CONNECTICUT STATE LIBRARY

Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to States Implementation Evaluation FFY 2018 – FFY 2022

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Summary Introduction

In FFY 2000, Connecticut State Library (CSL) expenditures per capita were $6.13 with total operating expenditures of $20,128,000. After two decades of eroding funding combined with a 5.88% increase in population, FFY 2020 expenditures per capita were $3.53 with a total operating expenditures of $12,746,771, representing a 42.41% decline in per capita spending.[1] These statistics do not factor in inflation; the purchasing power of CSL's FFY 2020 expenditures compared to FFY 2000 expenditures was roughly 58% less.[2] Years of eroding financial support have necessitated facilities closures and deep cuts in staff positions and services over time. CSL saw a 48.21% decline in state funding and a 13.60% decrease in federal funding from FFY 2000 to FFY 2020. In FFY 2000, Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funding represented 9.63% of total expenditures for CSL; in FFY 2020, LSTA funding was 16.12% of total expenditures.[3] As these difficult financial transformations have occurred, CSL has had to make difficult yet strategic decisions about the ways in which LSTA funds are used, shifting resources to shore up essential services and to focus and build on CSL's strengths.

Figure 1. Public Library outlets by location, Public Library Survey FFY 2019
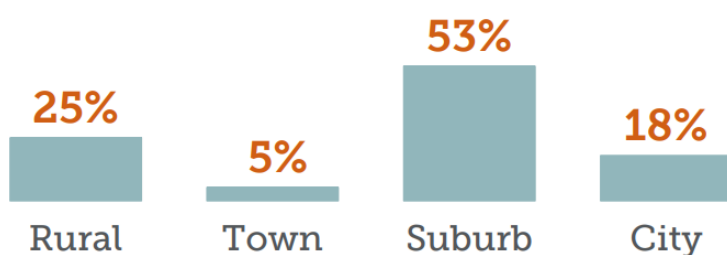
Connecticut has a total of 192 public library jurisdictions employing 1,117.58 FTE librarians based on the 2019 Public Library Survey; similarly, 35 institutions of higher education employing 526.28 FTE librarians based on the 2020 Academic Library Survey; and, 206 public school districts employing 729.65 full-time librarians based on the 2018-2019 Elementary and Secondary Information System Survey. The public library workforce represents about 47% of the librarians in the state. Total FTE staff is about 2,201 in 232 public library outlets, the majority of them suburban (53%).

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[1] https://www.imls.gov/research-evaluation/data-collection/state-library-administrative-agency-survey
[2] US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index Inflation Calculator
https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm
[3] https://www.imls.gov/research-evaluation/data-collection/state-library-administrative-agency-survey

Figure 3. Public Library Outlets, Population and Poverty Status, Connecticut

Connecticut is a geographically small state (eight counties) for the numerous public library jurisdictions it supports, only a few of which are library systems with more than one branch. One result of the state's system of small independent libraries and a historical lack of movement towards library consolidation is a high administrative workload for CSL staff as they seek to deliver services to the multitude of public libraries, as well as the hundreds of school, academic, special, and government libraries who are also eligible to benefit in various ways from services provided through Connecticut's LSTA funding. The map on the left shows library outlets and poverty rates from the American Community Survey (ACS) (darker color = higher poverty rate).[4] The following figure captures population served, library card holders, library systems (note slight variation on PLS data from year to year), and library buildings.[5]

Figure 4. Public Libraries serving Connecticut

Population Served	Library Card Holders	Library Systems	Library Buildings
3.3M	1.4M	180	226
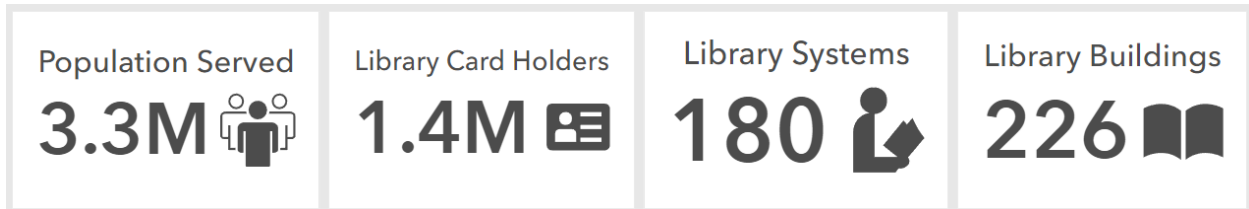
Given Connecticut's estimated population of 3,605,944[6], the state's annual LSTA Grants to States[7] allotment from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) of approximately $2,098,014.25[8] million per year translates into $0.58[9] per person on an annual basis. LSTA funds alone are obviously inadequate to meet the library and information needs of approximately 3.6 million residents. CSL's challenge has been to find ways to make $0.58 per person transformative in terms of library services; to leverage a small amount of money to accomplish major results by strategically deploying funds; and to leverage other public and private monies in support of library and information services.

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[4] Public Libraries by State: Library System & ACS Data Viewer, FY 2019

[5] Ibid.

[6] United States Census Bureau Population estimate July 1, 2020

[7] The report will refer to the Library Services and Technology Act's Grants to States Program simply as LSTA throughout this report.

[8] Four Year LSTA Grants to States Allotment average ((FFY 2018 State allotment + FFY 2019 State allotment + FFY 2020 State allotment + FFY 2021 State allotment) / 4)

[9] Four Year LSTA Grants to States State allotment average / United States Census Bureau population estimate July 1, 2020

There are two goal statements in CSL's *Library Services and Technology Act, Five Year Plan 2018-2022.* They are:

> GOAL 1: Support the impact of libraries as community anchors with increased institutional capacity, community partnerships, and programming focused on the seven literacies.

> GOAL 2: Improve access to information and library resources for all residents of the state.

CSL approaches these goals through a combination of statewide services and programs, special projects, and subgrants to libraries.

Agency's Internal Assessment and Evaluator's Assessment

As part of the assessment process, the evaluators asked the Connecticut State Librarian, CSL's LSTA Coordinator, 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 CSL'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.

Upon further investigation with focus groups, interviews, and surveys, the evaluators concluded their own independent assessment. All focus groups and interviews were conducted virtually. Participants were eager to share their experiences and explain how the libraries are supported and how their offerings support the community members. Table 1 offers a summary of both CSL's internal assessment and the evaluators' conclusions.

Table 1 - Connecticut State Library's and Evaluator's Assessment of Achievement		
GOAL	**CSL's Internal Assessment**	**Evaluators' Assessment**
GOAL 1: Support the impact of libraries as community anchors with increased institutional capacity, community partnerships, and programming focused on the seven literacies.	Achieved	Achieved
GOAL 2: Improve access to information and library resources for all residents of the state.	Achieved	Achieved

Evaluator's Goal 1 and 2 Summaries

Goal 1 expenditures represent 33.66% of Connecticut's total LSTA allotment for the FFY 2018 – FFY 2020 period. The evaluators believe that the Connecticut State Library has **ACHIEVED** Goal 1. CSL successfully fulfilled each of the five projects and 18 accompanying activities laid out in the *Library Services and Technology Act, Five Year Plan 2018-2022.* The resilience and

support of DLD consultants and guidance provided by the State Library during the pandemic were mentioned time and again throughout our conversations. CSL continues to rise to meet the challenges of the day, poised by the double-edged sword of a financially difficult state economy and the global pandemic. Throughout these trials, DLD has tirelessly lent their efforts to supporting and establishing Connecticut's libraries as community anchors, providing consulting, professional development, and programming aimed to expand libraries institutional capacity and community partnerships.

DLD pivoted quickly when the pandemic hit to support libraries where they were struggling, serving as a lifeline for public libraries by providing essential resources, guidance, and training, as well as launching statewide partnerships to help libraries offer pandemic assistance. CSL took a unique opportunity during this funding cycle to rethink operations and positions, expanding consultant foci into Community Engagement and social service needs, resource sharing across New England and supporting partnerships with other states, digital inclusion, and longform professional development. Grants funded in the category of *Literacy* encouraged programming and projects focused on the seven literacies, funding 14 projects in five of these seven literacies; while grants funded in the category of *Planning* led to expanded community partnerships and stronger bonds with agencies and community organizations for libraries.

Goal 2 expenditures represent 64.14% of Connecticut's total LSTA allotment for the FFY 2018 – FFY 2020 period. The evaluators believe that the Connecticut State Library has **ACHIEVED** Goal 2. CSL successfully fulfilled each of the four projects and 10 accompanying activities laid out in the *Library Services and Technology Act, Five Year Plan 2018-2022*. The Activities under Goal 2 Project 1, "Facilitate resource sharing among libraries through a statewide catalog, interlibrary loan system, delivery system, and supplementary library collections," are met by the *Resource Sharing Online, Statewide Delivery System,* and *Resource Sharing of Supplementary Library Collections* projects. The Activities under Project 2, "Provide access to scholarly and popular databases (researchIT CT) for all residents and students" and Project 3, "Offer a statewide eBook and digital resource sharing platform populated with electronic resources for use by all CT library card holders," are met by the *Research Sharing Online* project -- specifically, the *eGo* and *researchIT* programs. Goal 2 Project 4, "Expand the services and impact of LBPH beyond just the provision of recreational resources to patrons with print disabilities" is fulfilled by the *Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped* project.

Connecticut continued to fund the statewide catalog, ILL request system, and delivery system in support of shared resources for hundreds of public, academic, and school libraries to ensure that residents have equitable access to library materials. The deliverIT program underwent considerable increases in use, financial hardships, and subsequent restructuring during the last LSTA cycle. CSL developed a new, successful model that managed the severe deficit in program funding and provided the stability that the program needed. While libraries wish there were more funding available for deliverIT, the program is indispensable to them. *Resource Sharing of Supplementary Library Collections* continues to provide valuable shared resources to library staff around the state for their professional development and to supplement book discussion groups and early literacy and STEAM programming and is of high value especially to

school and small libraries with modest budgets. The statewide databases program provides significant cost savings to libraries of all types, who have come to rely on the program more and more during their own repeated funding cuts in the past eight years. The new *eGO statewide eBook platform* is a popular program launched in FFY 2020 cycle and already adopted by half of the public libraries in the state.

A-2. Appendix F summarizes all the focal areas and intents addressed by CSL's projects. The only focal area that is not addressed is Civic Engagement.

A-3. Only one project reached the 10% expenditure threshold identified by IMLS as representing a substantial focus on a specific identified group. *Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped* accounted for 23.60% of total expenditures during the evaluation period, representing the *Individuals with disabilities*. However, this does not mean that many of the target audiences did not significantly benefit from the efforts supported with LSTA funding. For example, expenditures under Goal 1's *Summer Reading* and *Professional Development* projects directly benefited *Families, Children,* and *School-Aged Youths*. *Professional Development* expenditures under Goal 1 directly benefited the *Library workforce.* The "Urban Library Initiative" in FFY2019 indirectly benefited *Individuals that are unemployed/underemployed,* and *Individuals living below the poverty line.* Individual subgrants that were awarded during the period covered by this assessment indirectly benefited other audiences identified by IMLS, such as the "Learn English!" sub-grant at the Danbury Public Library in FFY2019 *(Immigrants/refugees)*.

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 Connecticut State Library, 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 Connecticut communities and libraries thrive during the unprecedented times of COVID-19.

EVALUATION REPORT

Evaluation Introduction

Given Connecticut's estimated population of 3,605,944[10], the state's annual LSTA Grants to States[11] allotment from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) of approximately $2,098,014.25[12] million per year translates into $0.58[13] per person on an annual basis. LSTA funds alone are obviously inadequate to meet the library and information needs of approximately 3.6 million residents. CSL's challenge has been to find ways to make $0.58 per person transformative in terms of library services; to leverage a small amount of money to accomplish major results by strategically deploying funds and leveraging other public and private monies in support of library and information services.

Figure 1. Public Library outlets by location, Public Library Survey

Public Library Outlets by Locale
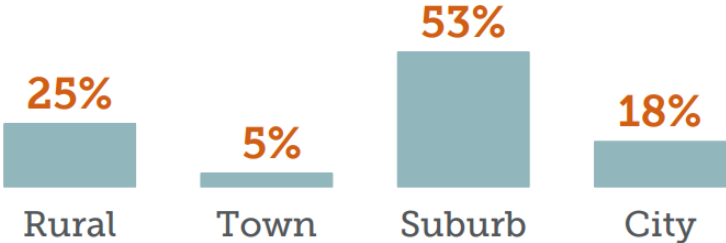
Rural 25% Town 5% Suburb 53% City 18%

Connecticut has a total of 192 public library jurisdictions employing 1,117.58 FTE librarians based on the 2019 Public Library Survey; similarly, 35 institutions of higher education employing 526.28 FTE librarians based on the 2020 Academic Library Survey; and, 206 public school districts employing 729.65 full-time librarians based on the 2018-2019 Elementary and Secondary Information System Survey. The public library workforce represents about 47% of the librarians in the state. Total FTE staff is about 2,201 in 232 public library outlets, the majority of them suburban (53%). Connecticut libraries serve communities from less than 1,000 people up to 250,000 thousand people. The majority of the jurisdictions (31%) serve communities in the 10,000 to 24,999 population range. Top library systems by population served include the Bridgeport Public Library, New Haven Public Library, Ferguson Library (Stamford), Hartford Public Library, and Silas Bronson Library (Waterbury).

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[10] United States Census Bureau Population estimate July 1, 2020

[11] The report will refer to the Library Services and Technology Act's Grants to States Program simply as LSTA throughout this report.

