

Library Services and Technology Act

# Five-Year Plan Evaluation

Fiscal Years 2018-2022

Commissioned by the New Jersey State Library, Jennifer Nelson, State Librarian

Completed in March 2022

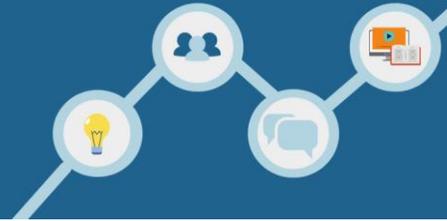
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# EVALUATION SUMMARY



## Introduction

The purpose of this evaluation was to determine the New Jersey State Library's (NJSL) progress in meeting the goals specified in its 2018-2022 Library Services and Technology Act Five-Year Plan. The evaluation focused on the projects and activities undertaken to work toward achieving each goal that was funded by the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), a federal grant program administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Three fiscal years were included in the evaluation – 2018-2020 – the period for which data was available.

NJSL's 2018-2022 LSTA Five-Year Plan goals are as follows:

### Goal One

Information access: All New Jersey residents will have convenient access to quality information resources in a format they can use to achieve their educational, occupational, and personal/recreational goals.

### Goal Two

Institutional capacity: All New Jersey residents are served by local libraries that are technologically advanced and that employ knowledgeable, community-focused staff members who incorporate the best professional practices to deliver high quality library services.

### Goal Three

Lifelong learning: All New Jersey residents have an opportunity to reach their full potential and to participate in and contribute to their communities.

## Key Findings

Based on analyses of project documentation (including the State Program Report, project narratives, and locally collected data) and feedback from NJSL staff and the New Jersey library community via interviews, focus groups, and a survey, NJSL made significant progress toward achieving the 2018-2022 goals despite the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic during two of the three years in the evaluation period.

During the evaluation period, NJSL completed 33<sup>1</sup> projects. Three projects (JerseyClicks (44%), Talking Book and Braille Center (34%), and JerseyConnect (13%)) accounted for 91% of all LSTA funds spent. Broken down by goal, NJSL dedicated the majority of LSTA funds (47%) to Goal 1 projects, which included JerseyClicks and JerseyConnect. About one-third (34%) of the funds were spent on Goal 3 projects, which included Talking Book and Braille Center, and 15% of the funds were spent on Goal 2 projects.

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<sup>1</sup>This total is based on a count of projects per year. During the evaluation period, 14 unique projects were completed: Nine occurred in all three years of the evaluation period, one was a two year project, and four were single year projects.

## A. Retrospective Questions

### A-1. To what extent did the Five-Year Plan activities make progress towards each goal?

Below, the results for this question are reported by discussing the projects under each goal. Key data points are highlighted for each project if data was available.

#### *Goal One – Information Access*

NJSL managed five projects to work toward achieving Goal 1: Digital Public Library of America, Digitization, JerseyCat ILL/Resource Sharing, JerseyClicks Statewide Databases, and Statewide Reference Services. The results for those projects with substantial LSTA fund investments are as follows (the evaluation report contains the results for all Goal 1 projects):

JerseyCat Statewide ILL/Resource Sharing: JerseyCat is an interlibrary loan management system that facilitates identification and loaning of items to both in-state and out-of-state patrons. JerseyCat usage was greatly impacted by COVID-19. Across the evaluation period, usage decreased by 78%.

JerseyClicks Statewide Databases: JerseyClicks provides access to 23 databases for patrons to use through their local library. The databases provide access to a wide array of content including genealogy, newspapers, academic, and language learning resources. JerseyClicks usage increased by 207% from FY18 to FY20.

Feedback from the New Jersey library community generally indicated agreement that these services supported the aims of Goal 1. In particular, the majority of survey respondents agreed that JerseyClicks and JerseyCat provide convenient access to information resources and help New Jersey residents achieve their educational, occupational, and personal/recreational goals. In addition, these services were identified often in open-ended survey comments as well as interviews and focus groups as services that libraries rely on to expand access to information resources for New Jersey residents.

Based on the data available for evaluation, Goal 1 was achieved.

#### *Goal Two – Institutional Capacity*

To work toward achieving Goal 2, NJSL engaged in five projects: Capira Curbside, JerseyConnect Statewide Technology Program, New Jersey Statewide Statistics, Professional Development and Continuing Education for Library Staff and Trustees, and Urban Libraries Council Edge. The results for JerseyConnect – which has substantial LSTA fund investments – are as follows (the evaluation report contains the results for all Goal 2 projects):

JerseyConnect Statewide Technology Program: JerseyConnect provides free technology services and network infrastructure to public libraries including web, domain, and email hosting; cloud storage; Wi-Fi management; and more. In FY20, a total of 363 public library outlets (80% of all outlets) used at least one service.

The majority of survey respondents agreed that JerseyConnect helped library staff deliver high quality library services. A common theme across interviews, focus groups, and open-ended survey comments was the ability of JerseyConnect to help library staff build capacity to provide additional services to their communities.

Based on the data available for evaluation, Goal 2 was achieved.

## Goal Three – Lifelong Learning

NJSL engaged in four projects to work toward achieving Goal 3: Literacy Collection Development, LYRASIS Membership, NJSL Talking Book and Braille Center (TBBC), and Statewide Literacy: Summer Reading & Center for the Book. The results for TBBC – which has substantial LSTA fund investments – are as follows (the evaluation report contains the results for all Goal 3 projects):

New Jersey State Library Talking Book and Braille Center (TBBC): TBBC provides direct library services to New Jersey's print disabled population through a partnership with the Library of Congress's National Library Services for the Blind and Print Disabled. During the evaluation period, it engaged in several strategic partnerships that enabled it to expand its reach to print disabled users and to provide access to Newsline, which offers print disabled users access to information including news, emergency alerts, and job listings. Circulation of TBBC items increased from FY18 to FY20 by 18% for downloads and 15% for cartridges.

Outcome data from TBBC users was not collected during the evaluation period. However, the survey of the New Jersey library community asked respondents about their perceptions of the outcomes that users experienced. More than three-quarters of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that TBBC usage is associated with a variety of positive outcomes such as enabling users to feel connected to the community and to reading. Qualitative feedback provided additional context for these findings, with participants commenting on TBBC's critical role in providing resources for print disabled community members to which they would otherwise not have access.

Based on the data available for evaluation, Goal 3 was partially achieved. NJSL made meaningful progress toward this goal by investing significant resources in TBBC and expanding its reach through strategic partnerships, and by providing lifelong learning opportunities through the statewide literacy projects, adult literacy initiative, and LYRASIS. However, with the exception of Statewide Summer Reading, the Goal 3 projects had a narrow reach in terms of population served. Additionally, the goal focuses on lifelong learning. Statewide Summer Reading and the adult literacy initiative addressed the literacy aspect of lifelong learning, which leaves the other aspects of lifelong learning to be addressed only by those projects with limited and/or highly targeted audiences.

### A-2. Measuring Success Focal Areas

The 89 activities that NJSL carried out during the evaluation period were associated with three of the six IMLS Focal Areas. Forty-seven percent of activities were aligned with the Library Capacity Focal Area, 37% of activities were aligned with Information Access, and 16% were aligned with Lifelong Learning. No activities were aligned with Human Services, Employment and Economic Development, or Civic Engagement intents.

### A-3. Substantial Groups Targeted

Of the groups targeted during the evaluation period (including library workforce, students, and the general public), only one met the IMLS definition of a substantial target audience (being the target of 10% or more activities). The library workforce was designated as the target audience in a little more than half (53%) of the activities.

## B. Process Questions

### B-1. Use of SPR Data

During the evaluation period, NJSL staff used SPR data to guide Five-Year Plan activities.

## B-2. Changes Made to the Five-Year Plan

During the course of conducting the evaluation, two projects that were initially aligned with one goal were moved into another goal category at the direction of NJSL staff: TBBC (Goal 1 to Goal 3) and Statewide Statistics (Goal 1 to Goal 2). In addition, the Professional Development and Continuing Education for Library Staff and Trustees project was initially listed under Goal 2 in the Five-Year Plan but reported under Goal 3 in the State Program Report. This project was re-aligned with Goal 2 for the evaluation.

