

WLS Plan of Service 2017-2019
(July, 2017 – June 30, 2019)

Mission Statement: The mission of the Western Library System is to provide the leadership, training, and support necessary to enable our member libraries to be essential and valued resources in their communities. In the next biennium, our focus will be:

- helping library staff to increase their knowledge and offer excellent library and information services;
- supporting library efforts in planning and collaboration that is responsive to the schools and communities they serve;
- assisting library staff in providing and using technology resources to meet information needs;
- continuing the promotion of the value of libraries and library workers;
- maintain the programs that support our mission.

I. TRAINING, CONSULTING, SUPPORT

Goal 1: To increase the knowledge and skills of the WLS library community by providing continuing education opportunities and technology training.

Objectives:

1. Use results of surveys and workshop feedback to determine WLS member training needs, and plan training events to meet them.
2. Work with the Nebraska Library Commission and the other Systems to develop, plan, and promote Basic Skills programs and statewide CE (such as technology training, Trustee/Board education, youth and senior programs, collection management, fundraising, policies, advocacy).
3. Encourage participation of WLS members and Boards in continuing education opportunities.
4. Assist library staff and trustees in meeting accreditation and certification guidelines, and participating in educational programs.

Outcomes:

1. A variety of educational opportunities will be planned and provided.
2. Workshop participants will indicate on evaluations what they learned.
3. Library staffs and Boards will participate in programs to fulfill certification/accreditation requirements and professional learning needs.

Goal 2: To provide information and support to individual libraries or Boards to meet specific needs.

Objectives:

1. Respond to requests for assistance with visits and/or materials.
2. Request support from NLC staff as needed.

Outcomes:

1. Problems specific to an individual staff member, a library, a Board, or a community will be addressed and a plan created to solve them.
2. Specific information which has not been addressed in CE training will be provided to libraries as requested.

Goal 3: To provide opportunities for members in the System to share ideas.

Objectives:

1. Facilitate informal meeting opportunities with job-a-likes.
2. Conduct Public Librarians Meetings throughout the region.
3. Maintain current member directory to encourage communication.
4. Set up social media accounts: Facebook, twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, etc. Continue with WLS website.

Outcomes:

1. Library staff will identify specific concerns work together on solutions.
2. Library staff will share resources and program ideas.
3. Library staff in remote areas will feel connected to other libraries.
4. Library staff will have increased networking support and get to know their colleagues.

Goal 4: To make all residents of the Western Library System region aware of electronic resources provided through libraries and encourage their use.

Objectives:

1. Provide training to insure that all library staff are able to use, and to help others use, computer resources.
2. Support community training efforts.
3. Encourage technology collaboration between schools and public libraries.

Outcomes:

1. Increased use of NebraskAccess, online catalogs, OverDrive, etc.
2. Library staff will feel comfortable searching the Internet and databases, and helping others use them.
3. Staff and patrons will be able to find desired information electronically.
4. The library and librarians will be considered an essential community resource.

II. PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT, COORDINATION

Goal 1: To assist libraries to improve the quality of library collections.

Objectives:

1. Work with library staff to select materials, evaluate collections, and weed.
2. Make available recommendations for materials for specific needs.
3. Provide guidelines for setting collection goals and priorities.

Outcomes:

1. Collections will be more current, relevant, and appealing.
2. Interest and circulation will increase.
3. Funds will be spent to meet identified needs.

Goal 2: To help libraries use strategic planning to develop library services.

Objectives:

1. Continue to provide direction for the planning process.
2. Provide tools to help gather community information.
3. Promote Board and community involvement in library planning.
4. Assist libraries with the strategic planning process.
5. Publicize information about grant funding opportunities.
6. Encourage local support for sustaining library technology.

Outcomes:

1. Libraries will develop useful planning documents.
2. Library programs will be responsive to community needs.
3. Libraries will pursue new funding sources.
4. Community partnerships will be formed.
5. Technology resources will be upgraded.

Goal 3: To provide resources for library staff to use in administration, planning, collection development, public services, and professional enrichment.

Objectives:

1. Obtain and make available books, videos, and journals to meet the needs of member libraries as budget permits.
2. Publicize the books, videos and journals available in the WLS office.
3. Organize files of materials to share (policies, brochures, etc).
4. Promote the services and materials available from the NLC.
5. Develop a searchable online catalog of WLS office resources that can be accessed by members via the WLS website.

Outcomes:

1. Increased use of the WLS professional collection.
2. Increased use of NLC materials and services by WLS members.
3. Feedback from libraries about usefulness of resource materials.

