sustained and stable support for all Wisconsin public libraries regardless of size or location

To enhance Wisconsin publicly supported academic libraries:

- Robust funding for the Universities of Wisconsin and Wisconsin Technical College System libraries to enable them to support research, teaching, and learning on their campuses
- Full funding for the Wisconsin Historical Society Library
- Additional funding for shared electronic library collections that support research and advanced study across the Universities of Wisconsin

To enhance Wisconsin school and institutional libraries:

- Appropriate use of the Common School Fund for strong school library programs under the guidance of certified school library media professionals
- Increased capacity and access to broadband services for all Wisconsin students
- Increased funding for K-12 educational technology programs, infrastructure, and professional development
- Employment of certified school library media specialists, instructional technology professionals, and appropriate support staff in every school
- Extension of the protective status provided to correctional institution officers and sergeants to civilian staff (librarians, teachers, social, and health care workers) employed by the Department of Corrections