## B-3. Sharing SPR Data and Evaluation Resources

NJSL staff shared data from the SPR and other evaluation resources with various stakeholders.

# C. Methodology Questions

## C-1. Selection of an Independent Evaluator

NJSL selected an independent evaluator through a public request for quotations process in accordance with NJ state statutes and following guidance outlined in Section 9134 © of IMLS's authorizing legislation.

## C-2. Statistical and Qualitative Methods

Evaluators collected and analyzed multiple data sources to determine the extent to which the LSTA-funded projects met the Five-Year Goals, including

- NJSL project documentation (State Program Report, project narratives, and locally collected data), and
- feedback from NJSL administration and staff, the LSTA Advisory Council, and New Jersey library leaders and staff via twelve interviews, two focus groups (with a total of nine participants) and a survey (n=250).

Because convenience sampling was used for the survey, the results should not be generalized to all New Jersey library staff.

Validity and reliability of the evaluation were assessed through multiple methods, including verifying project documentation inconsistencies with NJSL staff, employing multiple methods of data collection to triangulate data for each project, using common survey response scales, and asking multiple survey questions to evaluate each LSTA-funded service. This methodological practice enabled the evaluators to check for consistency in response patterns.

## C-3. Engagement of Stakeholders

A variety of stakeholders were involved in the Five-Year Evaluation and had the opportunity to provide feedback, including NJSL administration and staff, LSTA Advisory Council members, and the New Jersey library community.

## C-4. Strategies for Sharing Key Findings and Recommendations

The evaluators and NSJL staff will implement several strategies to share the key findings and recommendations, including a presentation to NJSL staff and stakeholders in spring 2022, and distribution of the one-page visual summary of findings and recommendations with the New Jersey library community. In addition, this one-page summary may be used as one means for soliciting feedback about the 2023-2027 Five Year LSTA Plan.

# Recommendations

Based on the results of this evaluation, NJSL may consider the following recommendations as it develops its 2023-2028 LSTA Five-Year Plan:

**Continue to prioritize statewide services that expand access to information resources:** Feedback from the New Jersey library community emphasized the importance of statewide services such as JerseyClicks, JerseyCat, and JerseyConnect for expanding access to the range of information resources that libraries can provide to their communities. In focus groups, interviews, and open-ended survey responses, multiple participants commented that statewide services play a critical role in enabling all libraries – especially small and rural – to provide high quality services and to bridge the digital divide.

**Explore options for expanding the broadband infrastructure:** Library leaders expressed concern that not all libraries have access to JerseyConnect's high speed internet service and commented on the need for Verizon to expand its infrastructure.

**Expand communication and marketing efforts to raise awareness of LSTA-funded services:** A common theme across interviews, focus groups, and open-ended survey comments regarded the need to raise awareness about LSTA-funded services among both library staff and New Jersey residents. Multiple participants commented on their lack of familiarity with these services and their need for more information (and, in some instances, more training) to be able to implement and share the services with their communities. To better market the services, focus group participants recommended that NJSL provide customizable social media graphics packages and printable materials, as well as frequent communications targeting all library staff, not just administration.

**Seek input from the New Jersey library community when selecting and implementing new projects:** Feedback from focus groups and survey comments indicated that the New Jersey library community seeks opportunities to provide input and guidance on NJSL's selection and implementation of new projects. NJSL may consider providing such opportunities through virtual and in-person town halls, conference sessions, surveys, and by soliciting feedback on various listservs.

**Consider the ongoing ramifications of COVID-19 when planning for services:** Multiple COVID-19 impacts were reported in project documentation, including increased use of JerseyClicks and the Center for the Book website, JerseyConnect's addition of Remote Assist, and participation decreases in programs such as Summer Reading during the pandemic's first year. In response to COVID-19, NJSL implemented four projects during the evaluation period – Capira Curbside (LSTA-funded), and Zoom, Read Squared, and B&T Axis 360 (state-funded). Even when the pandemic recedes, it is likely that some New Jersey residents will continue to need or prefer virtual services. NJSL may consider continuing its investment in these services and investigating options for providing additional virtual services.

**Implement a systematic process for evaluating LSTA-funded projects:** Currently, limited user feedback is collected for LSTA-funded projects, and these efforts focus primarily on usage. To gain a more thorough understanding of the effectiveness and impact of these projects, NJSL may consider evaluating users' perceptions of quality and relevance as well as identifying and measuring outcomes. By undertaking these efforts, NJSL will be able to improve these services, gain an awareness of participant/user impact, and better determine where to invest resources.

**Consider the extent to which all New Jersey residents are being served:** While each of the three LSTA goals aimed to serve all New Jersey residents, project documentation and feedback from NJSL staff and the New Jersey library community indicated that certain segments of the population were missed for reasons ranging from technical limitations to the lack of awareness about NJSL services. In addition, during the evaluation period, the only substantial group that was targeted by an LSTA project was the library workforce. AS NJSL considers refinements to existing services and/or adding new services, it is recommended that it develop a more systematic process for identifying under-served populations and determining how LSTA-funded services may reach all New Jersey residents.

# EVALUATION REPORT



## Introduction

New Jersey receives federal funding to support library service through the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The New Jersey State Library (NJSL), an affiliate of Thomas Edison State University, serves as the State Library Administrative Agency (SLAA) and manages LSTA funds in accordance with NJSL's Five-Year LSTA Plan. The NJSL's most current Five-Year LSTA Plan for years FY2018-2022 contains three goals each with objectives that align with the IMLS areas of intent. The goals and objectives in the Plan are as follows:

### Goal One

Information access: All New Jersey residents will have convenient access to quality information resources in a format they can use to achieve their educational, occupational, and personal/recreational goals.

*Goal 1, Objective 1 (1.1)*: To improve library users' ability to discover information resources

*Goal 1, Objective 2 (1.2)*: To improve library users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources

### Goal Two

Institutional capacity: All New Jersey residents are served by local libraries that are technologically advanced and that employ knowledgeable, community-focused staff members who incorporate the best professional practices to deliver high quality library services.

*Goal 2, Objective 1 (2.1)*: To improve the library workforce

*Goal 2, Objective 2a (2.2a)*: To improve the library's physical/technical infrastructure

*Goal 2, Objective 2b (2.2b)*: To improve library operations

### Goal Three

Lifelong learning: All New Jersey residents have an opportunity to reach their full potential and to participate in and contribute to their communities.

*Goal 3, Objective 1 (3.1)*: To improve users' general knowledge and skills

## Retrospective Questions

### A-1. To what extent did the Five-Year Plan activities make progress towards each goal?

In this section, two sets of findings are presented for each goal: The first draws from project documentation including the State Program Report (SPR), project narratives, and locally collected data. The second set draws from survey, interview, and focus group data that the evaluators collected from NJSL administration and staff, the LSTA Advisory Council, and New Jersey library leaders and staff.

Over the evaluation period, NJSL completed 33 projects<sup>2</sup> which were composed of 89 activities. Ten projects were completed in FY18, 11 in FY19, and 12 in FY20. Of the 33 projects, many are multi-year projects that spanned two or all three years of the evaluation time period. Just four projects were single year projects.

As shown in Figure 1, NJSL dedicated the most LSTA funds to Goal 1 projects (47%). About one-third (34%) of the funds were spent on Goal 3 projects and 15% of the funds were spent on Goal 2 projects.