[12] Four Year LSTA Grants to States Allotment average ((FFY 2018 State allotment + FFY 2019 State allotment + FFY 2020 State allotment + FFY 2021 State allotment) / 4)

[13] Four Year LSTA Grants to States State allotment average / United States Census Bureau population estimate July 1, 2020

Figure 2. PLS Table 1A. Percentage distribution of public libraries, by population of legal service area and state: FY 2019
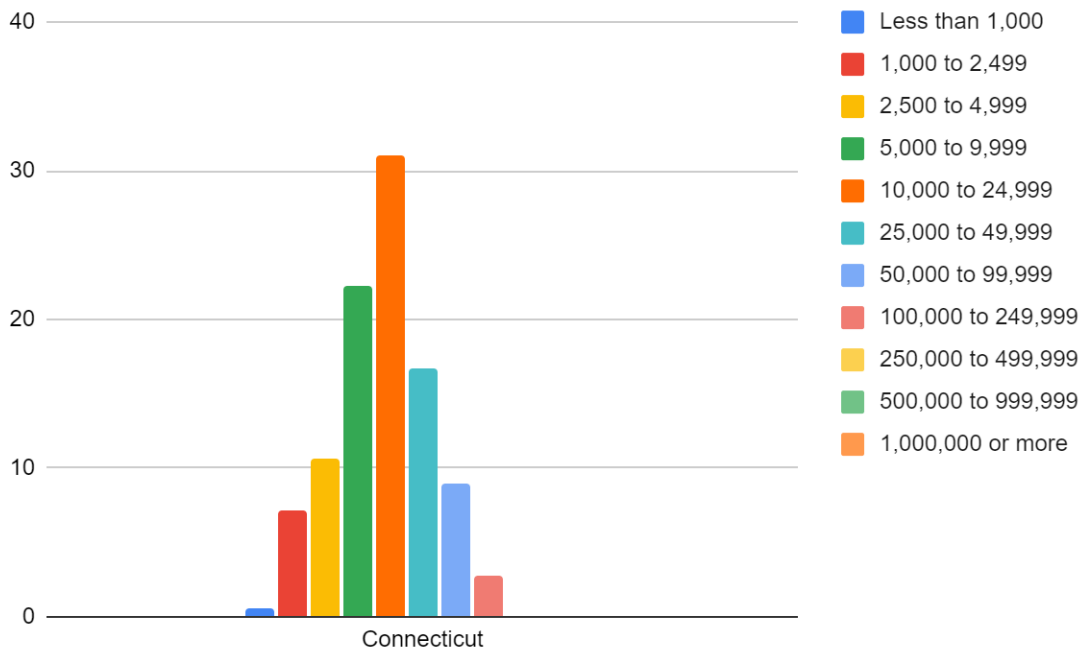
There are two goal statements in Connecticut's *Library Services and Technology Act Five Year Plan, 2018-2022*. Each of the goals is stated below and LSTA-funded activities carried out in support of the goal are described. Finally, the evaluators' assessment of whether each goal has been achieved, partially achieved, or not achieved is presented.

GOAL 1: Support the impact of libraries as community anchors with increased institutional capacity, community partnerships, and programming focused on the seven literacies.

Goal 1 seeks to assist libraries with creating strategic, sustainable partnerships and lifelong learning programs that address the seven literacies[14] in their communities; offer training opportunities and resources for the library workforce to improve their abilities to create strategic, sustainable partnerships and to address the seven literacies in their communities; assist libraries with planning initiatives; provide subject expertise and advice through DLD's library consultants; and collect annual statistics from public libraries and disseminate the results for local use in planning and budgeting.

In the Five Year Plan, Goal 1 lists five projects with 18 activities. The five projects are:

1. Assist libraries with creating strategic, sustainable partnerships and lifelong

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[14] Basic Literacy, Early Literacy, Civic/Social Literacy, Digital and Information Literacy, Financial Literacy, Health Literacy, and Legal Literacy.

learning programs that address the seven literacies in their communities.

2. Offer training opportunities and resources for the library workforce to improve their abilities to create strategic, sustainable partnerships and to address the seven literacies in their communities.
3. Assist libraries with planning initiatives.
4. Provide subject expertise and advice through DLD's library consultants.
5. Collect annual statistics from public libraries and disseminate the results for local use in planning and budgeting.

Following are the titles of projects reported in the State Program Report (SPR) and the total amount of LSTA FFY 2018 – FFY 2020 funding that was expended on activities undertaken in support of Goal 1.

PROJECT AND ACTIVITY TITLES	THREE YEAR (FFY 2018 - 2020) EXPENDITURE TOTAL
Consulting and DLD Administration (FFY 2018, 2019, 2020)	$ 1,583,414.91
Professional Development (FFY 2018, 2019, 2020)	$ 226,767.30
Summer Reading (FFY 2018, 2019, 2020)	$ 128,064.54
Urban Library Initiative (FFY 2019)	$ 40,000.00
Competitive sub grants to libraries	$ 70,989.81
Food as Fuel for Body and Mind: Russell Library's Charlie Cart Project to Promote Children's Health Literacy (FFY 2019)	$ 7,500.00
Road to Success Starts at the Ferguson Library	$ 7,500.00
Entrepreneur in Residence (FFY 2020)	$ 7,500.00
Learn English! Free English Classes at the Danbury Public Library (FFY 2019)	$ 7,419.35
Come Learn With Me: Moving Beyond Storytime (FFY 2018)	$ 5,352.00
Harry Bennett Branch Community Needs Assessment (FFY 2018)	$ 5,000.00
South Windsor Public Library Strategic Planning Project (FFY 2018)	$ 5,000.00
Middletown Community Assessment (FFY 2019)	$ 5,000.00
Planning=Success: A Strategic Plan for Wallingford Public Library (FFY 2019)	$ 5,000.00
Composing Our Story (FFY 2020)	$ 5,000.00
Youth Summer Career Bridging Workshops (FFY 2020)	$ 3,395.25
Our Community Technology Access & Training Project (FFY 2019)	$ 3,323.21
The Healing Library (FFY 2018)	$ 2,000.00
Terryville Public Library Strategic Plan (FFY 2019)	$ 2,000.00
GOAL SUBTOTAL	**$ 2,049,236.56**

Goal 1 expenditures represent 33.66% of Connecticut's total LSTA allotment for the FFY 2018 – FFY 2020 period. These expenditures cover three projects continued from the prior LSTA funding cycle and carried through the three years of evaluation in the current cycle, as well as a new, one time project. *Consulting and DLD Administration* is the largest LSTA expenditure and accounts for 26.01% of funding over the three-year period. *Professional Development* accounts for 3.73% of funding, *Summer Reading* accounts for 2.10% of funding, and the *Urban Libraries Initiative* accounts for 0.66% of funding. All competitive sub-grants to libraries also fall within Goal 1. While the CSL does not group them as a project for SPR reporting purposes, we have grouped them for easy reference for the purposes of this report. *Sub-grants to libraries* account for 1.17% of total funding.

The **Consulting and DLD Administration** program funds a large part of the salaries of the State Library's Division of Library Development (DLD) staff, who support numerous programs and consulting activities. The DLD consultants are critical subject specialist staff who provide statewide assistance to library directors, library employees, and library boards in order to help them learn skills, resolve issues, and provide the best services to their patrons and communities. Staff specialties include youth and adult services, statistics, the seven literacies, E-Rate, library management, grant writing, digital projects, and community engagement. The Division director additionally serves as a liaison to multiple state and nonprofit agencies, helping to coordinate statewide projects and programs. Consultants play an important role in identifying state agency and community organization partners for LSTA goal-driven initiatives. Consultants both recruit trainers from the organizations for statewide programs and create informational web pages for libraries to learn how to engage with these partners for programming and services in their own communities. The liaison program continued successfully this cycle, pairing DLD consultants with libraries and directors in a defined geographic region. LSTA also funds some office supplies, assistive technology in consulting spaces, subscriptions to professional publications, ALA job postings, and mileage for consultant visits to public libraries to perform staff training. In this cycle, DLD continued to support use of the Aspen Institute's "Action Guide for Re-Envisioning Your Public Library" and the Best Practices in Connecticut Public Libraries.[15] DLD staff provided ongoing programs that address the seven literacies. Staff additionally provide subject-specific web pages and email discussion lists for related initiatives and programs. The above activities fulfill Five Year Plan activities 2a, 2c, 3a, 3b, 3c, 4a, 4b, and 4c.

Focus groups and interviews conducted for this evaluation highlighted the extent to which libraries see DLD consultants as a lifeline. From E-Rate and Fiber support to CIPA compliance,[16] policy revisions, annual statistics, and grant applications, respondents praised consulting services. In a survey conducted by the evaluators, 31% of respondents listed consulting services as one of the LSTA-supported programs with the most impact and 47% of library directors highlighted consulting services as one of the LSTA-supported programs that

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[15] The Best Practices for Connecticut Public Libraries were developed during the prior LSTA cycle and endorsed by the State Library Board in September 2017: https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/bestpractices

[16] Children's Internet Protection Act: https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/childrens-internet-protection-act

had the greatest impact on their library. Among directors, 84.5% report that they have personally used the Library Statistics program, 61.8% have consulted with Library Development staff, and 60.8% have used eRate/Fiber project support. The comments below from the survey and focus groups highlight the importance of consulting services:

"The consulting services provided by the State Library staff are an incredible resource for our library. The information and assistance we've gotten through this service have helped us greatly enhance our ability to serve our community's needs in terms of both programming and access to technology."

"I believe that the impact on the library board from the consulting services and professional development programs has been profound…the board has become more aware, more active, and become more savvy advocates."

During COVID I don't even know where I'd be without [DLD staff]. They pivoted quickly to try and support libraries when we were all struggling…We were out in the ocean and it was like seeing someone throwing a life preserver…The staff are stars."

The number of direct consultations provided by DLD staff has risen continuously over the past three years, increasing 18.81% between FFY18 and FFY19, and 7.14% from FFY19 to FFY20.

Figure 5. DLD staff consults by year, FFY 2018 - FFY 2020
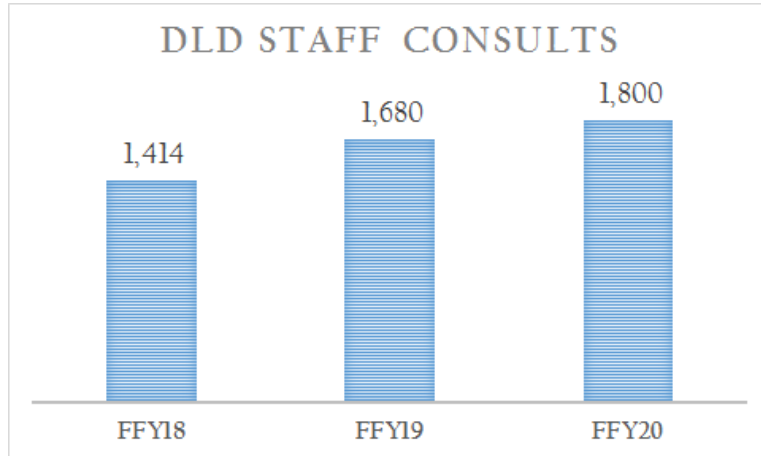
In recent years, DLD experienced a number of retirements, providing a unique opportunity to rethink operations and positions, expanding into new project areas. For example, a new position

was created that focuses not only on Adult Services but also on Community Engagement, with an emphasis on social service needs. The Digital Content & Innovation Coordinator position was rethought with a new focus on resource sharing across New England and supporting partnerships with other states, including building a non-proprietary ebook platform. The LSTA Coordinator's position was expanded to include consulting on E-Rate and fiber, bringing a more central focus on digital inclusion to DLD's work; after this shift, the consultant assisted 72 public libraries with E-Rate applications in FFY2019 alone. The Professional Development position shifted its focus from one-off offerings to integrating the production of entire curricula, such as the new curriculum, "Library Directors 101." Consultants have integrated COSLA's "Measures that Matter" initiative elements into LSTA grants, programs evaluation, and data collection, fulfilling Five Year Plan activity 5b.

While the seven literacies are addressed throughout the projects funded by LSTA dollars, many have been addressed explicitly by DLD staff activities, as laid out in the Five Year Plan. A major early Literacy initiative outside of Summer Reading is the Reimagining School Readiness project. CSL is part of the third cohort of this IMLS-funded train-the-trainer program. Staff began their training in January 2022, and will in turn train a minimum of 70 Connecticut library staff members by the end of FFY 2022. Consultants have brought in professional development trainers for Mother Goose on the Loose, a method for planning and presenting storytimes that incorporates research-based theories of learning, music, props, books, play, and language.

One area in which DLD has pivoted its focus since 2020 has been equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI); for example, by promoting virtual training from Growing Equitable Library Services such as REI Groundwater, they are fulfilling this critically important need.. Feedback showed their efforts in this area have been much appreciated by libraries:

> "I will be forever grateful for the EDI work [consultants] did with us at the beginning of the pandemic. It truly transformed the mindset of several of our staff and has been vital to our community work."

A number of the Early Literacy projects fall under the EDI umbrella. CSL brought in trainers from We the People who teach libraries about book selection for storytime from an EDI lens; trainers on how to offer bilingual storytimes; and trainers who offered programs supporting neurodivergent children, "Welcoming Kids on the Spectrum." The Child and Young Adult Services Consultant additionally developed a presentation on how to conduct a diversity audit[17] of the library collections. This has been offered not only to Connecticut libraries, but has been requested around the country by other states' SLAA consultant teams, professional organizations, and is currently in development as a Niche Academy course. In the evaluators' survey, there were comments requesting that the diversity audits be considered as a future LSTA sub-grant category. The Child and Young Adult Services Consultant also participated in Project READY[18] training in FFY 2019 - FFY 2020, and promoted Project READY to youth services staff around the state, many of whom have implemented the training. This 27-module curriculum addresses the gap in existing professional development opportunities for youth services library staff around racism and racial equity. Each module includes readings and videos, and library staff are meant to come together for a facilitated discussion of the content after each module. Both survey and focus group participants highlighted the instrumental nature of the program, for example:

> "Project READY training has been a game changer for my staff."

