



WISCONSIN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

## 2023 Legislative Policy Statement

### **The Wisconsin Library Association affirms that:**

- Wisconsin residents value and use libraries for education, business, cultural, 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 for 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 standards and 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 on-line 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, inter-loan from the Milwaukee Public Library and the University of Wisconsin 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 University of Wisconsin (UW) System and 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 UW System

### **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

*Approved by WLA LD&L Committee [11/18/2022] and WLA Board of Directors [12/16/2022]*