Figure 1. LSTA Expenditures by Goal

Goal and Objective	Project Name	LSTA Funds (\$)	LSTA Funds (%)
<i>Goal 1: Information Access</i>			
1.2	Digital Public Library of America (Match Only)		
1.2	Digitization	\$33,262.00	
1.1	JerseyCat Statewide ILL/Resource Sharing	\$360,647.00	
1.2	JerseyClicks Statewide Databases	\$5,421,641.00	
1.2	Statewide Reference Services (Match Only)		
<i>Goal 1 Total</i>		<i>\$5,815,550.00</i>	<i>47%</i>
<i>Goal 2: Institutional Capacity</i>			
2	Capira Curbside	\$75,171.00	
2.2a	JerseyConnect Statewide Technology Program	\$1,556,659.00	
2.2b	NJ Statewide Statistics	\$173,816.00	
2.1	Professional Development & Continuing Education for library staff and trustees (Match Only)		
2.2b	Urban Libraries Council EDGE Project	\$25,000.00	
<i>Goal 2 Total</i>		<i>\$1,830,646.00</i>	<i>15%</i>
<i>Goal 3: Lifelong Learning</i>			
3.1	Literacy Collection Development	\$22,692.00	
3.1	LYRASIS Membership	\$2,500.00	
3.1	NJSL Talking Book and Braille Center	\$4,216,676.92	
3.1	Statewide Literacy: Summer Reading & Center for the Book (Match Only)		
<i>Goal 3 Total</i>		<i>\$4,241,868.92</i>	<i>34%</i>
n/a	Administration	\$504,759.08	4%
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$12,392,824.00</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>2</sup>This total is based on a count of projects per year. During the evaluation period, 14 unique projects were completed: Nine occurred in all three years of the evaluation period, one was a two year project, and four were single year projects.



Figure 2 shows the outputs reported in the SPR by goal. Depending on the activity type, the SPR captures selected outputs. Additional outputs that were described in the SPR narrative or captured locally are included in the project descriptions below.

Figure 2. Outputs by Goal

Outputs	State Goal			Total Outputs
	Information Access	Institutional Capacity	Lifelong Learning	
Session length (minutes)	180	8,630	0	8,810
Number of times program administered	32	262	66,794	67,088
Presentation/performance length (minutes)	0	1,815	342	2,157
Number of presentations/ performances administered	0	10	93	103
Total number of consultation/reference transactions	12,218	750	0	12,968
Number of hardware acquired	4	0	0	4
Number of software acquired	0	3	0	3
Number of licensed databases acquired	69	0	0	69
Number of print materials (books & government documents) acquired	0	0	1,226	1,226
Number of electronic materials acquired	0	0	5	5
Number of audio/visual units (audio discs, talking books, other recordings) acquired	0	0	9	9
Number of items digitized	150,000	0	0	150,000
Number of items digitized and available to the public	150,000	0	0	150,000
Number of learning resources (e.g. toolkits, guides)	0	2	4	6
Number of items conserved, relocated to protective storage, rehoused or preservation-appropriate physical action was taken	20	0	0	20
Number of items reformatted, migrated, or for which other digital preservation-appropriate action was taken	35,635	0	0	35,635
Number of preservation plans/frameworks produced/updated (i.e. preservation readiness plans, data management plans)	3	0	0	3
Total number of items circulated	1,039,596	0	750,191	1,789,787
Total number of ILL transactions	3,156,446	0	0	3,156,446

## Goal 1: Information Access

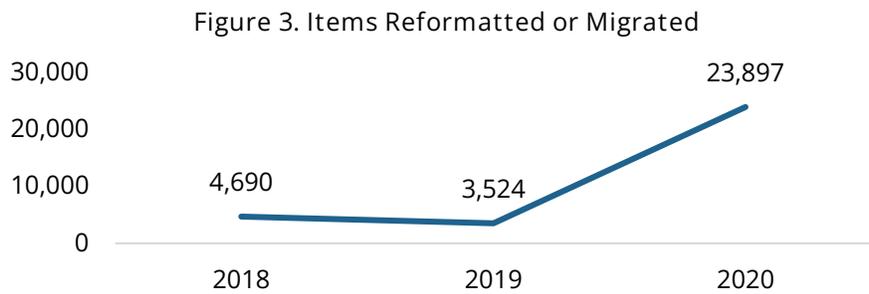
NJSL engaged in five projects to work toward achieving Goal 1:

**Digital Public Library of America (NJ/DE Digital Collective):** LSTA funds were used to pay for a membership to the Digital Public Library of America to add a service hub, the New Jersey/Delaware Digital Collective, in FY19 and FY20. The Collective began to pursue membership in the Digital Public Library of America in FY15 but due to the

rigorous process, the first metadata ingestion was in January 2021. Membership in DPLA is expected to greatly expand the capabilities of State Library staff and partners to pursue digitization efforts.

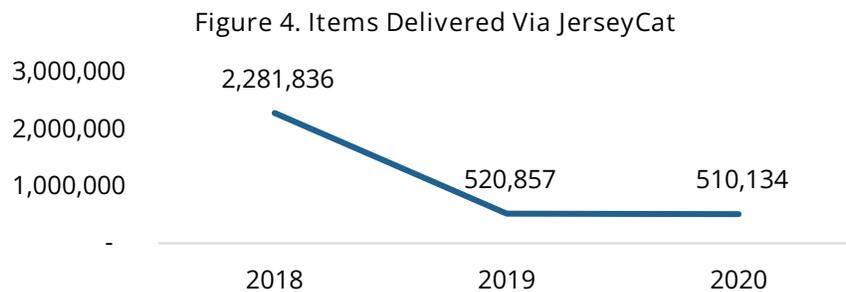
Digitization (State Publications Digital Library): NJSL digitization efforts are aimed at New Jersey government publications and include digital books, photographs, and postcards about New Jersey but not published by the state government (Digital Jerseyana Collection). Efforts include selection, scanning, post-production, metadata creation, and managing an electronic repository.

Additional work includes digitizing Legislative Histories, which narrate the intent behind particular laws and regulations, and items about New Jersey. According to staff reports, the importance of the digital Legislative Histories was demonstrated in FY19 while the library building was closed due to COVID-19 and the library experienced a sharp increase in the usage of Legislative Histories. In addition, the number of items digitized increased by 578% from FY19 to FY20 (Figure 3). New, more reliable scanners were purchased in FY20 that allowed for staff to scan items at a much faster rate.

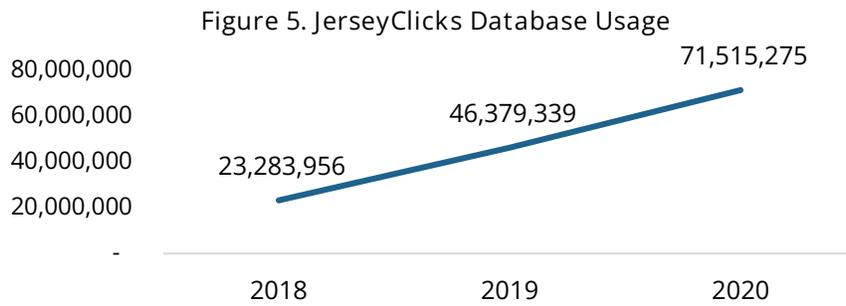


JerseyCat Statewide ILL (Resource Sharing): JerseyCat is an interlibrary loan management system that facilitates identification and loaning of items to both in-state and out-of-state patrons. This service is available to libraries of all types through membership in the NJ Library Network and is a partnership with LibraryLinkNJ which manages delivery of physical items. Additionally, JerseyCat staff research and identify materials for non-OCLC libraries and fulfill requests from libraries outside New Jersey.

JerseyCat usage was greatly impacted by COVID-19. Across the evaluation period, items delivered dropped by 78% (Figure 4).