Civic/Social Literacy initiatives have included not only the EDI-focused Urban Libraries Initiative and Symposium discussed below, but also DLD's partnership with US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to provide citizenship resources and training to librarians; a staff

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[17] https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/children/inclusivecollections
[18] https://ready.web.unc.edu/

partnership with the US Census to provide training and information sessions for librarians around the 2020 census and the challenges of COVID-19; and a partnership on the Homelessness and Connecticut Libraries initiative.

Digital & Information Literacy initiatives out of DLD included partnering with the National Digital Inclusion Alliance to provide digital inclusion training for libraries, and forming the Advisory Council for Library Planning and Development (ACLPD) Digital Inclusion Task Force. ACLPD launched "Connecticut Libraries & Partners for Digital Inclusion," a broad state alliance that brings together libraries, state agency representatives, and community organizations to plan and educate around the goals of providing devices, high speed broadband access, and digital navigation for every resident. According to DLD staff, this alliance has helped position Connecticut libraries at the forefront of national issues of digital equity. DLD staff additionally served as members of groups such as the Connecticut Commission on Education Technology Digital Learning Advisory Committee. The LSTA Coordinator emphasized that "Digital inclusion work during the pandemic included an emergency pivot within normal E-Rate consultations to collaboration with the State of Connecticut to promote, educate, and advise libraries in the use and processes of the Emergency Broadband Benefit and the Emergency Connectivity Fund, which allowed libraries to lend devices and hotspots, as well as to deploy hotspots into the community. This new work has become part of the ongoing work of DLD consultants."

Financial Literacy initiatives out of DLD include the long-standing partnership with America Saves/Connecticut Saves to provide programming; workshops and resources during America Saves Week and Money Smart Week, as well as a partnership with the Department of Banking and Commission on Consumer Protection to offer workshops and resources for libraries and their communities. As part of Military Saves Month, DLD worked with veterans and military families as part of the Libraries and Veterans Forum and partnered with Texas A&M University to create a Libraries and Veterans Services Toolkit.[19]

Health Literacy initiatives out of DLD include ongoing partnerships with the Network of the National Library of Medicine; UCONN Health; the Connecticut Department of Public Health, and Hartford Healthcare to provide workshops on health information for librarians. DLD also distributed health information to public libraries on topics such as Diabetes Awareness and COVID-19, and partnered with Hartford Healthcare to bring COVID-19 Vaccination information and vaccination clinics to libraries.

Legal Literacy initiatives included a partnership with the Judicial Branch to provide Hands on Legal Reference workshops to librarians; distributing legal information fact sheets to libraries; and co-chairing the Connecticut Access to Justice Commission's Working Group on Public Libraries, which has undertaken projects such as a bilingual PSA for self-represented parties navigating the court system.

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[19] Libraries and Veterans Services Toolkit: https://militarysaves.org/military-saves-month/military-saves-month-2020-digital-toolkit/

As Connecticut libraries rethink the future of resource sharing, in conjunction with a task force of the Advisory Council for Library Planning and Development, DLD consultants developed resource sharing scenarios using Futures School[20] strategic foresight training and presented them to libraries and library boards and helped to lead a joint effort by New England State Libraries to deliver quality resource sharing-related programming to the library community.

In FFY 2019, Division staff advised libraries and created numerous resources needed for library functioning during the global pandemic. These included a special LibGuide and training sessions on state public health recommendations. The pandemic brought DLD into consultation and implementation of the governor's "Everybody Learns" internet connectivity program for libraries. In FFY2020 in continuation of their COVID support, DLD offered training on the Emergency Connectivity Fund and the Emergency Broadband Benefit, and the Division launched a collaboration with Hartford Healthcare to offer COVID vaccination clinics and virtual or in-person information sessions with the experts, facilitating connections with 21 public libraries for event hosting.

"The ability of the State Library staff to disseminate Covid related information and to support the individual libraries throughout the pandemic was a lifeline for many libraries and their staff. This resource, in the form of expertise and experience, was much needed and utilized as libraries navigated the unusual circumstances posed by the pandemic."

Notable advances were made in communication with public library directors and staff via the refinement of old newsletter formats and the creation of new publications during the past few years: the DLD "Weekly Wrap-up" and "Monthly Newsletter" which go out to 1,700 library staff around the state were redesigned, raising the open and click rates. In the evaluators' survey, these two communication methods ranked top among library directors after subject-specific listservs hosted by CSL. New bimonthly "Children and Young Adults Newsletter" and a biannual "Directors' Notes" were developed; the latter saw an average open rate of 69% and the former was identified by survey respondents as the second most effective method of communication from the CSL after social media. Despite the practice of sending new public library directors a "Welcome Letter" with information about how to access DLD resources, 30% of directors responding to our survey were only somewhat aware of DLD services for new directors while 16% were totally unaware, while 27.1% were only somewhat aware of consulting services overall and 8.3% totally unaware of them.

Another substantive activity that falls under this program is *Library Statistics.* Each year, the State Data Coordinator (SDC) gathers and analyzes data from close to 180 reporting public libraries. An annual report is made available to help libraries assess their performance and funding in relation to similar libraries. In FFY2020, new questions were added to help libraries document and present special pandemic-era services to stakeholders. The SDC also prepares a series of templated flyers for the libraries focusing on different aspects of the data, such as COVID response for children and young adults, and assists libraries to package information with

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[20] https://www.libraryfutures.net/

custom designs. These can be presented to library stakeholders and funders during budget season. In focus groups, library staff discussed the statistics support offered by DLD in a very positive light. This activity fulfills Five Year Plan activity 5a.

Under the **Professional Development** project, CSL provides continuing education for all librarians and library staff in the state in order to allow them to work more effectively and efficiently and to serve their communities better. CSL additionally provides a collection of professional development books that can be borrowed by any library employee in Connecticut for as long as needed and without fines out of the Middletown Library Service Center (MLSC), funded under Goal 2. These activities fulfill Five Year Plan activities 2b, 2d, and 2e. In the state-wide LSTA survey, two-thirds (66%) of respondents praised Professional Development as one of the highest impact services supported by LSTA funding, and respondents praised both virtual and in-person professional development offerings.

"The various professional development opportunities especially during the pandemic have been invaluable."

"The professional development opportunities have provided helpful learning sessions and peer-to-peer networking for our staff. This, in turn, fosters new ideas in our library which we bring to the community."

Figure 6. CSL post-surveys for professional development, "strongly agree" and "agree" combined
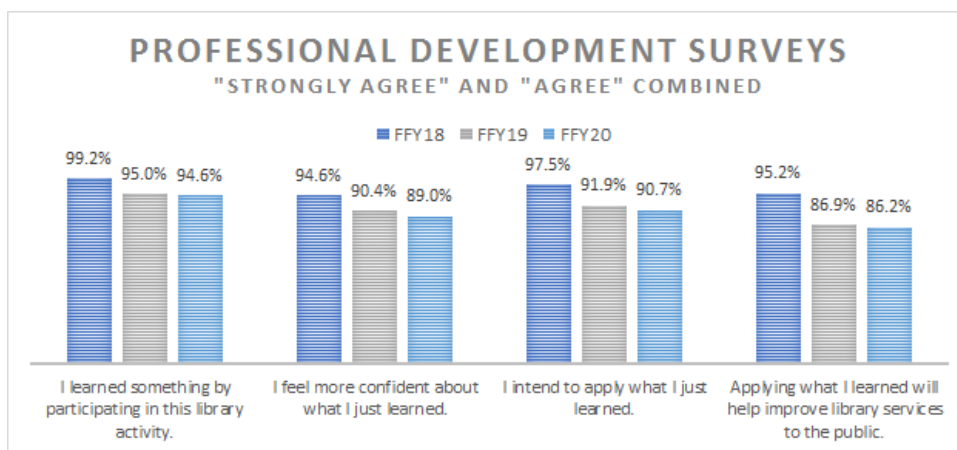
Classes included a variety of topics;[21] One particularly successful offering was The Futures School, which ran for 10 days in FFY 2019, and helped librarians develop the mindset and skills for environmental scanning and

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[21] Regular offerings on leaflet design, better data collection, public speaking, weeding collections, creating video book trailers, coding and digital equity, serving patrons with mental health problems, virtual volunteers, budget strategies, strategies for serving linguistically diverse families, reading children's books critically, assessing community needs, financial literacy programming, disrupting disability bias, library management, strategic communications, dealing with angry customers, family homelessness, how to perform an EDI collection audit, and customer service. Special training for COVID-19 included sessions such as, "Living Through a Pandemic: How to Stop Burnout and Improve Customer Skills" and, "Marketing and Strategic Communications During COVID-19." A special 17-part series called Set the Stage was provided by five experts in infant and early childhood development to help staff provide programming that prepares children for reading skills; this program was praised by staff in discussions with evaluators.

scenario development focused on the transformation of libraries. In focus groups, a library director said that the "Futures program is having an impact on how I look at the strategic plan…it provides a framework to think differently about the future, and what challenges might be coming." DLD has secured an IMLS Leadership Grant to expand The Futures School collaboration in the coming years across multiple states. Classes were also provided on how to use software, apply for grants, and use statewide services, and LSTA funds additionally support the well-used self-paced tutorials for all library staff through Niche Academy. In FFY 2020 alone there were 7,000 views of 211 unique tutorials by approximately 500 unique users. Between 480 and 701 post-course surveys were collected each year by CSL. The surveys received strong positive responses for outcome questions in all three years, though positive responses fell during the years of the pandemic, possibly impacted by the switch to virtual teaching. Surveys received many positive remarks, such as:

> "Thank you so much for scheduling this topic. Our library has a serious need for this type of training. I'd love to see more!" - *Working with Patrons with Mental health Conditions*

> "I feel so much more confident and excited to help the kids learn! Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!!!" - *Storytime 101*
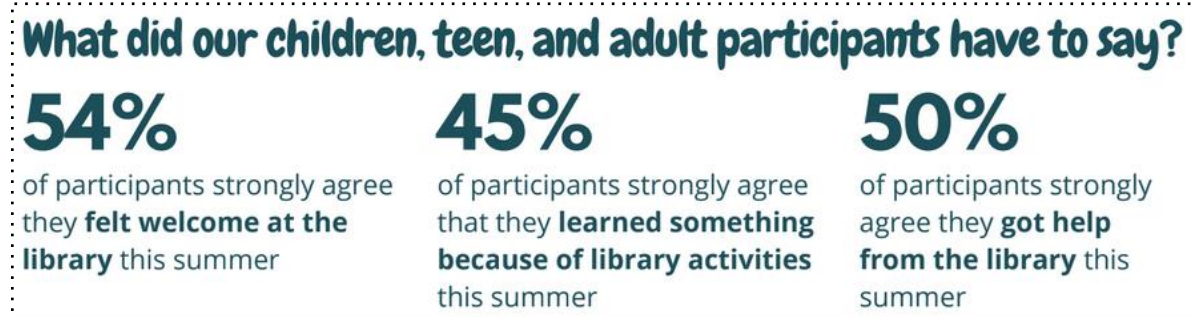
In a focus group with the ACLPD, participants agreed that professional development provided through LSTA funds is valuable. They discussed the fact that there are other organizations -- such as the Connecticut Library Association and Connecticut Association of School Librarians -- that also provide valuable professional development, and that "developing a cohesive and collaborative plan and approach to Professional Development in Connecticut would be a good investment that would expand all groups' professional development impact."

The statewide **Summer Reading** Program (SRP) is funded under Goal 1, including membership to the Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP), programmatic support, and statewide subscriptions to READsquared: Summer Reading tracking software that CSL began using this cycle to encourage librarians to implement Summer Reading programs. Each year, DLD staff develop a Summer Reading manual with programming ideas and bibliographies. These activities fulfill Five Year Plan activities 1a and 1b. During the pandemic, the format of the program was changed to accommodate the need for family-based programming, and libraries were encouraged to use READsquared creatively to encourage social and emotional activities as well as reading. In 2019 CSL additionally held a three-day Virtual Summer Library UnConference. This peer-to-peer exchange was a notable new component of Summer Reading planning and innovation for public libraries in the state.

Connecticut is the third smallest state in the nation but contains some of the country's most affluent communities alongside some of the most impoverished. This inequity is one of the reasons Summer Reading is so important. Until 2021, CSL collected only output data from participating libraries related to summer reading. The Youth Services consultant began asking impact questions on the summer reading survey in 2021, as outputs alone cannot convey the story of impact for this type of program, especially within an EDI framework. In FFY 2021, 125 public libraries submitted SRP survey reports, and 109 libraries included patron surveys. These

new surveys provided a four-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree). Figure 7 shows remarkable findings based on "strongly agree" responses only, aggregated from all 4,163 patron surveys.

Figure 7. 2021 SRP flier, patron survey responses for "strongly agree"

What did our children, teen, and adult participants have to say?

54% of participants strongly agree they **felt welcome at the library** this summer

45% of participants strongly agree that they **learned something because of library activities** this summer

50% of participants strongly agree they **got help from the library** this summer

During focus groups, the new outcomes based SRP survey was specifically praised, "[it was] really helpful this year. My library got back all these beautiful narratives and stories"' to help understand their impact. Staff spoke passionately about SRP support.