Goal 4: To collaborate within and outside the System on regional and state programs.

Objectives:

1. Provide a summer performing activity in conjunction with summer reading programs as budget permits.
2. Assist with and promote author visits, literary events, Humanities Council programs, and other similar activities as budget permits.
3. Promote Nebraska authors and books.
4. Encourage participation in the Golden Sower program.
5. Support reading/writing groups and activities.
6. Work with regional library systems & the NLC to develop and implement programs and services that meet the needs of our member libraries.

Outcomes:

1. People who are not regular library users will attend special events and become more interested in the library and its services.
2. Patrons will see the library as a cultural gathering place.
3. Nebraskans will appreciate the accomplishments of local writers.
4. Young people and adults will be part of a community of readers.
5. The WLS will offer services and programs in a cost-effective and productive manner.

Goal 5: To maintain current successful WLS services; and efficiently and cost effectively operate the WLS office.

Objectives:

1. Provide requested WLS materials, equipment, information, and support.
2. Respond promptly to consulting needs by phone, e-mail, fax, or visit.
3. Maintain regular contact with all system members.
4. Encourage professional development through scholarships.
5. Promote participation in professional association activities.
6. Provide information about issues impacting library services.
7. Maintain, evaluate, and upgrade office equipment.
8. Prepare all required reports.
9. Organize files and financial records using standard procedures.
10. Hold six or more System Board meetings per year to provide governance of overall operations and programming.

Outcomes:

1. WLS members will receive needed assistance from the System director and assistant.
2. WLS members will be challenged, empowered, and supported in their professional duties.
3. WLS members will be informed about issues affecting them.
4. The WLS office will meet all requirements for financial, legal, and program standards.
5. The WLS office will operate efficiently and effectively.

III. PROMOTION, ADVOCACY, COMMUNICATION

Goal 1: To increase the visibility and value of libraries and library services to the school and community.

Objectives:

1. Provide information and materials to help library staff market their programs in their schools and communities.
2. Participate in Legislative Day and other activities that will promote libraries in the broader community.
3. Be a library information resource for school administrators, city council members, and others indirectly connected to libraries.

Outcomes:

1. Participation in library programs will increase.
2. Use of library materials and services will increase.
3. The community will be aware of school and public library needs in the areas of budget, staff, hours, materials and services.
4. School administrators and city/county leaders will recognize the library as a core element in the school and the community.

Goal 2: To provide means for WLS members to be informed about library activities and to communicate with each other.

Objectives:

1. Keep the System web page current and relevant.
2. Provide web page links based on member needs and requests.
3. Encourage all members to use e-mail.
4. Support the use of library social media.
5. Use the WLS member email to distribute time-sensitive information.
6. Maintain an updated member directory.

Outcomes:

1. Members will have “anytime” access to current System and related library information.
2. Members will receive information in a timely manner.
3. Members will support each other by communicating electronically.
4. Members will experience a sense of unity and camaraderie.
5. Members will participate in the library world beyond their location.

Goal 3: To provide a consistent vehicle for communication, promotion, education, support, identity and unity for WLS members; a record of System activities; and a sharing of WLS information in a wider community

Objectives

1. Publish a bi-monthly newsletter.
2. Distribute the newsletter to all members and other interested parties.
3. Provide the newsletter in electronic format.

Outcomes:

1. All members and those associated with WLS will share a common base of information about the library system.
2. There will be ongoing documentation of the activities and members of the Western Library System.

Goal 4: To encourage people to pursue a career in the library profession.

Objectives:

1. Provide information to those considering career choices.
2. Publicize educational programs that prepare library workers.
3. Promote a positive image of the library profession.

4. Encourage Friends groups and Board members to promote the library profession within their networks.
5. Make available promotional materials and programs to distribute and present to schools, Board meetings, and public forums.

Outcomes:

1. Increased enrollment in library training programs.
2. Larger pool of qualified applicants for job openings.
3. Greater value placed on those currently in library positions.

Goal 5: To promote the library in the community and the school.

Objectives:

1. Assist Library Boards on how to advocate for the library.
2. Recognize involvement of school and community leaders in library programs.
3. Encourage library partnerships.

Outcomes:

1. Community members will financially support the library.
2. Non-library users will consider the library a valuable asset.
3. The library will be a school and community partner and be seen as an essential element for the success of the larger unit.
4. School and public libraries will support each other's programs and services, and students will make the connection.