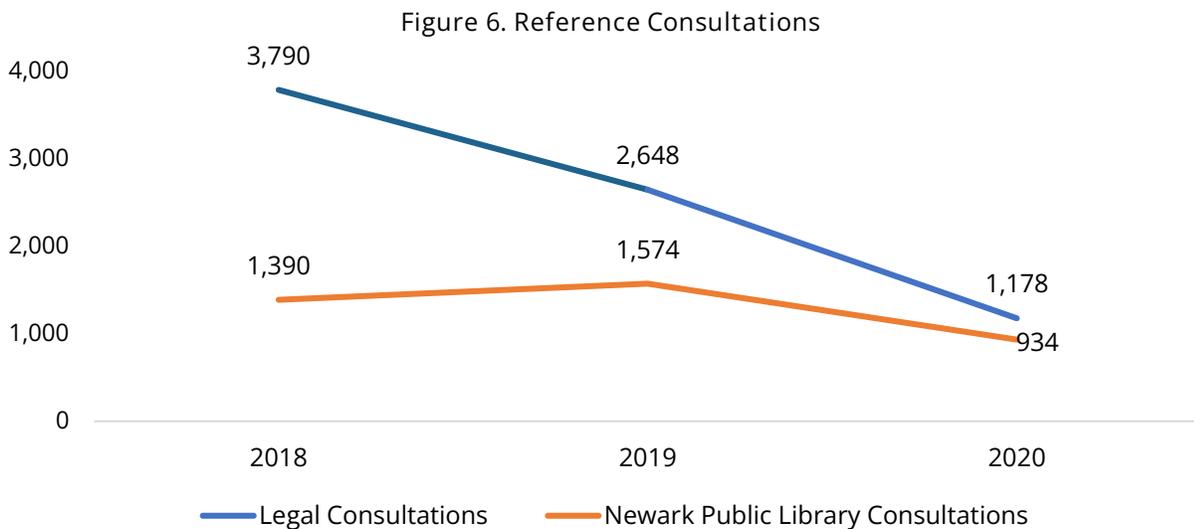
JerseyClicks Statewide Databases: This project provides access to 23 databases for patrons to use through their local library. The databases provide access to a wide array of content including genealogy, newspapers, academic, and language learning resources. Usage of licensed databases increased dramatically over the reporting period with a 207% difference from FY18 to FY20 (Figure 5).



Statewide Reference Service: NJSL provides specialized legal reference service to the state legislature, state judiciary, state government employees, and members of the public. Two full-time equivalent law librarians provide consultations as well as facilitate access to a collection of legal materials.

NJSL also partners with the Newark Public Library to provide specialized reference service in the areas of art, business, music patents, and US government documents to all members of the New Jersey Library Network (NJLN). This project also provides back-up reference services in areas outside of the specified subjects to NJLN members.

As Figure 6 shows, Legal consultations showed a steady decline in overall numbers during the evaluation period. Reference consultations provided by the Newark Public Library decreased due to closures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.



### Goal 1 Expenditures

Goal 1 expenditures accounted for 47% of total LSTA expenditures during the reporting period. As illustrated in Figure 7, JerseyClicks accounted for the vast majority of Goal 1 expenditures (93%). Two Goal 1 projects were reported as match only and did not expend any LSTA funds.

Figure 7: Goal 1 Expenditures

Project Name	LSTA Funds (\$)	LSTA Funds (%)
Digital Public Library of America (Match Only)	\$0	0%
Digitization	\$33,262	>1%
JerseyCat Statewide ILL/Resource Sharing	\$360,647	6%
JerseyClicks Statewide Databases	\$5,421,641	93%
Statewide Reference Services (Match Only)	\$0	0%
Total	\$5,815,550	100%

### Goal 1 Activities and Partnerships

A total of 31 activities were reported under Goal 1 (Figure 8). Of those activities, 61% intended to improve users' ability to obtain and or use information resources. The next most common activities aimed to improve users' ability to discover information resources (19%) and their general knowledge and skills (19%).

Figure 8: Goal 1 Activities and Partnerships

Intent	Number of Activities	% of Total
Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources	19	61%
Improve users' general knowledge and skills	6	19%
Improve users' ability to discover information resources	6	19%
Total	31	100%

Goal 1 projects partnered with a variety of organization types to implement services (Figure 9). The most common organization type was libraries followed by "other" and schools.

Figure 9: Goal 1 Project Partners

Partner Types	Number of Activities
Libraries	15
Other	8
Schools	7
Historical Societies	2
Archives	2
Museums	2

To further assess NJSL's progress in achieving Goal 1, the evaluators collected feedback from the New Jersey library community through a survey, interviews, and focus groups.

Survey results indicated that the vast majority of respondents had at least some level of familiarity (rating of 2 or higher on a 5-point familiarity scale) with JerseyCat (92%) and JerseyClicks (83%). In comparison, half of the respondents were "not at all familiar" with Statewide Reference Services (50%), and the majority of respondents were "not at all familiar" with the NJ/DE Digital Collective (71%) and State Publications Digital Library (76%). It is to

be expected that fewer respondents would be familiar with the NJ/DE Digital Collective, as it launched during the same period of time that the survey was administered (fall 2021). See Appendix C for a chart displaying the full set of responses.

Survey respondents who reported some level of familiarity (rating of two or higher on a five-point familiarity scale) with the Goal 1 services were asked to indicate their extent of agreement with a set of items measuring the effectiveness of these services within the context of Goal 1:

- [Service] provides New Jersey residents with convenient access to information resources.
- [Service] is easy for New Jersey residents to use.
- [Service] helps New Jersey residents achieve their educational goals.
- [Service] helps New Jersey residents achieve their occupational goals.
- [Service] helps New Jersey residents achieve their personal/recreational goals.

Figure 10 displays the results for these items:

Figure 10. Effectiveness of Services Within the Context of Goal 1\*

	Strongly Disagree or Disagree	Neutral	Agree or Strongly Agree	n**
<i>Convenient Access</i>				
JerseyCat	7%	11%	82%	208
JerseyClicks	6%	11%	83%	194
NJ/DE Digital Collective	13%	53%	33%	45
State Publications Digital Library	10%	55%	36%	42
Statewide Reference Services	7%	26%	67%	99
<i>Easy for Residents to Use</i>				
JerseyCat	29%	33%	38%	189
JerseyClicks	20%	33%	47%	183
NJ/DE Digital Collective	15%	60%	26%	47
State Publications Digital Library	17%	55%	29%	42
Statewide Reference Services	9%	38%	53%	91
<i>Educational Goals</i>				
JerseyCat	6%	22%	72%	188
JerseyClicks	5%	31%	64%	176
NJ/DE Digital Collective	9%	60%	30%	43
State Publications Digital Library	5%	68%	28%	40
Statewide Reference Services	5%	29%	65%	95
<i>Occupational Goals</i>				
JerseyCat	7%	29%	64%	180
JerseyClicks	7%	32%	61%	168
NJ/DE Digital Collective	10%	67%	24%	42

	Strongly Disagree or Disagree	Neutral	Agree or Strongly Agree	n**
State Publications Digital Library	5%	68%	28%	40
Statewide Reference Services	8%	31%	61%	93
<i>Personal/Recreational Goals</i>				
JerseyCat	6%	19%	75%	196
JerseyClicks	10%	35%	56%	168
NJ/DE Digital Collective	10%	60%	31%	42
State Publications Digital Library	5%	69%	26%	39
Statewide Reference Services	7%	30%	63%	94

\*Response options included a 5-point agreement scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree as well as “don’t know” and “not applicable.” All don’t know and not applicable responses were removed before calculating the percentages in Figure 10.

\*\*This column reports the number of responses for each item.

As Figure 10 shows, more than four-fifths of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that JerseyClicks (83%) and JerseyCat (82%) provided residents with convenient access to information resources, as did about two-thirds (67%) of respondents for Statewide Reference Services. About one-third of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with this statement for the State Publications Digital Library (36%) and NJ/DE Digital Collective (33%).

Respondents were less likely to strongly agree or agree that the Goal 1 services were easy for residents to use. Between about one-fourth (NJ/DE Digital Collective, 26%) and one-half (Statewide Reference Services, 53%) strongly agreed or agreed with this statement.

The majority of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that JerseyCat, Statewide Reference Services, and JerseyClicks helped residents meet their occupational, educational, and personal/recreational goals. Fewer respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the NJ/DE Digital Collective and State Publications Digital Library helped residents meet these types of goals.