In FFY 2019, CSL funded the ***Urban Library Initiative****,* developed by a new task force of the ACLPD in order to assess the needs of urban libraries and provide access to tools and continuing education that will help them meet their special challenges. This innovative project funded staff trainers for trauma informed practice and social services and job coaches for library users; an Urban Libraries Professional Development Symposium; collection upgrades to make urban library collections more inclusive; and furnishings for urban libraries in distressed communities. This activity fulfills Five Year Plan activity 1c.

Sub-grants to libraries. Funding cuts over the years have necessitated that LSTA monies be used to fill gaps in critical services; nonetheless, CSL has been able to continue providing a small number of competitive sub-grants, and between three and seven sub-grants were funded each year of the evaluation period. This activity fulfills Five Year Plan activities 1d and 3d. The two categories in which grants were available were one-year *literacy grants* of up to $7,500 to assist libraries with creating strategic, sustainable partnerships and lifelong learning programs that address the seven literacies from the Five Year Plan, and six-month *planning grants* of up to $5,000 to assist libraries with planning initiatives to explore new services, programs, or projects; assess and address the needs of changing population and patron bases; develop partnerships and collaboration; assess collections; or write new strategic plans or long-range master plans. In the evaluators' survey, 43.4% of respondents reported that their library had received a sub-grant, and only 16.7% of respondents were unaware of the program. Fifteen percent (15%) of respondents highlighted sub-grants in their comments about which LSA-supported programs had the highest impact in recent years, for example:

"LSTA grants…have offered significant funding for a variety of literacy programs. The success of these grant programs gave us greater confidence in delivering programs much needed in our community."

Competitive sub grants [are] necessary to help take a library to the next level, whether it is an association library in a small community or a municipal library in a city. Made it possible to do real planning. Transformed a wish list of possibilities into action items. Thank you."

"I have also taken advantage of LSTA grants and they have offered significant funding for a variety of literacy programs. The success of these grant programs gave us greater confidence in delivering programs much needed in our community."

"It's a great way for libraries to value-add to their services... to pilot a new idea or add to services without having to expend funds from the town."

Based on conversations with library staff, the competitive grants -- while small in number -- are high in impact. Participants discussed planning grants as a form of community outreach: while the official product may be a document in the hands of library staff, the intangible benefits are the stronger bonds formed with many agencies and community organizations during the process. These agencies become aware of library services and partnership opportunities, and the process of completing a planning grant is therefore also one of relationship-building in the community. While these grants do not fund construction, they can inform this next step. In the words of one director:

"It is quite possible that a direct result of us receiving these LSTA funds might be a substantial rebuild of our library, or even a new library. It's a big, big deal."

Literacy Grants included funding for projects in five of the seven literacies laid out in the Five Year Plan: Health Literacy, Financial Literacy, Basic Literacy, Early Literacy, and Digital and Information Literacy. One exemplary program was the Entrepreneur in Residence (EIR) grant out of the Ferguson Public Library. This fully virtual program assisted 25 local startups and small business owners to survive, pivot, and thrive in the COVID-environment. The virtual program provided counseling, peer sessions, and training from leading experts in all aspects of entrepreneurship -- from opening a business, to shifting product or client focus, to navigating bankruptcy filing when closing a business. A paid consultant (the EIR) met individually with participants on a regular basis over the course of a year, providing business expertise in areas such as goal setting, business forms, and marketing. The library provided data, reports and tools, business databases and materials, and other assistance needed to complete business plans and marketing analysis. Group program sessions included presentations on topics such as, "Paycheck Protection Program and Economic Injury Disaster Loans," "Legal, Accounting, and Insurance for your Business," and Direct Mail Marketing for Small Business and Integration with Digital Technologies." In the post-program survey, 93% of respondents rated the EIR as "excellent," and 88% rated the overall program as "excellent." The LSTA funds have allowed the

library to demonstrate the need for and success of the program to such an extent that the library plans to continue it indefinitely, without LSTA funding. Participant reflections included:

"It has been quite a while since the true value of libraries was brought to my attention."
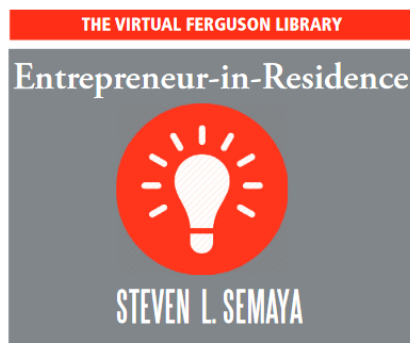
"This program is an excellent investment to match the money with practical steps to getting back to continuous workflow as this pandemic recedes."

In the section of the survey asking respondents to look forward to the next five years and discuss changes in the way LSTA dollars are invested, there were multiple recommendations for CSL to think about ways to clarify, simplify, and streamline the subgrant application process. CSL is required to follow state contracting rules and regulations in addition to the IMLS requirements, and DLD staff believe the process has already been streamlined to the extent possible. There were also several comments requesting to broaden the topical areas in which subgrants can be applied, and increase the funds for subgrants. On the other hand, DLD staff report that the LSTA funds set aside for sub-grants to libraries are never fully used. Focus group participants praised CSL staff who assist grantees through the process, and suggested that a complementary level of support could be added via a CSL-facilitated peer mentor program that would link new sub-grant recipients with volunteer past recipients who are willing to brainstorm, chat, or talk through issues. Participants were also interested in the idea of a CSL-supported listserv to facilitate community between grant recipients, and a resource that could help libraries identify and connect with prior grant recipients who had a governance structure similar to their own.

Goal 1 Conclusion - Retrospective Question A-1

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

The evaluators conclude that CSL has **ACHIEVED Goal 1**. CSL successfully fulfilled each of the five projects and 18 accompanying activities laid out in the *Library Services and Technology Act, Five Year Plan 2018-2022.* The Activities under Project 1, "Assist libraries with creating strategic, sustainable partnerships and lifelong learning programs that address the seven literacies in their communities," are met by the *Summer Reading, DLD Consulting, Urban Libraries Initiative,* and *Sub-grant* projects. The Activities under Project 2, "Offer training opportunities and resources for the library workforce to improve their abilities to create strategic, sustainable partnerships and to address the seven literacies in their communities," are met by the *Professional Development* project. The Activities under Project 3, "Assist libraries with planning initiatives," are met by the *DLD Consulting* and *Sub-grant* projects, while Project 4, "Provide subject expertise and advice through DLD's library consultants" and Project 5, "Collect

annual statistics from public libraries and disseminate the results for local use in planning and budgeting" are also fulfilled by *DLD Consulting.* Goal 1 expenditures represent 33.66% of Connecticut's total LSTA allotment for the FFY 2018 – FFY 2020 period. CSL continues to rise to meet the challenges of the day, poised by the double-edged sword of a financially difficult state economy and the global pandemic.

GOAL 2: Improve access to information and library resources for all residents of the state.

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.

PROJECT AND ACTIVITY TITLES	THREE YEAR (FFY 2018 - 2020) EXPENDITURE TOTAL
Statewide Delivery System (deliverIT CT) (FFY 2018, 2019, 2020)	$ 1,472,475.22
Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (FFY 2018, 2019, 2020)	$ 1,436,721.80
Resource Sharing of Supplementary Library Collections (FFY 2018, 2019, 2020)	$ 709,563.30
Resource Sharing Online (FFY 2018, 2019, 2020)	$ 285,442.38
GOAL SUBTOTAL	**$ 3,904,202.70**

Goal 2 expenditures represent 64.14% of Connecticut's total LSTA allotment for the FFY 2018 – FFY 2020 period. These expenditures cover four broad projects, all of which continued from the prior LSTA funding cycle and carried through the three years of evaluation in the current cycle. The long-running *Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped* project accounts for 23.60% of funding over the three-year period. *Statewide Delivery System (DeliverIT CT)* accounts for 24.19% of funding, *Resource Sharing of Supplementary Library Collections* (sometimes referred to as the MLSC) accounts for 11.66% of funding, and *Resource Sharing Online* accounts for 4.69% of funding.

In the Five Year Plan, Goal 2 has four projects with nine accompanying activities. The four projects are:

1. Facilitate resource sharing among libraries through a statewide catalog, interlibrary loan system, delivery system, and supplementary library collections
2. Provide access to scholarly and popular databases (researchIT CT) for all residents and students
3. Offer a statewide eBook and digital resource sharing platform populated with electronic resources for use by all CT library card holders.
4. Expand the services and impact of LBPH beyond just the provision of recreational resources to patrons with print disabilities.

Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped: Perhaps no single word better describes the challenges faced by CSL's Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LBPH) during the evaluation period than "change." The program has a new Director replacing a long-term incumbent. LBPH has a new home in the Division of Library Development within the CSL structure. Planning is underway for a new physical home at the Middletown Library Resource Center. Furthermore, change has been the byword on the services side as well. During the evaluation period, LBPH has successfully dealt with the Library of Congress' recall program as physical cartridges storing a single title are replaced with a Duplication on Demand (DoD) service model. July 2019 marked the beginning of the transition to DoD and the accompanying table shows the tremendous change in the number of titles downloaded over the course of the three-year evaluation period. It is an understatement to say that the shift to using the Gutenberg Cartridge Duplicator has represented a sea-change in the process of meeting the needs of LBPH's loyal patrons. Another unanticipated event that impacted LBPH during the evaluation period was the closure and/or disruption of LBPH's physical operation due to the pandemic between March 23, 2020 and September of 2020. It is worth noting that service to the public remained the highest priority; employees soon reworked their schedules so they could go to the library with minimal contact and by September most of the staff had returned to the library. During FY 2021, LBPH continued to serve patrons throughout; furthermore, arrangements were made with the New Jersey State Library's Talking Book & Braille Center for CSL to serve not only Connecticut needs but also New Jersey's needs when the NJSL Talking Book Service was partially shut down. Recent changes in the LBPH are designed specifically to advance outreach to existing and new users; moving forward, outreach to librarians and community partners (who may know about possible new users) will include information about LBPH services in addition to other DLD initiatives.[22]

In assessing the *Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped* project, the evaluators examined the State Program Report, gathered additional statistics through National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS), reviewed a patron survey conducted by CSL LBPH between December 3, 2021 and January 10, 2022, interviewed several staff members including the new program Director, interviewed current and former members of the LBPH Advisory Committee, and interviewed several users/consumers. While several of the disruptions mentioned above were noted in the interviews, the overall picture of the program that is painted by the evidence is extremely positive.

CONNECTICUT STATE LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND AND PHYSICALLY	FFY 2018	FFY 2019	FFY 2020	TOTAL FFY 2018 - FFY 2020	Percentage Difference FFY 2018 - FFY 2020

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[22] Eleven outreach activities are organized for this year specifically: One on one Training via State Outreach Van, Virtual Book Club - Monthly, CT Blindness Awareness Month Campaign, Summer Reading, Author Talks, Quarterly public education programs, LBPH Newsletter, Outreach request form, How to Use Workshops, Coordinate with CT public libraries that provide homebound service, and ADA compliant training videos.

HANDICAPPED					
Active Readers	6,479	5,990	5,621	18,090	-13.24%
Circulation (items)	207,610	179,297	179,913	566,820	-13.34%
DoD Titles downloaded on Cartridges	31,832	141,498	162,432	335,762	410.28%
BARD Audio Book Readers (Individuals)*	346	370	381	1,097	10.12%
BARD Audio Downloads (Books Only)*	22,460	26,897	27,809	77,166	23.82%
TOTAL Readers	**6,825**	**6,360**	**6,002**		
Estimated State Population	3,573,297	3,571,520	3,565,287		
Readers as a Percentage of State Population	0.19%	0.18%	0.17%		

* From Library of Congress survey

In the user survey, over ninety percent (91.14%) of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the statement "Using the services of the Library for the Blind improves the quality of my life." Staff reported an enthusiastic reception of the DoD program and quoted one patron as saying, "This is great, why did we wait so long to think of this!" The evaluators explored the disruption of services triggered by the closure of LBPH's facility with end-users. One patron summed up the thoughts of several others when she said, "They worked through the pandemic pretty well. There was never a time when I thought "Oh my God, I might run out of books!"

Conversations with former and current Advisory Committee members revealed a strong connection to support and advocacy organizations in the State and praised the dedication and professionalism of current staff; however, they also revealed the biggest weakness of the program at this time - the need to carry forward an effective program of outreach. Interviewee sentiment pointed out the importance of outreach given the broadening of the scope of eligible users of the program to include a variety of reading disorders in addition to the blind and physically disabled. As the evaluators' noted in an earlier paragraph CSL already is planning an extensive outreach for the LBPH program.

In summary, the staff of CSL's LBPH have demonstrated dedication, fortitude, and creativity in the face of several significant challenges. Their efforts have been rewarded by continued high use of the program, increases in the use of both DoD and the Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) program, and a relative stability in the number of program users.

Statewide Delivery

To help libraries share books with patrons across the state, deliverIT CT drivers delivered

1.5 million

library items in FY 2019.

The **Statewide Delivery System**, deliverIT CT, enables sharing for public, academic, and school libraries, transporting between one and 1.5 million library items per year to 215 public and academic libraries in the state to ensure that residents have equitable access to library materials. During the pandemic, the service was halted from mid-March through June of 2020, during which time drivers received professional development and safety training and the service was converted to a contact-less operation. This caused a one-third decrease in items moved, but the program saw an 18% increase from FFY 2020 to FFY 2021 when the program was fully operational again. These activities fulfill Five Year Plan Goal 2 activity 1d.

Roughly one fourth of LSTA funds are used to underwrite part of the cost of this program, covering 46.28% of the program's cost in FFY2020. The program allows any borrower to check out materials at any library in the state, and also supports interlibrary loan (ILL). Items borrowed from participating institutions may also be dropped off at any library, and the program returns the materials to the home library. The deliverIT program underwent considerable increase in use, financial hardships, and subsequent restructuring during the last LSTA cycle. After the last Five Year Evaluation concluded in FFY 2017, recommendations from the statewide deliverIT Task Force and from the Minges & Associates assessment report on the service were taken into account, and CSL developed a new model to lower costs and to manage the severe deficit in program funding. This service model went into effect at the start of FFY 2018. One of the Minges report findings was that very few other states provide the high level of financial support for a statewide library delivery system that Connecticut did, and that Connecticut may well be the only state paying for 100% of the service without any financial support from the libraries served.

The service is vital to and most appreciated by libraries; at the same time, repeated budget cuts have gutted the program financially and libraries wish the service could be more robust and receive more funding. This is underscored by the tension between use and satisfaction levels with the service. A DeliverIT statewide satisfaction survey in May 2019 found that only 15.6% of 135 responding libraries were "very satisfied" with the service (with an additional 40% "satisfied," and a quarter of responding libraries unsatisfied). At the same time, the feedback in focus groups conducted by the evaluators from both public and academic libraries around the state emphasized their heavy dependency on deliverIT and the importance of this LSTA-funded program. There were many requests for more funds to be directed into the program, and when asked which programs funded by LSTA are most impactful statewide, a general sense that:

> "[more] funding for the delivery system would be most impactful. Current funding is not sufficient to meet the needs of all library types."

> "DeliverIT is a lifeline for a small library like ours!"

Only 4.2% of survey respondents report that no one at their library uses deliverIT, and over 98% of public library directors said their libraries use the service, while 96% of directors report being aware of the service. Among school library staff only 66.7% were "very aware" of the service and 23.1% report that no one at their institution has used it. Academic libraries did not respond to the evaluators' survey, but in a focus group, a representative of the Academic Libraries discussed the importance of deliverIT to their community when resources are tight:

> "In 2015 …we were praying we weren't going to lose DeliverIT…It's so important in this state: we are small but we share everything. It's one of the best things the federal money pays for."

In reflections on deliverIT CT, the Director of Library Development added that, "the State Library Board endorsed a baseline service '3 bins in, 3 bins out, up to 5 days a week' in 2017 and CSL is sustaining this service at a high percentage with few missed service stops due to weather, isolated staffing issues, and holidays. Connecticut was the first state in the north-east to resume statewide delivery service in June of 2020 and transitioned the service to almost completely contactless allowing for more flexibility for route logistics. It is also important to know that the State Fleet is moving to electric vehicles which will impact service. Outsourcing is not an option as the previous outsourcing of the service was a failure. As it stands this is a service that is sustainable but will eventually change."

The **Resource Sharing of Supplementary Library Collections** is a program that provides circulating library materials in print, audio, and digital formats to help supplement library collections as needed. It accounts for 11.66% of LSTA funding and is one of the only services used more heavily by School Library staff than staff from other library types. These activities fulfill Five Year Plan Goal 2 activity 1c. Collections are kept at the Middletown Library Service Center (MLSC), which is used interchangeably as another name for the program. MLSC provides lendable book discussion sets, Maker and STEM kits, audiobooks on CD for all ages, children's and young adult books, and storytime book and prop sets. It also provides a collection of professional development books that can be borrowed by any library employee in Connecticut for as long as needed and without fines. The collections are most often used by school and small libraries with modest budgets or limited shelving space: in FFY 2020, 62.26% of users were school libraries and 35.85% by public libraries. Specialty materials, such as book discussion sets and STEM kits, are the most popular physical items circulated. The MLSC was highlighted by 31% of survey respondents in comments about LSTA-supported programs with the greatest impact. Additionally, three-fourths of survey respondents are "highly aware" of the MLSC, with only 8% "totally unaware" of the service, and 88% of respondents report that either they or other staff at their libraries use the MLSC.

Resource sharing online is an umbrella program over multiple statewide services that support resource sharing among libraries, other than deliverIT. These include the statewide catalog (findIT CT), the statewide ILL system (requestIT CT), statewide databases (researchIT CT), the statewide eBook platform (eGO), and training around these services. As a result of these resource sharing activities, all Connecticut residents and students had free access to high-quality electronic resources for school or personal research and entertainment. In response to

the pandemic closures, DLD offered a workaround for patrons who could not access electronic resources usually available to them at school from home, allowing students, educators, and other patrons to have full access to the digital resources that they needed.
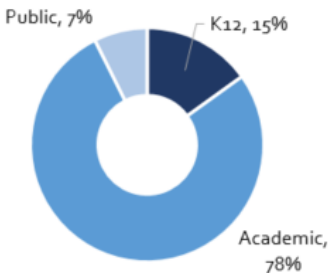

**Figure 8. ResearchIT, use by library type FFY 2019 - FFY 2021**

Statewide databases (researchIT) currently funds access to 39 databases to public, academic, and school libraries. CSL also provides training to library staff on use of these databases. The Connecticut Digital Library Advisory Board (CDLAB) helps to select databases. The service represents an estimated $38,000,000 in cost avoidance for Connecticut libraries in FFY 2021. This is one of the few LSTA-funded services with a consumer base that is primarily academic libraries; when data from FFY 2019 through FFY 2021 is analyzed, academic libraries represent 77.60% of usage.[23] Due to budget cuts, in FFY 2018 academic libraries began sharing the cost of researchIT resources that are provided exclusively to academic users. Ancestry.com alone has accounted for over 12 million views in each year of the evaluation cycle, and EBSCO and PROQUEST databases have totaled 14 million views between FFY 2019 to FFY 2021. Libraries have come to rely on the statewide databases more and more during their own repeated funding cuts in the past eight years. These activities fulfill Five Year Plan Goal 2 activities 2a, 2b, and 2c.

The new *eGO statewide eBook platform* was formally launched in February 2020. Using the SimplyE app, it allows library users to access eBook and eAudio titles from their individual public library, a parent regional library system, the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) Open Bookshelf, or the New York Public Library SimplyE Collection, as well as from the CSL's RBDigital collection. Unfortunately, due to financial constraints the RBDigital collection was sunset in 2020. The eGo service, now in year two, is still being rolled out to all libraries statewide. 2021 closed with 91 public libraries live (47.64%), and 159 out of 191 public libraries (83.25%) configured in the eGO platform. In early 2022, eGo will transition from SimplyE to the Palace app. The Palace Project is a new library-centered platform for digital content and services created by LYRASIS and DPLA. Palace's goals are to allow libraries to purchase, organize, and deliver ebooks and other digital content to their patrons quickly and easily while protecting patron privacy, giving libraries greater control over the acquisition and delivery of ebooks and audiobooks and make more diverse ebooks easily available to libraries and their patrons while advocating for the needs of libraries in the marketplace. eGo is the only statewide eBook platform of its kind in the country built from the ground up with partners in development since 2015. In the survey conducted by the evaluators, 71.5% of respondents say that they or someone else at their library have used eGo. Among school library respondents, 53.8% were unaware of eGo. Among library directors, the majority (56%) were "very aware" of the service, but 36% are "somewhat aware" and 6% are "unaware."

Figure 9. FindIT participating libraries by library type, FFY 2020

[23] This is based on usage statistics for EBSCO and PROQUEST databases combined.
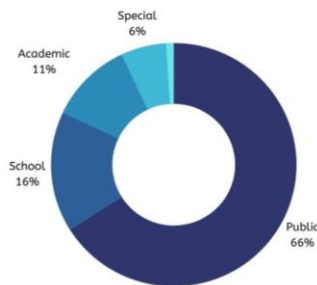
FindIT, the statewide library catalog, is maintained by DLD and allows patrons and librarians to search across institutions' collections. *RequestIT* is findIT's integrated ILL feature. Together with deliveryIT, these three services form the trifecta of statewide physical resource sharing. Connecticut was the first state to use FulfILLment, an open-source system, for a statewide catalog and ILL (FFY 2019). As of FFY 2020, 315 libraries participate in the catalog: roughly two-thirds are public libraries, 16% are school libraries, and 11% are academic libraries. These 315 members contribute 24,657,595 bibliographic records; a 14.11% increase from FFY 2019, which in turn saw an increase of 7.57% from FFY 2018. In FFY 2021, there were 270,772 visits to findIT and 2,766,979 page views. RequestIT had 136 participating libraries as of September 2021, gaining five libraries from FFY 2020. Usage in 2021 experienced a 76.48% increase over 2020. Currently, CSL began rolling out connectors for libraries using the Bibliomation catalog to join requestIT.

CSL suspended payments for requestIT participating libraries for 18 months while the program was built up. A modest annual fee of $350 resumed in FFY 2019. CSL also provides cataloging for libraries who do not have the capacity for a minimal fee. The fees are used to enhance the system and to build connectors allowing requestIT to interoperate with a library's Integrated Library System (ILS), streamlining the ILL process and saving participating libraries valuable staff time. Work on connectors began in fall 2019. These activities fulfill Five Year Plan Goal 2 activities 1a and 1b.

Goal 2 Conclusion - Retrospective Question A-1

A-1. To what extent did CSL's Five Year Plan activities make progress towards Goal 2?
The evaluators believe that the Connecticut State Library has **ACHIEVED** Goal 2. CSL successfully fulfilled each of the four projects and 10 accompanying activities laid out in the *Library Services and Technology Act, Five Year Plan 2018-2022.* The Activities under Goal 2 Project 1, "Facilitate resource sharing among libraries through a statewide catalog, interlibrary loan system, delivery system, and supplementary library collections," are met by the *Resource Sharing Online, Statewide Delivery System,* and *Resource Sharing of Supplementary Library Collections* projects. The Activities under Project 2, "Provide access to scholarly and popular databases (researchIT CT) for all residents and students'' and Project 3, "Offer a statewide eBook and digital resource sharing platform populated with electronic resources for use by all CT library card holders," are met by the *Research Sharing Online* project -- specifically, the *eGo* and *researchIT* programs. Goal 2 Project 4, "Expand the services and impact of LBPH beyond just the provision of recreational resources to patrons with print disabilities'' is fulfilled by the *Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped* project. Goal 2 expenditures represent 64.14% of Connecticut's total LSTA allotment for the FFY 2018 – FFY 2020 period.

Connecticut continued to fund the statewide catalog, ILL request system, and delivery system in support of shared resources for hundreds of public, academic, and school libraries to ensure that residents have equitable access to library materials. The deliverIT program underwent

considerable increases in use, financial hardships, and subsequent restructuring during the last LSTA cycle. CSL developed a new, successful model that managed the severe deficit in program funding and provided the stability that the program needed. While libraries wish there were more funding available for deliverIT, the program is indispensable to them. *Resource Sharing of Supplementary Library Collections* continues to provide valuable shared resources to library staff around the state for their professional development and to supplement book discussion groups and early literacy and STEAM programming and is of high value especially to school and small libraries with modest budgets. The statewide databases program provides significant cost savings to libraries of all types, who have come to rely on the program more and more during their own repeated funding cuts in the past eight years. The new *eGO statewide eBook platform* is a popular program launched in FFY 2020 cycle and already adopted by half of the public libraries in the state.

Retrospective Assessment Questions A-2 and A-3

A-2. To what extent did CSL's Five Year Plan activities achieve results that address national priorities associated with the Measuring Success focal areas and their corresponding intents? The Measuring Success focal areas are: Lifelong Learning, Information Access, Institutional Capacity, Economic and Employment Development, Civic Engagement, and Human Services. CSL's LSTA-funded programs center on the first four focal areas. Appendix F provides a detailed mapping to LSTA focal areas and intents on a project by project basis. Some projects -- such as DLD Consulting -- are so wide ranging that an argument could be made to map them to almost every focal area, but projects have been mapped only to the areas they most directly impact. The results achieved are in line with the national priorities associated with the Measuring Success framework and their corresponding intents. The only focal area that is not addressed by CSL's LSTA projects is Civic Engagement.

Results that address the national priority of Lifelong Learning were achieved under the programs of Summer Reading and five competitive Literacy sub-grants to libraries. Results that address the national priority of Information Access were achieved under all four programs funded in Goal 2, as well as one sub-grant. Results that address the national priority of Institutional Capacity were achieved under the programs of Consulting, Professional Development, Urban Library Initiative, and six Planning grants to libraries. Results that address the national priority of Economic & Employment Development were achieved most directly under two sub-grants to libraries: The Youth Summer Career ridging Workshops and the Entrepreneur in Residence programs. Results that address the national priority of Human Resources were achieved under the programs of Summer Reading and three Literacy sub-grants to libraries, such as "The Healing Library."

A-3. Did any of the following groups represent a substantial focus for CSL's Five Year Plan activities? (Yes/No) Only one project reached the 10% expenditure threshold identified by IMLS as representing a substantial focus on a specific identified group. *Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped* accounted for 23.60% of total expenditures during the evaluation

period, representing *Individuals with disabilities*. However, this does not mean that many of the target audiences did not significantly benefit from the efforts supported with LSTA funding. For example, expenditures under Goal 1's *Summer Reading* and *Professional Development* projects directly benefited *Families, Children,* and *School-Aged Youths. Professional Development* expenditures under Goal 1 directly benefited the *Library workforce.* The "Urban Library Initiative" in FFY2019 indirectly benefited *Individuals that are unemployed/underemployed,* and *Individuals living below the poverty line.* Individual subgrants that were awarded during the period covered by this assessment indirectly benefited other audiences identified by IMLS, such as the "Learn English!" sub-grant at the Danbury Public Library in FFY2019 *(Immigrants/refugees).*

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

B-1. How has CSL 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? CSL uses the data for partnerships; reports; grant applications; program development; resource acquisition decisions; workshop planning.