When interpreting these results, it is important to recognize that fewer respondents were familiar with the State Publications Digital Library and NJ/DE Digital Collective than the other Goal 1 services, and the majority of responses to the set of items assessing the effectiveness of these services within the context of Goal 1 were neutral. This indicates that respondents may not have sufficient knowledge to assess these services.

Qualitative data in the form of interviews, focus groups, and comments to open-ended survey questions provided additional insight regarding the New Jersey library community’s perceptions of Goal 1 services. Survey respondents were asked to share how one of the LSTA-funded services (across all three LSTA goals) has “helped your library to better serve the community.” In nearly half (45%) of the 166 responses respondents commented specifically on how Goal 1 services facilitated information access. This sentiment was echoed in focus groups and interviews. In particular, participants indicated that libraries rely on both JerseyCat and JerseyClicks to expand information access to resources for New Jersey residents, and that this access benefits a wide range of residents including K-12 students, small business owners, and seniors in meeting their educational, occupational, and personal/recreational goals. In addition, participants identified Statewide Reference Services as a key resource for niche questions that local library staff did not have the expertise or resources to answer.

However, in interviews and focus groups as well as survey comments, participants commented that many New Jersey residents and library staff were unaware of the Goal 1 services. In fact, a common theme across the qualitative data sources concerned the need for better communication and marketing of the LSTA services across all three LSTA goals. In response to a question regarding the role of LSTA services in helping libraries better serve their communities, about one-third (31%) of respondent comments indicated that they had little or no knowledge of the LSTA services and needed information about them (and in some instances, more training) so that they could share them with their community. Some solutions that focus group participants recommended for addressing this issue included providing customizable social media graphics packages and printable materials, as well as frequent communications targeting all library staff, not just administration.

### Goal 1 Categorization

Based on the data available for evaluation, Goal 1 was achieved.

## Goal 2: Institutional Capacity

NJSJL engaged in four projects to work toward achieving Goal 2:

Capira Curbside: This software tool allows patrons to place holds on library items remotely and schedule pick up. This enables patrons to retrieve items in a safe place outside or just inside the library. This tool was licensed during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic to provide access to library materials while maintaining social distancing. This project was new in FY20 and at the time of reporting had been used in 51 libraries with 31,887 reservations completed.

JerseyConnect Statewide Technology Program: JerseyConnect provides free technology services and network infrastructure to public libraries that support flexibility and scalability and reduce redundancy (Figure 11):

Figure 11: JerseyConnect Services

Services available to all libraries	Additional services available to connected libraries
Web hosting services with statistics	High speed internet access via fully redundant and scalable statewide network infrastructure
Full-service email hosting and management	Router management and replacement service
Email spam and virus filtering regardless of email host	Real-time and historical bandwidth reporting
Cloud storage	Full-service Cisco firewall management
Domain name hosting	Virtual server hosting for ILS (proprietary or open source)
Wi-Fi management and consultation on technology projects	Device and circuit monitoring with notification
	Quality of Service (QoS) guarantees for services hosted by JerseyConnect

Over the grant period, outlets utilizing at least one service increased slightly from 361 in FY18 to 363 in FY20 (accounting for 80% of all New Jersey public library outlets in F20). JerseyConnect staff completed 750 consultation requests in FY20. Consultation figures were not reported for FY18 or FY19.

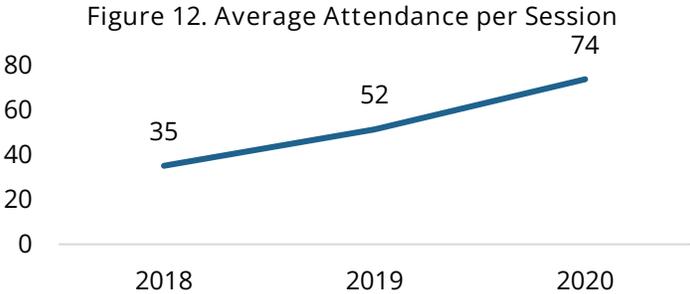
New Jersey Statewide Statistics: The NJSL collects and analyzes data related to finance, personnel, collections, services, and usage of New Jersey public libraries. These statistics are also used to determine state aid eligibility and compliance with library law. NJSL also participates in the Federal Cooperative Library Statistics Program by submitting New Jersey public library statistics to IMLS.

Professional Development and Continuing Education for Library Staff and Trustees: NJSL provides training for library staff and trustees by offering targeted professional development programs. Over the three years included in the evaluation, NJSL offered 262 program sessions and 10 presentations. Nearly three-fourths of the sessions (71%) were attributed to the 2020 Mentor NJ activity (187 sessions). Selected programs offered during the evaluation period include:

- Academy of Library Leadership (FY18, FY19)
- Mentor NJ (FY18, FY19, FY20)
- NJ Cultural Alliance for Response: Disaster Preparation (FY18, FY19)
- UX Boot Camp (FY18, FY19)
- YALSA/COSLA IMLS Transforming Teen Service: A train the trainer approach to performing arts readiness project (FY19)

See Appendix D for a full listing of programs.

Average attendance per program session was 50 during the span of the evaluation period (Figure 12). However, average attendance per program increased in both FY19 and FY20 when some programs were made available in a virtual or combined in-person and virtual format.



Outcome data was not collected for LSTA-funded professional development and continuing education offerings during the evaluation period.

Urban Libraries Council Edge Project (Edge): Twelve public libraries participated in this effort that provided access to the Urban Libraries Council Edge Platform in FY19. Edge provides libraries with tools to measure and set strategic goals around technology services to strengthen digital inclusion efforts. Feedback from participating libraries indicated that many found the tool valuable in helping them identify areas for improvement. One public library participant noted, "The assessment...present[ed] specific areas in need of improvement...it was surprising discovering the notable lack in health programming and sufficient health resources, as well as a need for more complete staff competence technologically." Additional comments indicated that the assessment tool and resources provided helpful suggestions even for libraries without additional funds to expend. One participant praised the simplicity and effectiveness of the program, saying "[I was] surprised that there were many simple things that we could do, such as develop a citizenship resource guide, which would improve our offerings. Not

everything involved the purchase of something expensive.” This participant also noted that the assessment results helped inform the library’s strategic plan.

## Goal 2 LSTA Expenditures

JerseyConnect accounted for 85% of Goal 2 expenditures followed by NJ Statewide Statistics with 9%. (Figure 13). One project, Professional Development and Continuing Education for Library Staff and Trustees, was match only.

Figure 13: Goal 2 LSTA Expenditures

Project	LSTA Funds (\$)	LSTA Funds (%)
Capira Curbside	\$75,171	4%
NJ Statewide Statistics	\$173,816	9%
JerseyConnect	\$1,556,659	85%
Professional Development & Continuing Education for library staff and trustees (Match Only)	\$0	0%
Urban Libraries Council EDGE Project	\$25,000	1%
Total	\$1,830,646	100%

## Goal 2 Activities and Partnerships

A total of forty-four activities were completed under Goal 2 (Figure 14). The vast majority of these activities (80%) intended to improve the library workforce. Goal 2 activities reported fewer partnerships than Goal 1 but again partner organization types were quite diverse (Figure 15). Libraries were the most common partner type with 12 activities.

Figure 14: Goal 2 Activities

Intent	Count of Activities	Total (%)
Improve the library workforce	35	80%
Improve library operations	4	9%
Improve the library's physical & technical infrastructure	3	7%
Improve users’ ability to obtain &/or use information resources	2	5%
Total	44	100%

Figure 15: Goal 2 Partnerships

Partner Type	Count of Activities
Libraries	12
Museums	4
Cultural Heritage	4
Historical Societies	3
Other	3
Archives	2
Schools	1



Survey results indicated that of the Goal 2 services, respondents were most familiar with NJSL’s professional development and continuing education opportunities, followed by JerseyConnect. More than two-thirds of the respondents (69%) rated their familiarity with professional development and continuing education opportunities as a two or higher on a five-point familiarity scale, as did 60% of respondents regarding JerseyConnect. In comparison, half (50%) of the public library respondents were “not at all familiar” with Statewide Statistics, and 91% were not at all familiar with Edge. It is to be expected that fewer respondents would be familiar with these latter two services, as a subgroup of public library staff contribute to and use Statewide Statistics, and Edge was a short-term project that 12 public libraries participated in during FY19. Capira Curbside was not included in the survey due to its newness. See Appendix C for a chart displaying the full set of responses.