B-2. Specify any modifications CSL made to the Five Year Plan. What was the reason for this change? There have been no modifications made to the Five Year Plan.

B-3. How and with whom has CSL shared data from the SPR and from other evaluation resources? How has CSL used the last Five-Year Evaluation to inform data collected for the new Five-Year Evaluation? How has CSL used this information throughout this five-year cycle? CSL shares data from SPR with key stakeholders; state agencies where necessary, including making the case for the refilling of vacant positions; with state lawmakers especially to drive home the issue that cuts to the state budget have resulted in a reduction in CT's allocation. CT is close to the bottom in the 50 states for state funded support of CT libraries. They have used data collected from the last 5 year evaluation to make key decisions on allocation of LSTA resources and ensure all projects have supporting information.

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

C-1. Identify how CSL 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 Connecticut State Library implementation of the LSTA Grants to States program, CSL, 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 more than 50 LSTA evaluations in 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, and mentoring the next generation of public library staff and evaluators.

Ms. Chapman has over a decade of experience working in assessment and data analysis in academic, state, and consortial libraries. She worked as the Data Analysis & Communications Consultant and State Data Coordinator in the Library Development office of the State Library of North Carolina and has currently served for eight years as the Assessment Analyst & Consultant at Duke University Libraries.

Mr. Wilson has extensive experience with federal funding programs for libraries dating back to the 1970s and interactions with state library administrative agencies since he served as Wisconsin's State Librarian in the 1990s. Mr. Wilson has also completed extensive graduate/doctoral-level coursework in statistics and research methods.

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 Public Libraries Survey (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 CSL 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 CSL at the beginning of the evaluation process and a second phone call to discuss the agency's self-reflection on whether 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 CSL 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, (e) a broad based short survey for library staff and stakeholders with some knowledge and engagement with LSTA funded activities collecting primarily qualitative contextual information about past activities and future needs.

Researchers and evaluators across the globe are adjusting to the new realities that accompany the pandemic. The technical note below is merely an example.

> COVID-19 presented special circumstances and a number of considerations had to be taken into account. The crisis brought the imperative of changing how evaluation work is done and how we engage policymakers, programme managers and beneficiaries as restrictions on travel and 'social distancing' are expected to last.[24]

While no on-site visit was conducted during this evaluation period, both of the primary investigators for QualityMetrics (Dr. Martha Kyrillidou and Mr. William Wilson) had visited the CSL offices as part of the 2013-2017 LSTA evaluation cycle and on many other occasions. Consequently, the evaluators were somewhat familiar with CSL'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.

Furthermore, the COVID-19 circumstances have 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 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, under these conditions, it is easy to 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 the communities has also been evident as these restrictions are establishing new norms for interacting in person. Monitoring community behaviors took place frequently during the pandemic often resulting in people feeling over-surveyed in many

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[24] 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-190 crisis and restrictions.

instances. This had an impact on the nature of the statewide web-based survey that was administered in that an extra effort was made to make it as short as was practical. The web-based survey targeting the library community was conducted between September 13th and November 30th, 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 CSL'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 interview. 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 CSL'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 CSL leadership team and staff.

C-3. Describe the stakeholders involved in the various stages of the Five-Year Evaluation. How did QualityMetrics in cooperation with CSL engage them? Numerous small-group virtual sessions and telephone interviews were conducted with librarians and other persons with knowledge of LSTA-funded initiatives in Connecticut. One-on-one interviews were also conducted with 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 SPRs.

Interviewees shared their knowledge of LSTA utilization, enhancing interactions and depth and quality of the conversations. Furthermore, principal investigators Martha Kyrillidou and Joyce Chapman 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 Connecticut and how it was supported by CSL 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.

C-4. Discuss how CSL will share the key findings and recommendations with others. CSL will share key findings and recommendations with key stakeholder groups; communications including newsletter; social media; and website/libguides under LSTA 5 Year Plan.

Conclusion

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 CSL, 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.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Acronyms

ACLPD - Advisory Council for Library Planning and Development (for DLD)
ARPA - American Recovery Plan
ACS - American Community Survey
BARD - Braille and Audio Reading Download
CARES - Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act
CDLAB - Connecticut Digital Library Advisory Board
COP - Community of Practice
COSLINE - Council of State Library Agencies in the Northeast
CSL - Connecticut State Library
CSPL - Collaborative Summer Library Program
DLD - Division of Library Development (within CSL)
DoD - Duplication on Demand
DPLA - Digital Public Library of America
EDI - Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
EIR - Entrepreneur in Residence
EISi - Elementary/Secondary Information System
E-Rate - Federal program that provides discounts to help eligible schools and libraries in the United States obtain affordable telecommunications and internet access
FFY - Federal Fiscal Year
FTE - Full Time Equivalent
ILL - InterLibrary Loan
ILS - Integrated Library System
IMLS - Institute of Museum and Library Services
LBPH - Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
LSTA - Library Services and Technology Act
LSWG - Library Statistics Working Group
MLSC - Middletown Library Service Center
NCES - National Center for Educational Statistics
NLS - National Library Service for the Blind and Handicapped
OPAC - online public access catalog
PLS - Public Library Survey
RFP - Request for Proposals
ROI - return-on-investment
SLAA - State Library Administrative Agency
SDC - State Data Coordinator
SPR - State Program Report

SRP - Summer Reading Program
STEAM - Science Technology Engineering Arts Mathematics
STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math
T3 - YALSA Transforming Teen Topics
USCIS - United States Citizenship and Immigration Services
YALSA - Young Adult Library Services Association

Appendix B: Interviewees/ Focus Groups

Interviews

1. Deborah Schander, State Librarian, CSL
2. Kymberlee Powe, Children's/Young Adult Consultant, CSL
3. Dawn La Valle, Division Director, Library Development, CSL
4. Matt Geeza, Library for the Blind, CSL
5. Anne Fortunato, LBPH Advisory Committee Member
6. Katie Wiseman, LBPH Advisory Committee Member
7. Tom Gross, LBPH Patron/User and former Board of Education - Blind Head
8. Clark Francoer, LBPH Patron/User
9. Pat Byrne, LBPH Paton/User
10. Sylvia Connor, LBPH Patron/User
11. Thom Crosby, LBPH Patron/User
12. Paula McLean, LBPH, Reader's Advisor
13. Ramona Burkey, Library Director, Russell Library
14. Dawn Higgenson, Adult Services Librarian, Town of Oxford Library
15. Jane Fisher, Director, Wallingford Public Library
16. Gretchen DelCegno, Library Director, Terryville Public Library
17. Audra MacLaren, Director, Gunn Memorial Library
18. Claudette Stockwell, Director, Killingly Public Library
19. Yelena Klompus, Reference Librarian, Ferguson Library
20. Elizabeth Joseph, Associate Director, Ferguson Library

Focus groups

1. Advisory Council for Library Planning and Development (ACLPD)
2. Library for the Blind and Handicapped superusers
3. Library Development consulting service users

Appendix C: Bibliography of Documents Reviewed

State Agency Sources

- SPR data (FFY 1018-FFY 2020)
- LSTA Grant Final Reports, FFY 2019-FFY 2021
- DLD CE evaluations
- SLAA surveys
- Summer Reading
  - Outcomes survey
  - CT State Library Summer Reading Flyer 2021
- Sub-grants
  - Future Ready for Middletown: A Strategic Plan
  - Entrepreneur Academic Toolkit
  - Wallingford Library Strategic Plan
  - Ferguson, Henry Bennett Branch needs assessment grant materials: photos reports, flyers, needs assessment
  - Ferguson, Let's Talk ELL grant materials: flyers, photos, student feedback, survey reports, teacher report
- DLD work that is not well reflected in the SPR (xlsx)
- Additional Consulting Activities and Partnerships (docx)
- Anecdotes from Professional Development Offerings FY2018 (docx)
- Family Homelessness and Connecticut Libraries (PDF)
- Strategic Foresight Resource Sharing (PPT)
- deliverIT_FAQ_Update_6-22-2017 (PDF)
- deliverIT_Satisfaction_Survey_May_2019v2a (PDF)
- LBPH Patron Survey Summary (PDF)
- Library Development LibGuides https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/home

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
- Public Libraries by State: Library System & ACS Data Viewer, FY 2019
- 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.
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- 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 and Interview Questions

Focus groups

General Questions

1. What stands out as being the most effective use of LSTA in Connecticut 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 Connecticut?
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 about their familiarity with the 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

Connecticut 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. Connecticut receives approximately $2 million in LSTA Grants to States funding each year. 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 Connecticut State Library (CSL) with the evaluation.

QualityMetrics has been gathering information and data from a number of different sources including the State Program Report (SPR) that CSL submits annually to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), internal statistical and narrative reports, survey data, and personal interviews with CSL 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 this brief survey. The survey should take you no more than ten minutes to complete. First we ask about your awareness and use of several LSTA-funded activities. Then we ask you to look back over the last few years and to consider how the LSTA program has benefited libraries and library users. We then invite you to think about the future and 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 Connecticut's LSTA program (positive or negative).

Thank you in advance for helping the Connecticut State Library serve your community better!

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BACKGROUND

Connecticut receives approximately $2 million in LSTA Grants to States funding each year. The CT State Library allocates this funding towards achieving two overarching goals, Libraries as Community Anchors and Access to Information, and leveraging new and existing resources, opportunities, and partnerships.

The CT State Library's top priority is to emphasize the role of libraries as anchor institutions within their communities and to help librarians gain skills, knowledge, and resources to serve their communities' needs. Building on the themes of 'People' and 'Place' from the Aspen Institute's report, Rising to the Challenge: Re-Envisioning Public Libraries (2014), the CT State Library assists public libraries with cementing their place as essential organizations, central to the quality of life, civic and cultural engagement, and economic vitality in every municipality.

Increasing institutional and practical capacity, the CT State Library responds to the needs of the library workforce for ongoing training and professional support from developing and capitalizing on community partnerships to utilizing tools for planning and assessment.

As a second priority, the CT State Library supports statewide programs that represent the foundations of library service to all people in CT, building on the Aspen Institute report's theme of 'Platform.' This priority ensures that all CT residents regardless of location, ability, or socioeconomic circumstances, will have equal access to quality library services. The CT State Library invests in sustainable methods of resource sharing that take advantage of a statewide economy of scale.

Addressing ongoing and long-term needs, the CT State Library meets these goals through a responsive combination of statewide services and programs, subgrants to libraries, special projects, and strategic partnerships. As always, the CT State Library will continue to pilot and test new initiatives with libraries to determine, through data and feedback, whether they will be useful to the statewide community, laying a groundwork of due diligence and strategy before moving forward with a new endeavor.

Each goal addresses several of the eight LSTA priorities and is based on identified needs. LSTA funds supplement state and local funds and foster creativity and innovation in meeting the needs of Connecticut's existing, potential, and future library community.

Please indicate the degree to which you are aware of the following programs and services offered by the State Library

	Totally unaware	Somewhat aware	Very aware	Not applicable
Youth Services support (e.g., ReadSquared, Transforming Teen Services)	( )	( )	( )	( )
Summer Reading support	( )	( )	( )	( )

Professional Development	( )	( )	( )	( )
Consulting with Library Development staff	( )	( )	( )	( )
Library Directors support (e.g., new director training, library governance, Library Board training)	( )	( )	( )	( )
eRate and Fiber project support	( )	( )	( )	( )
LSTA Sub-grants	( )	( )	( )	( )
Library Statistics	( )	( )	( )	( )
Middletown Library Service Center collections	( )	( )	( )	( )
eGO (statewide eBook platform)	( )	( )	( )	( )
deliverIT CT (statewide library delivery service)	( )	( )	( )	( )
Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped	( )	( )	( )	( )

	State Library partnerships (e.g., Hartford Healthcare, CT Coalition to End Homelessness, All CT Reads, Lead Your Library)	( )	( )	( )	( )

Please indicate whether you have used the following programs and services provided by the State Library.

	I have personally participated	Other staff members from my library have participated	Neither I nor any of the other staff at my library have participated	Not applicable
Youth Services support (e.g., ReadSquared, Transforming Teen Services)	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Summer Reading support	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Professional Development	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Consulting with Library Development staff	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Library Directors support (e.g., new director training, library governance, Library Board training)	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

eRate and Fiber project support	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
LSTA Sub-grants	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Library Statistics	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Middletown Library Service Center collections	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
eGO (statewide eBook platform)	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
deliverIT CT (statewide library delivery service)	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
State Library partnerships (e.g., Hartford Healthcare, CT Coalition to End Homelessness, All CT Reads, Lead Your Library)	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

LOOKING BACK

Think back over the past few years (2018 on). Which, if any, of these LSTA-supported programs below 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 in these 4 areas?

- Professional Development
- Middletown Library Service Center collections
- Consulting services provided by State Library staff
- Competitive sub grants (e.g., Planning or Literacy grants)

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_____

LOOKING FORWARD

Look ahead to the next five years (2023 - 2027). Are there any changes to Professional Development offerings, consulting services provided by State Library staff, collections, or LSTA sub grants that would improve library services in Connecticut communities? 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.)

_____
_____
_____
_____

OTHER COMMENTS

Please feel free to offer any additional comments about Connecticut's LSTA program. (Note that your responses are confidential and comments will not be identified with an individual or with a specific library.)

_____
_____
_____
_____

The State Library provides multiple methods of communicating about programs and training. Below is a list of popular communication methods that we currently use. Please rank them from 1 to 6, with 1 being most effective for you and 6 being least effective for you.

_____Directors' Notes
_____DLD Children's and YA Newsletter
_____DLD Monthly Newsletter
_____Listservs (e.g., SPEAK, GoodNightMoon, CONNTECH)
_____Weekly Wrap-up
_____Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube)

OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

The library that I represent is:
( ) A public library

( ) A school library
( ) An academic library
( ) A special library
( ) Other - Write In: _____

My role in the library that I represent is:
( ) Director
( ) Manager or Department Head
( ) Youth Services staff
( ) Adult Services staff
( ) Circulation/ILL staff
( ) Technical Services staff
( ) Technology Specialist
( ) Library Trustee
( ) Other - Write In: _____

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

Appendix F: Measuring Success Crosswalk Table

CONNECTICUT Measuring Success Focal Areas and Intents

Focal Areas and Intents	1.1 Consulting and DLD Administration	1.2 Professional Development	1.3 Summer Reading	1.4 Urban Library Initiative	1.5 Food as Fuel for Body and Mind: Russell Library	1.6 Road to Success Starts at the Ferguson Library	1.7 Learn English! Free English Classes at Danbury Public	1.8 Come Learn With Me: Moving Beyond Storytime	1.9 Harry Bennett Branch Community Needs Assessment	1.10 South Windsor Public Library Strategic Planning Project	1.11 Middletown Community Assessment	1.12 Planning=Success: A Strategic Plan for Wallingford	1.13 Our Community Technology Access & Training Project	1.14 The Healing Library	1.15 Terryville Public Library Strategic Plan	1.16 Youth Summer Career Bridging Workshops	1.17 Composing Our Story	1.18 Entrepreneur in Residence	2.1 Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped	2.2 Statewide Delivery System (deliverIT CT)	2.3 Resource Sharing of Supplementary Library Collections	2.4 Resource Sharing Online
Lifelong Learning			YES		YES	YES	YES	YES					YES									
Improve users' formal education			YES			YES	YES	YES														
Improve users' general knowledge and skills			YES		YES			YES					YES									
Information Access													YES						YES	YES	YES	YES
Improve users' ability to discover information resources													YES									
Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources													YES						YES	YES	YES	YES
Institutional Capacity	YES	YES		YES					YES	YES	YES	YES			YES		YES					
Improve the library workforce	YES	YES		YES																		
Improve the library's physical and technological infrastructure	YES			YES																		
Improve library operations	YES								YES	YES	YES	YES			YES		YES					
Economic & Employment Development																YES		YES				
Improve users' ability to use resources and apply information for employment support																YES						
Improve users' ability to use and apply business resources																		YES				
Human Resources			YES		YES			YES						YES								
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					YES			YES						YES								
Improve users' ability to apply information that furthers their parenting and family skills			YES																			
Civic Engagement																						
Improve users' ability to participate in their community																						
Improve users' ability to participate in community conversations around topics of concern																						

CONNECTICUT
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	Individuals with Limited Functional Literacy or Information Skills	Families	Children (aged 0-5)	School-aged Youth (aged 6-17)	General (aged 18-64)	Senior (aged 65+)
1.6 Road to Success Starts at the Ferguson Library				YES								
1.7 Learn English! Free English Classes at the Danbury Public Library				YES								
1.8 Come Learn With Me: Moving Beyond Storytime			YES	YES		YES	YES					
1.9 Harry Bennett Branch Community Needs Assessment											YES	
1.10 South Windsor Public Library Strategic Planning Project	YES						YES					
1.11 Middletown Community Assessment	YES										YES	
1.12 Planning=Success: A Strategic Plan for Wallingford Public Library	YES											
1.13 Our Community Technology Access & Training Project												YES
1.14 The Healing Library						YES	YES	YES				
1.15 Terryville Public Library Strategic Plan	YES											
1.16 Youth Summer Career Bridging Workshops		YES								YES	YES	
1.17 Entrepreneur in Residence											YES	
1.18 Composing Our Story	YES											
2.1 Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped						YES						
2.2 Statewide Delivery System (deliverIT CT)											YES	
2.3 Resource Sharing of Supplementary Library Collections	YES										YES	
2.4 Resource Sharing Online											YES	

Appendix H: Expenditure Tables

CONNECTICUT 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	Libraries as Community Anchors	Consulting and DLD Administration (FFY 2018, 2019, 2020)	X	X	X	$ 456,464.00	$ 464,980.65	$ 661,970.26	$ 1,583,414.91	77.27%	26.01%
		Professional Development	X	X	X	$ 60,742.00	$ 96,462.97	$ 69,562.33	$ 226,767.30	11.07%	3.73%
		Summer Reading	X	X	X	$ 36,774.00	$ 41,290.54	$ 50,000.00	$ 128,064.54	6.25%	2.10%
		Urban Library Initiative		X		$ -	$ 40,000.00	$ -	$ 40,000.00	1.95%	0.66%
		Food as Fuel for Body and Mind: Russell Library's Charlie Cart Project to Promote Children's Health Literacy		X		$ -	$ 7,500.00	$ -	$ 7,500.00	0.37%	0.12%
		Road to Success Starts at the Ferguson Library		X		$ -	$ 7,500.00	$ -	$ 7,500.00	0.37%	0.12%
		Entrepreneur in Residence			X			$ 7,500.00	$ 7,500.00	0.37%	0.12%
		Learn English! Free English Classes at the Danbury Public Library		X		$ -	$ 7,419.35	$ -	$ 7,419.35	0.36%	0.12%
		Come Learn With Me: Moving Beyond Storytime	X			$ 5,352.00	$ -	$ -	$ 5,352.00	0.26%	0.09%
		Harry Bennett Branch Community Needs Assessment	X			$ 5,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ 5,000.00	0.24%	0.08%
		South Windsor Public Library Strategic Planning Project	X			$ 5,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ 5,000.00	0.24%	0.08%
		Middletown Community Assessment		X		$ -	$ 5,000.00	$ -	$ 5,000.00	0.24%	0.08%
		Planning=Success: A Strategic Plan for Wallingford Public Library		X		$ -	$ 5,000.00	$ -	$ 5,000.00	0.24%	0.08%
		Composing Our Story			X			$ 5,000.00	$ 5,000.00	0.24%	0.08%
		Youth Summer Career Bridging Workshops			X			$ 3,395.25	$ 3,395.25	0.17%	0.06%
		Our Community Technology Access & Training Project		X		$ -	$ 3,323.21	$ -	$ 3,323.21	0.16%	0.05%
		The Healing Library	X			$ 2,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ 2,000.00	0.10%	0.03%
		Terryville Public Library Strategic Plan		X		$ -	$ 2,000.00	$ -	$ 2,000.00	0.10%	0.03%
		GOAL SUBTOTAL				$ 571,332.00	$ 680,476.72	$ 797,427.84	$ 2,049,236.56	100.00%	33.66%

CONNECTICUT LSTA PROJECT EXPENDITURE SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

	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		Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped	X	X	X	$ 509,008.00	$ 536,932.70	$ 390,781.10	$ 1,436,721.80	36.80%	23.60%
		Statewide Delivery System (deliverIT CT)	X	X	X	$ 563,258.00	$ 445,033.89	$ 464,183.33	$ 1,472,475.22	37.72%	24.19%
		Resource Sharing of Supplementary Library Collections	X	X	X	$ 226,275.00	$ 239,641.08	$ 243,647.22	$ 709,563.30	18.17%	11.66%
		Resource Sharing Online	X	X	X	$ 129,920.00	$ 122,267.38	$ 33,255.00	$ 285,442.38	7.31%	4.69%
		GOAL SUBTOTAL				$1,428,461.00	$1,343,875.05	$1,131,866.65	$ 3,904,202.70	100.00%	64.14%
			FFY 2018	FFY 2019	FFY 2020						
		LSTA PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION				$ 42,130.00	$ 30,607.23	$ 61,225.39	$ 133,962.62	100.0%	2.20%
		GRAND TOTAL				$2,041,923.00	$2,054,959.00	$1,990,519.88	$ 6,087,401.88	100.0%	100.00%

Appendix I: Web-Survey Report

Library Stakeholder Survey
LSTA Five-Year Evaluation

As part of the 2018-2022 LSTA Five Year Plan evaluation process, the Connecticut State Library (CSL) worked with independent evaluators to distribute a survey to library stakeholders. The survey was built in Alchemer survey software and distributed by CSL staff via relevant listservs. The survey ran from October 12th through October 31st. The goals of the survey were to assess the impact of the funds provided by the LSTA program on the libraries of Connecticut, and to additionally inform the library's 2023-2027 Five Year Plan for LSTA funds. The survey asked respondents to look back over the last few years and to consider how certain areas of expenditures within the LSTA program have benefited libraries and library users, to think about the future and to suggest changes to the ways in which LSTA funds should be invested, and provided the opportunity for respondents to offer any other observations about the CSL's LSTA program. The two goals of the current Five Year LSTA Plan were shared with respondents in the survey's introduction ("Libraries as Community Anchors," and "Access to Information").

Findings

The survey received 99 responses, 90 of which were complete and 9 of which were partial. As shown in Figure 1, 82% (72) of respondents work in public libraries and 15% (13) work in school libraries. Fifty-six percent of respondents (49) are public library directors and an additional 14% are managers or department heads within public libraries. Figure 2 shows the overall breakdown of job roles.

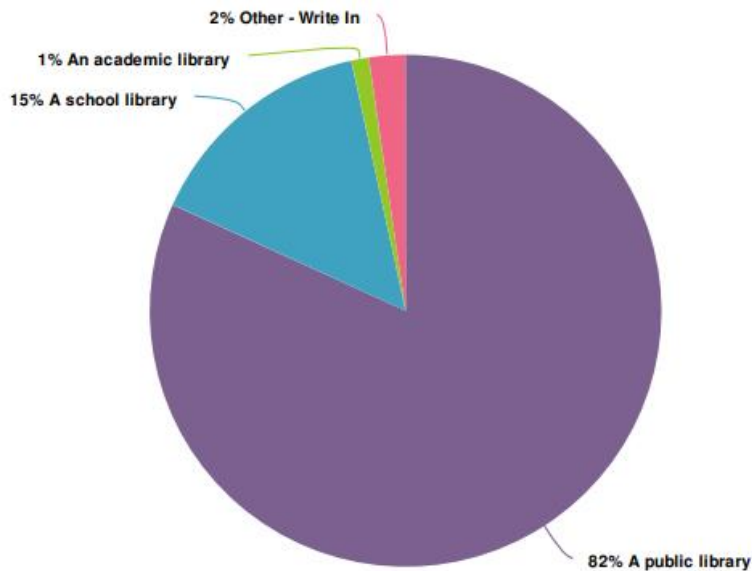**Figure 1. The type of library in which respondents work**

- 2% Other - Write In
- 1% An academic library
- 15% A school library
- 82% A public library

Figure 2. Role of respondent within their library

- 15% Other - Write In
- 1% Library Trustee
- 2% Technical Services staff
- 1% Circulation/ILL staff
- 3% Adult Services staff
- 3% Youth Services staff
- 16% Manager or Department Head
- 58% Director
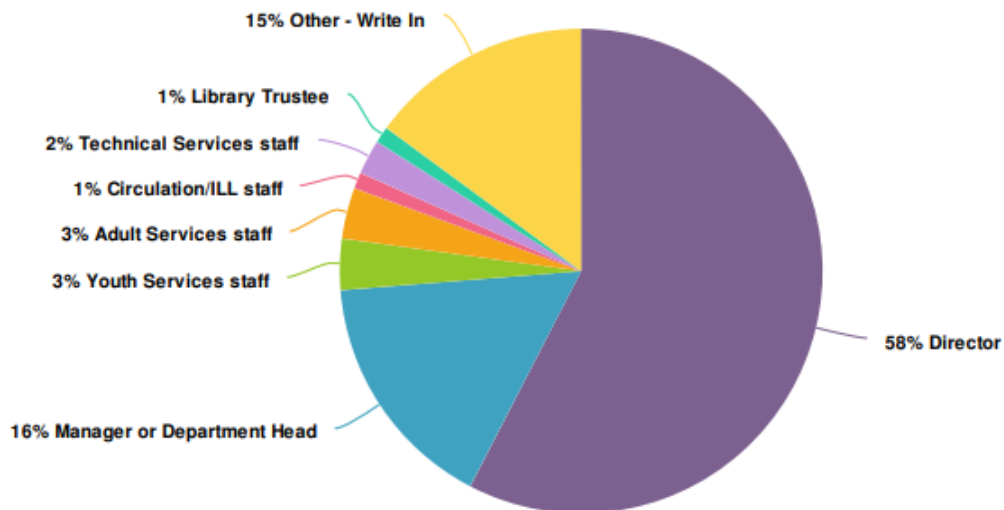
Awareness and use of services

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they were aware of a variety of LSTA-funded programs and services provided by the State Library, followed by a question about whether they or others at their library have used these same services. Results for all respondents combined can be found in the two tables below. Gauging library staff's awareness of services can assist CSL to identify areas for additional outreach and marketing. In general, library directors are more familiar with LSTA-funded programs and services than other staff who responded to the survey. This is to be expected. Some of the program and services that respondents are least

aware of include Library Director Support (16% of library directors and 20.6% of all respondents are unaware), State Library partnerships (14% of directors and 25% of all respondents are unaware), eRate and Fiber project support (19.6% of all respondents are unaware, though only 8% of directors are unaware).

Among *library directors*, there were some programs where many respondents might be expected to be very aware of programs but were only somewhat aware. These could be areas to target with additional outreach. These include LSTA sub-grants (only 54% are "very aware"), Library Director Support (only 54% are "very aware"), eGo (only 56% are "very aware"), partnerships (only 30% are "very aware"), and Consulting with Library Development staff (64.6% are "very aware").