Those respondents with some level of familiarity with NJSL’s professional development and continuing education opportunities and Statewide Statistics (rating of two or higher on a five-point familiarity scale) were asked to indicate their extent of agreement with a set of items measuring the services’ effectiveness within the context of Goal 2:<sup>3</sup>

- [Service] helps library staff focus on the needs of the community they serve when developing library services.
- [Service] helps library staff deliver high quality library services.

As Figure 16 shows, the majority of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that NJSL’s professional development and continuing education opportunities (PD & CE) (66%) and Statewide Statistics (56%) help library staff focus on the needs of the community they serve when delivering library services.

Close to three-fourths of the respondents (73%) strongly agreed or agreed that NJSL’s professional development and continuing education opportunities helped library staff deliver high quality library services, as did a little more than half of the respondents (53%) for Statewide Statistics.

Figure 16. Effectiveness of Services Within the Context of Goal 2\*

	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Neutral	Agree or Strongly Agree	n**
<i>Focus on Community Needs</i>				
PD & CE	3%	31%	66%	148
Statewide Statistics	2%	41%	56%	85
<i>Deliver High Quality Library Services</i>				
PD & CE	3%	25%	73%	151
Statewide Statistics	2%	45%	53%	85

\*Response options included a 5-point agreement scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree as well as “don’t know” and “not applicable.” All don’t know and not applicable responses were removed before calculating the percentages in Figure 16. Statewide Statistics and Adult Literacy Initiative responses are reported for public library respondents only.

\*\*This column reports the number of responses for each item.

<sup>3</sup>Survey items measuring the effectiveness of the services within the context of Goal 2 varied because some projects were reassigned to different goals during the course of conducting the evaluation.



Those respondents with some level of familiarity with JerseyConnect and Edge (rating of two or higher on a five-point familiarity scale) , were asked to indicate their extent of agreement with a set of items measuring the services' effectiveness within the context of Goal 2:

- [Service] helps my library better serve the community.
- [Service] helps library staff deliver high quality library services.

More than half (56%) of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that JerseyConnect helped their library better serve the community, as did 38% of respondents regarding Edge (Figure 17). About six in ten respondents (61%) strongly agreed or agreed that JerseyConnect helped library staff deliver high quality library services, as did 38% of respondents regarding Edge. When interpreting these results, it is important to recognize that just 13 respondents answered the Edge items, and the majority of their responses were neutral. This indicates that respondents may not have sufficient knowledge to assess this service.

Figure 17. Effectiveness of Services Within the Context of Goal 1\*

	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Neutral	Agree or Strongly Agree	n**
<i>Better Serve the Community</i>				
JerseyConnect	9%	35%	56%	97
Edge	0%	62%	38%	13
<i>Deliver High Quality Library Services</i>				
JerseyConnect	9%	30%	61%	98
Edge	0%	62%	38%	13

\*Response options included a 5-point agreement scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree as well as “don’t know” and “not applicable.” All don’t know and not applicable responses were removed before calculating the percentages in Figure 17. Responses are for public library respondents only.

\*\*This column reports the number of responses for each item.

Open-ended survey comments as well as interview and focus group data provided additional context regarding the New Jersey library community's perceptions of the effectiveness of the Goal 2 services. A common theme across these data sources was the ability of NJSL's professional development and continuing education opportunities to help library staff build capacity to provide additional services to their communities. Participants expressed appreciation for these opportunities and also made suggestions for improvement, including developing staff competencies or a certification process to facilitate a more uniform level of service across New Jersey libraries, as well as offering opportunities, similar to the Adult Literacy Initiative (Goal 3 service), that incorporate grant funds or some type of follow-up training to help staff implement what they learned. Participants also expressed a need for more communication regarding professional development and continuing education opportunities.

Participants commented on the critical role of JerseyConnect in “bridging the digital divide for some libraries and communities” and for providing services that some libraries otherwise would not be able to afford. Participants also expressed concern that not all JerseyConnect services were truly statewide and commented on the need for Verizon to expand its infrastructure so that all New Jersey libraries could utilize JerseyConnect's high speed internet service which is powered by Verizon.



Regarding Statewide Statistics, participants commented that this data helped them measure their performance and advocate for additional resources. However, participants expressed concern regarding the validity and reliability of this data, and commented that additional training was necessary to standardize reporting across the state's public libraries. In addition, some public library directors indicated that additional analysis of the data was needed to help local libraries use it for decision-making and planning.

### Goal 2 Categorization

Based on the data available for evaluation, Goal 2 was achieved.

## Goal 3 – Lifelong Learning

NJSL engaged in projects to work toward achieving Goal 3:

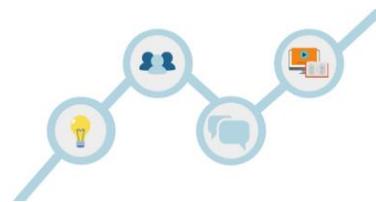
Literacy Collection Development (Adult Literacy Initiative): This initiative consisted of a “Literacy Bootcamp” workshop series, attended by 18 adult services librarians, on adult literacy best practices, program management, and volunteer training, as well as sub-grants to purchase adult literacy materials. In total, 2,430 titles in various formats covering subjects such as health literacy, financial literacy, professional development, technology, and English learning materials were purchased for local collections. Two libraries submitted feedback indicating their libraries were able to implement new programming as a result of the grant including an ESL book club and a financial literacy workshop series.

LYRASIS Membership: NJSL made training opportunities available through its subscription to LYRASIS, an online professional development provider. Trainings on a wide array of topics – including health and safety for performing arts organizations, reviving donor relationships, and optimizing online events – were available, which led to attendance by civic and cultural organizations in addition to libraries. In FY20, 140 program sessions were completed.

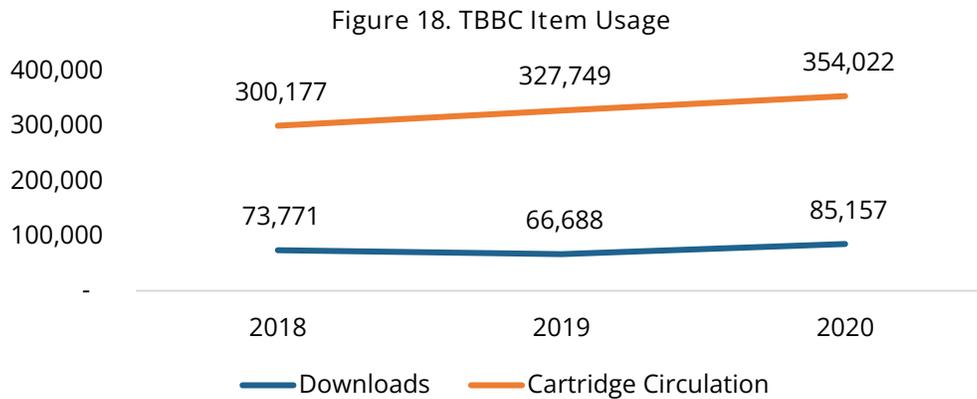
New Jersey State Library Talking Book and Braille Center (TBBC): TBBC provides direct library services to New Jersey's print disabled population through a partnership with the Library of Congress's National Library Services for the Blind and Print Disabled. TBBC engaged in several notable partnerships that allowed it to expand the reach and type of services offered. A total of 154 public libraries have accounts with TBBC, allowing their staff to help patrons locally register for service and download items. Additionally, New Jersey's Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) has a deposit account with TBBC allowing its users and CBVI's partners (New Jersey's Department of Veteran Affairs and the United States Veterans' Administration) to access materials. The Library Equal Access Program (LEAP) is another collaborative project with CBVI and 10 public libraries, training those 55 and older with a change in vision on using assistive technology. In a third partnership with the CBVI, TBBC administered, promoted, and supported Newsline. This collaborative project offers print-disabled users access to more than 500 publications including four New Jersey newspapers, emergency alerts, and job listings.

A partnership with the regional libraries of Pennsylvania and Connecticut allowed TBBC to maintain service throughout COVID-19 closures through its routing system. TBBC was able to make additional adjustments to maintain service with the assistance of the NJSL Information Technology Division which supported offsite access to Web Reads, TBBC's integrated library system.

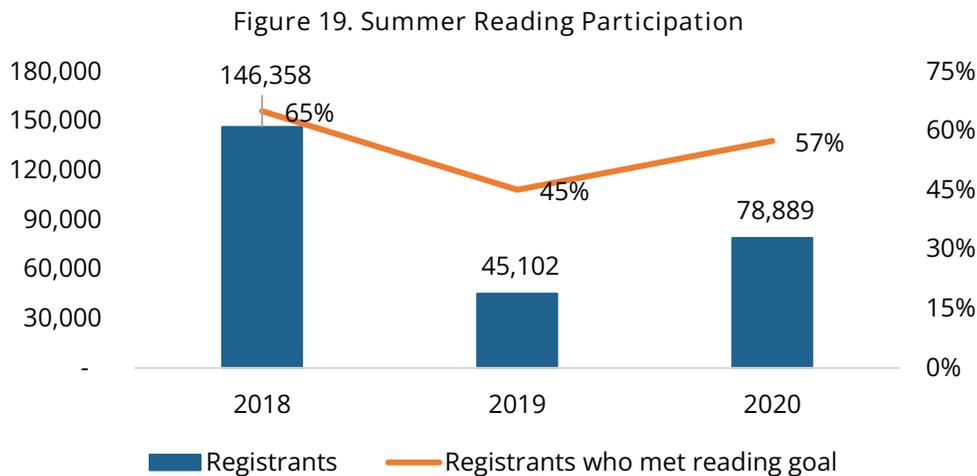
In addition to expanding services through partnerships, TBBC utilized technology to streamline many processes and improve service to users, such as creating digital books that could hold up to 16 titles for patrons without broadband access. In recognition of their technical abilities and collaborative work, TBBC was selected to participate in a pilot project with the NLS, testing the eBraille Reader. One hundred eBraille readers have been distributed to New Jersey residents as of October 2021.



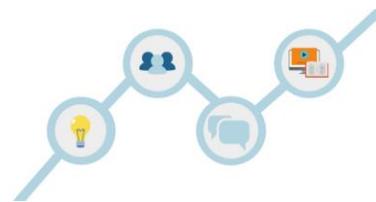
The number of registered patron accounts remained largely unchanged throughout the evaluation period. However, usage of TBBC items has increased from FY18 to FY20. As displayed in Figure 18, downloads increased by 18% and cartridge circulation increased by 15%.



Statewide Literacy (Statewide Summer Reading and Center for the Book): NJSL and the New Jersey Library Association partner to offer statewide participation in the Collaborative Summer Library Program’s offerings for children, teens, and adults. Based on data reported by public libraries on participation and programming figures, COVID-19 had a notable effect on summer reading registration in FY19 when many libraries were closed or not offering indoor programming (Figure 19). Registration dropped by 69% between FY18 and FY19, but then increased by 74% from FY19 to FY20. The number of programs offered also dropped considerably between FY18 (37,820 programs) and FY19 (12,014 programs). Programs offered in FY20 increased 40% (16,820 programs) from the low in FY19. Attendance per program fluctuated, with an average of 21 attendees in FY18, 28 in FY19 and 20 attendees in FY20.



NJSL used CARES funds to purchase READSquared for public libraries, a program which facilitated online registration and management of FY20 summer reading programs. In addition, NJSL staff noted that libraries have been able to attract new audiences through virtual summer reading programming and that there was a strong indication that libraries will continue to provide virtual offerings in addition to in-person in the future.



As part of the Statewide Literacy project, NJSL also supports the New Jersey Center for the Book (NJCB) which offers programs to promote public interest in books, reading, and libraries. NJCB participates annually in the National Book Festival by hosting a table or virtual presentation on the festival's annual theme. Additionally, NJCB hosted an event with poet Jacqueline Woodson, the 2018-2019 Library of Congress National Ambassador for Youth Literature. This event led to the formation of the NJ Literacy Alliance, a new organization of eight education and library organizations committed to working collaboratively on literacy issues. The NJCB saw a major increase in website traffic during the COVID-19 pandemic. Website sessions doubled from 537 in FY18 to 1,207 in FY19. Usage remained consistent with FY19 numbers in FY20 (1,200 sessions). NJCB has developed website content for teachers, students, and caregivers and intends to continue developing this content in response to demand.

### Goal 3 LSTA Expenditures

Nearly all LSTA expenditures towards Goal 3 were for TBBC (Figure 20). TBBC accounts for 34% of total LSTA expenditures across all three goals. One project, Statewide Literacy (Statewide Summer Reading and Center for the Book), was match only.

Figure 20: LSTA Expenditures

Project	LSTA Funds (\$)	LSTA Funds (%)
Literacy Collection Development	\$22,692	1%
LYRASIS Membership	\$2,500	>1%
NJSL Talking Book and Braille Center	\$4,216,676.92	98.94%
Statewide Literacy: Summer Reading & Center for the Book (Match Only)	\$0	0%
Total	\$4,219,177	100%

### Goal 3 Activities and Partnerships

A total of 14 activities were completed in Goal 3 projects (Figure 21). Seven activities aimed to improve users' ability to obtain and or use information resources and six activities intended to improve users' general knowledge and skills.

Figure 21: Goal 3 LSTA Activities

Intent	Count of Activities	Total (%)
Improve users' general Knowledge & skills	7	50%
Improve users' ability to obtain &/or use information resources	6	43%
General	1	7%
Total	14	100%

As with the prior two goals, projects benefited from a number of partnerships with diverse organization types. Libraries and "other" were the most common organization types (Figure 22).



Figure 22. Goal 3 Partnerships by Activity

Organization Type	Count of Activities
Libraries	7
Other	6
Adult Education	3
Human Services	2
Schools	2
Museums	1
Cultural Heritage	1
Historical Societies	1

Survey results indicated that almost all of the respondents were familiar with Statewide Summer Reading (93% rated their level of familiarity as a two or higher on a five-point familiarity scale), and nearly three-fourths (73%) of the respondents were at least somewhat familiar with TBBC. In comparison, about three-fourths of respondents were “not at all familiar” with the Center for the Book (73%) and the Adult Literacy Initiative (76%). It is to be expected that fewer respondents would be familiar with the Adult Literacy Initiative, as it was a short-term project that 18 public library staff participated in during FY18. LYRASIS was not included in the survey because of its newness. See Appendix C for a chart displaying the full set of responses.

Outcome data from New Jersey residents who participated in these services was not collected during the evaluation period. However, survey respondents were asked about their perceptions of outcomes that participants experienced for TBBC, Statewide Summer Reading, and Center for the Book.<sup>4</sup> Those respondents with some level of familiarity with the Goal 3 services (rating of two or higher on the familiarity scale) were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a set of statements for each service that addressed outcomes that were identified in the project documentation. As Figure 23 shows, more than three-quarters of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that TBBC helps people who have difficulty reading standard print or holding a book feel connected to the community (79%), use assistive technology to improve daily life (86%), and keep connected to reading (84%). Nearly nine in ten respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the statewide summer reading program helps to improve children’s reading skills (88%) and increases residents’ interest in reading (88%). Respondents’ feedback regarding the Center for the Book was more mixed. Around two in five respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the Center for the Book helps to raise residents’ interest in reading (44%) and libraries (40%), and helps to promote New Jersey’s diverse literary heritage to residents (41%). Similar proportions were neutral about these items.