Of the 13 respondents who work in *school libraries*, 23.1% are unaware of CSL's Youth Services support and 53.8% are unaware of the statewide eBook platform eGo.

Table 1. Awareness of LSTA-funded activities

	Totally unaware	Somewhat aware	Very aware	Not applicable
Youth Services support (e.g., ReadSquared, Transforming Teen Services) Count / Row %	13 / 13.3%	34 / 34.7%	48 / 49.0%	3 / 3.1%
Summer Reading support Count / Row %	8 / 8.2%	13 / 13.4%	75 / 77.3%	1 / 1.0%
Professional Development Count / Row %	6 / 6.2%	12 / 12.4%	77 / 79.4%	2 / 2.1%
Consulting with Library Development staff Count / Row %	10 / 10.6%	24 / 25.5%	58 / 61.7%	2 / 2.1%
Library Directors support (e.g., new director training, library governance, Library Board training) Count / Row %	20 / 20.6%	28 / 28.9%	43 / 44.3%	6 / 6.2%
eRate and Fiber project support Count / Row %	19 / 19.6%	18 / 18.6%	57 / 58.8%	3 / 3.1%
LSTA Sub-grants Count / Row %	16 / 16.7%	37 / 38.5%	41 / 42.7%	2 / 2.1%
Library Statistics Count / Row %	7 / 7.4%	13 / 13.8%	71 / 75.5%	3 / 3.2%
Middletown Library Service Center collections Count / Row %	8 / 8.2%	15 / 15.5%	73 / 75.3%	1 / 1.0%
eGO (statewide eBook platform) Count / Row %	15 / 15.5%	30 / 30.9%	48 / 49.5%	4 / 4.1%
deliverIT CT (statewide library delivery service) Count / Row %	7 / 7.3%	5 / 5.2%	83 / 86.5%	1 / 1.0%
Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped Count / Row %	12 / 12.5%	31 / 32.3%	52 / 54.2%	1 / 1.0%
State Library partnerships (e.g., Hartford Healthcare, CT Coalition to End Homelessness, All CT Reads, Lead Your Library) Count / Row %	24 / 25.0%	41 / 42.7%	29 / 30.2%	2 / 2.1%

The second question asked respondents about use of these same services by themselves or other staff at their libraries. Results from all respondents combined are in Table 2 below. Virtually everyone uses deliverIT CT. Two-thirds of all respondents have personally participated in professional development offerings. Among directors, 84.5% personally use the Library Statistics program, 61.8% have consulted with Library Development staff, and 60.8% have used eRate/Fiber project support. Almost a third of all respondents say that no one at their library has participated in Youth Service support, half of all respondents say that no one has participated in LSTA sub-grants, and slightly over a fourth say their library staff are not using statewide ebooks. Nearly half of director's indicate that they have not used Library Directors support services (48%).
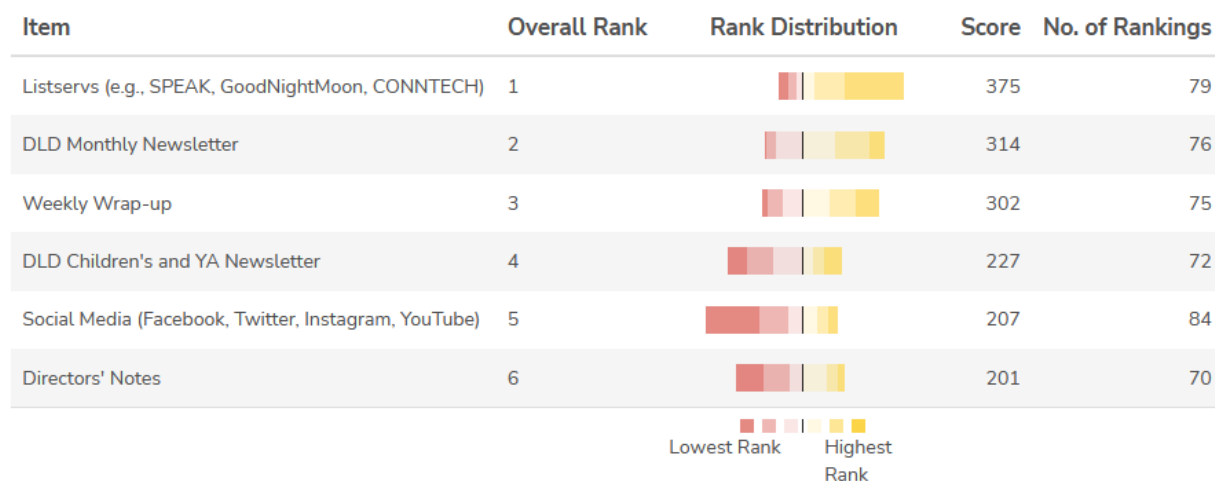
Table 2. Use of LSTA-funded activities

	I have personally participated	Other staff members from my library have participated	Neither I nor any of the other staff at my library have participated	Not applicable
Youth Services support (e.g., ReadSquared, Transforming Teen Services) Checks Row Check %	15 14.9%	48 47.5%	31 30.7%	7 6.9%
Summer Reading support Checks Row Check %	20 20.4%	61 62.2%	12 12.2%	5 5.1%
Professional Development Checks Row Check %	78 67.2%	30 25.9%	8 6.9%	0 0.0%
Consulting with Library Development staff Checks Row Check %	57 56.4%	16 15.8%	25 24.8%	3 3.0%
Library Directors support (e.g., new director training, library governance, Library Board training) Checks Row Check %	30 31.6%	13 13.7%	44 46.3%	8 8.4%
eRate and Fiber project support Checks Row Check %	41 42.7%	21 21.9%	27 28.1%	7 7.3%
LSTA Sub-grants Checks Row Check %	20 20.6%	22 22.7%	48 49.5%	7 7.2%
Library Statistics Checks Row Check %	72 66.7%	21 19.4%	13 12.0%	2 1.9%
Middletown Library Service Center collections Checks Row Check %	56 51.9%	34 31.5%	13 12.0%	5 4.6%
eGO (statewide eBook platform) Checks Row Check %	41 39.4%	31 29.8%	28 26.9%	4 3.8%
deliverIT CT (statewide library delivery service) Checks Row Check %	66 55.9%	44 37.3%	5 4.2%	3 2.5%
Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped Checks Row Check %	17 17.2%	25 25.3%	46 46.5%	11 11.1%
State Library partnerships (e.g., Hartford Healthcare, CT Coalition to End Homelessness, All CT Reads, Lead Your Library) Checks Row Check %	20 20.8%	19 19.8%	46 47.9%	11 11.5%

Communication methods

The survey asked respondents to rank communication methods. The highest ranking method by far among all respondents was listservs, followed by the DLD Monthly Newsletter. The Weekly Wrap-Up scored high as well, and ranked higher for library directors than the DLD newsletter. Directors ranked the Director's Notes fourth, behind listservs, Weekly Wrap-Up, and DLD Monthly Newsletter. Among school library respondents, Social Media ranked first, followed by DLD Children's and YA Newsletter, then listservs.

Figure 3. Ranking of methods of communication (all respondents)

Item	Overall Rank	Rank Distribution	Score	No. of Rankings
Listservs (e.g., SPEAK, GoodNightMoon, CONNTECH)	1		375	79
DLD Monthly Newsletter	2		314	76
Weekly Wrap-up	3		302	75
DLD Children's and YA Newsletter	4		227	72
Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube)	5		207	84
Directors' Notes	6		201	70

Lowest Rank   Highest Rank

Looking back

The first question asked respondents to think back over the past three years and discuss which of four LSTA-supported programs had the greatest impact on the library and the people the library serves. CSL staff requested that the question be limited to the following four expenditure areas because they are the only areas in which the CSL feels they have the ability to make changes to LSTA funding: Professional Development, Middletown Library Service Center collections, Consulting services provided by State Library staff, and competitive sub grants.

This question received 70 responses. By far the most discussed area of expenditures was professional development: 68% of comments (48), followed by nearly a third that discuss both consulting services and the Library Service center. Among public library directors, 74% praised professional development offerings (28).

Table 3. "Looking Back" analysis of responses by topical category

Area of expenditures	Count	Percent of respondents
Professional Development	48	68%
Consulting	22	31%
Library Service Center	22	31%
Sub grants	11	15%

DeliverIT	6	8%

While CSL chose not to include DeliverIT CT in the topics around which they wanted feedback, 8% of respondents discussed DeliverIT CT. Below are a selection of comments about the benefit of these programs.

"The professional development and consulting services provided by the State Library staff have been invaluable, particularly during the Covid pandemic. The ability of the State Library staff to disseminate Covid related information and to support the individual libraries throughout the pandemic was a lifeline for many libraries and their staff. This resource, in the form of expertise and experience, was much needed and utilized as libraries navigated the unusual circumstances posed by the pandemic."

"The Middletown Library Service Center offers great resources to support schools/classrooms and other learning environments. The Children/Youth Services department provides so much and has expert staffing.   Having another provider of relevant professional development has become very important in a cost-cutting environment."

"The consulting services provided by the State Library staff are an incredible resource for our library. The information and assistance we've gotten through this service have helped us greatly enhance our ability to serve our community's needs in terms of both programming and access to technology."

"I have also taken advantage of LSTA grants and they have offered significant funding for a variety of literacy programs. The success of these grant programs gave us greater confidence in delivering programs much needed in our community."

"I guess Professional Development from this list, but really deliverIT."

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 -- specifically limited to the four programs asked about in question one -- that would significantly improve library services. Some respondents did not limit their responses to these four programs.

We received 50 responses to this question. Some areas in which multiple recommendations were made include thinking about ways to clarify, simplify, and streamline the subgrant

application process and in broaden the topical areas in which subgrants can be applied; more communication about services and programs; increasing the funds for subgrants,

Some suggestions include:
- Improvement and additional funding to DeliverIT CT
- Expansion of the Set the Stage pilot program
- Request that professional development be tracked by functional areas and be summarized in a document sent to the libraries as far ahead of time as possible. Some opportunities are sent out a month in advance, but more warning would make it easier to do longer term rotation of staff through training opportunities: "It would be great to have a calendar that is shared through a monthly newsletter link so that we can click to see what is coming up in 6 months and then deploy staff to opportunities throughout the year."
- Sub grant funds for EDI audit work
- Additional ebooks
- More widely distributed information about consulting services
- More funding into subgrants, and providing access to the subgrants for more libraries
- Consider ways to make the LSTA subgrant application process easier and faster for the libraries
- Support in Human Resources and ideas for other shared staff or consultants, such as social workers
- Initiatives to foster collaboration between public libraries
- Advice and assistance with strategic planning

Other comments

Respondents were provided with a free text field in which to provide any additional comments. We received 20 comments. Forty-five percent (9) of these were thank-yous and words of praise for existing services. The rest reflected on facets of existing programming and communication, or ideas for the future. Select comments are included below.

> "THANK YOU!!! We have one of the country's best library systems, and I am so grateful for this support system."

> "The Urban Libraries Council has a lot of great initiatives for all libraries. I think tying the LSTA program into these initiatives would be great… In particular, ULC's white paper on becoming an anti-racist organization is extremely important…"

> "We have been the recipient of an LSTA sub-grant but found the administrative burden to be too great to repeat the process: the application process and reporting requirements take more staff time than we can spare, for the small size of the grants."

"Would like the State Library to be more transparent. More customer service friendly."

Appendix J: SLAA work mapped to the 7 literacies

Basic Literacy - Acquired EBSCO's Learning Express Job and Career Accelerator and Workforce Solutions offered free to every CT resident; workshops and programming.

Early Literacy - Kym Powe, YALSA Transforming Teen Services trainer; summer reading training, workshops and ReadSquared platform free to CT libraries; Reimagining School Readiness Toolkit; STEM kits; NASA @MyLibrary kits; Middletown Library Service Center collections including storytime kits; summer reading book sets.

Civic/Social Literacy - Urban Urban Libraries Grant program and Symposium to address Equity Diversity and Inclusion; partners with UCIS to provide citizenship resources and training to librarians; Gail Hurley partnered with US Census to provide multiple training and information sessions for CT librarians around the 2020 census and the challenges of COVID-19; Kym and Ashley Sklar partnership Homelessness and CT Libraries initiative.

Digital & Information Literacy - CSL partnering with National Digital Inclusion Alliance to provide digital inclusion training for CT libraries; formed CT Digital Inclusion Task Force to address digital access and connectivity issues in CT communities; Dawn member of CT Commission on Education Technology Digital Learning Advisory Committee; Brad Bullis is project manager for eGO statewide eBook platform (content funded by LSTA) partnering with Digital Public Library of America and Lyrasis and offers training for librarians on the various platforms as well as reQuest the ILL platform.

Financial Literacy - Gail Hurley continues long-standing partnership with America Saves/CT Saves to provide programming; workshops and resources during America Saves Week and MoneySmartWeek. DLD partners with Dept of Banking and Commission on Consumer Protection to offer workshops and resources for CT libraries to offer their communities.

Health Literacy - CT continues partnership with NNLM; UCONN Health; CT DPH and Hartford Healthcare to provide workshops on health information for librarians; distribution of health information to public libraries such as Diabetes Awareness; and most recently partnering with Hartford Healthcare to bring COVID-19 Vaccination information to CT communities as well as facilitating libraries to sponsor vaccination clinics.

Legal Literacy - DLD continues to partner with the Judicial Branch to provide Hands on Legal Reference workshops for librarians; contribute and distribute legal information fact sheets to CT libraries; Dawn La Valle continues to serve as a member of the CT Access to Justice Commission and is Co-Chair of the Working Group on Public Libraries. Notable projects is a bilingual PSA for CT self represented parties navigating the CT Court System.