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<sup>4</sup> Survey items measuring the effectiveness of the services within the context of Goal 3 varied because some projects were reassigned to different goals during the course of conducting the evaluation.



Figure 23. Effectiveness of Services Within the Context of Goal 3\*

	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Neutral	Agree or Strongly Agree	n**
<i>Talking Book &amp; Braille Center</i>				
TBBC helps people who have difficulty reading standard print or holding a book feel connected to the community.	3%	17%	79%	155
TBBC helps people who have difficulty reading standard print or holding a book use assistive technology to improve daily life.	2%	12%	86%	153
TBBC helps to keep people who have difficulty reading standard print or trouble holding a book connected to reading.	3%	14%	84%	146
<i>Statewide Summer Reading</i>				
The statewide summer reading program helps to improve New Jersey children's reading skills.	3%	9%	88%	185
The statewide summer reading program helps to increase New Jersey residents' interest in reading.	3%	9%	88%	185
<i>Center for the Book</i>				
The Center for the Book helps to raise NJ residents' interest in reading.	12%	44%	44%	43
The Center for the Book helps to raise NJ residents' interest in libraries.	14%	45%	40%	42
The Center for the Book helps to promote NJ's diverse literary heritage to NJ residents.	10%	49%	41%	41

\*Response options included a 5-point agreement scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree as well as "don't know" and "not applicable." All don't know and not applicable responses were removed before calculating the percentages in Figure 23. Statewide Summer Reading responses are reported for public library respondents only.

\*\*This column reports the number of responses for each item.

Those respondents with some level of familiarity with the Adult Literacy Initiative (rating of two or higher on the familiarity scale) were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a set of items measuring the service's effectiveness:

- [Service] helps library staff focus on the needs of the community they serve when developing library services.
- [Service] helps library staff deliver high quality library services.

As Figure 24 shows, a little less than half of the respondents (44%) strongly agreed or agreed that the Adult Literacy Initiative helps library staff focus on the needs of the community they serve when developing library services. Similarly, 46% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the Adult Literacy Initiative helped library staff deliver high quality library services. When interpreting these results, it is important to recognize that fewer respondents were familiar with the Adult Literacy Initiative, and nearly half of their responses to the set of items



assessing its effectiveness were neutral. This indicates that respondents may not have enough knowledge to assess this service.

Figure 24. Effectiveness of Adult Literacy Initiative Within the Context of Goal 3\*

	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Neutral	Agree or Strongly Agree	n**
The Adult Literacy Initiative helps library staff focus on the needs of the community they serve when developing library services.	8%	48%	44%	25
The Adult Literacy Initiative helps library staff deliver high quality library services	8%	46%	46%	24

\*Response options included a 5-point agreement scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree as well as “don’t know” and “not applicable.” All don’t know and not applicable responses were removed before calculating the percentages in Figure 24. Responses are reported for public library respondents only.

\*\*This column reports the number of responses for each item

Open-ended survey comments as well as interview and focus group data provided additional context regarding the New Jersey library community’s perceptions of the effectiveness of the Goal 3 services. Forty-eight (28%) of the 166 responses to the open-ended survey question asking respondents to describe how one LSTA service (across all three LSTA goals) helped their library better serve their community mentioned summer reading. Respondents commented on the positive effects of summer reading on participants, including increasing children’s interest in reading and reading skills, as well as raising parents’ knowledge of the importance of reading for their children. In addition, participants remarked that summer reading helped their library to be more connected with the community and to develop stronger partnerships with their local schools.

Regarding TBBC, interview and focus group participants as well as survey respondents commented on its critical role in providing resources for visually impaired community members. One survey respondent commented that TBBC “is an amazing service that can help many libraries break into...outreach. Patrons who feel isolated because of a disability feel as though they can connect with their community because of this wonderful service.” Several participants questioned the cost per patron for TBBC services and expressed concern about the amount of resources allotted for TBBC.

### Goal 3 Categorization

Based on the data available for evaluation, Goal 3 was partially achieved. NJSL made meaningful progress toward this goal by investing significant resources in TBBC and expanding its reach through strategic partnerships, and by providing lifelong learning opportunities through the statewide literacy projects, adult literacy initiative, and LYRISIS. However, with the exception of Statewide Summer Reading, the Goal 3 projects have a narrow reach in terms of population served. Additionally, the goal focuses on lifelong learning. Statewide Summer Reading and the adult literacy initiative addressed the literacy aspect of lifelong learning, which leaves the other aspects of lifelong learning to be addressed only by those projects with limited and/or highly targeted audiences.

## A-2. Measuring Success Focal Areas

The 89 activities that NJSL carried out during the evaluation period were associated with three of the six IMLS Focal Areas (Figure 25). Forty-seven percent of activities were aligned with the Library Capacity Focal Area, followed by 37% with Information Access, and 16% with Lifelong Learning. No activities were aligned with Human Services, Employment and Economic Development, or Civic Engagement intents.



Figure 25. Activities by Focal Area

Primary Focal Areas and Intents	Count of Activities	Percent of Activities
Information Access	33	37%
Improve users' ability to discover information resources	6	7%
Improve users' ability to obtain &-or use information resources	27	30%
Library Capacity	42	47%
Improve library operations	4	4%
Improve library's physical & technical infrastructure	3	3%
Improve the library workforce	35	39%
Lifelong Learning	14	16%
Improve users' general knowledge & skills	13	15%
Improve the library workforce	1	1%

### A-3. Substantial Groups Targeted

During the evaluation period, the only group that met IMLS' definition of a substantial target audience was the library workforce which was designated as the target audience in 53% of activities (Figure 26). TBBC is an example of a major project that targeted a specific group of individuals with disabilities. Another example is the Statewide Summer Reading project which targeted families.

Figure 26. Activities by Group

Group	Count of Activities*	Substantial Group**
Library Workforce	47	Yes
Individuals Living below the poverty line	0	No
Individuals who are unemployed/underemployed	0	No
Ethnic or minority populations	0	No
Immigrants/refugees	0	No
Individuals with disabilities	6	No
Individuals with limited functional library or information skills	1	No
Families	3	No
Children (0-5)	0	No
School-aged youth (6-17)	0	No

\*Activities can be designated as general or be designated as targeting more than one group

\*\*IMLS defines a substantial group as being the target of 10% or more of activities.



## Recommendations

Based on the results of this evaluation, NJSL may consider the following recommendations as it develops its 2023-2028 LSTA Five-Year Plan:

**Continue to prioritize statewide services that expand access to information resources:** Feedback from the New Jersey library community emphasized the importance of statewide services such as JerseyClicks, JerseyCat, and JerseyConnect for expanding access to the range of information resources that libraries can provide to their communities. In focus groups, interviews, and open-ended survey responses, multiple participants commented that statewide services play a critical role in enabling all libraries – especially small and rural – to provide high quality services and to bridge the digital divide.

**Explore options for expanding the broadband infrastructure:** Library leaders expressed concern that not all libraries have access to JerseyConnect’s high speed internet service and commented on the need for Verizon to expand its infrastructure.

**Expand communication and marketing efforts to raise awareness of LSTA-funded services:** A common theme across interviews, focus groups, and open-ended survey comments regarded the need to raise awareness about LSTA-funded services among both library staff and New Jersey residents. Multiple participants commented on their lack of familiarity with these services and their need for more information (and, in some instances, more training) to be able to implement and share the services with their communities. To better market the services, focus group participants recommended that NJSL provide customizable social media graphics packages and printable materials, as well as frequent communications targeting all library staff, not just administration.

**Seek input from the New Jersey library community when selecting and implementing new projects:** Feedback from focus groups and survey comments indicated that the New Jersey library community seeks opportunities to provide input and guidance on NJSL’s selection and implementation of new projects. NJSL may consider providing such opportunities through virtual and in-person town halls, conference sessions, surveys, and by soliciting feedback on various listservs.

**Consider the ongoing ramifications of COVID-19 when planning for services:** Multiple COVID-19 impacts were reported in project documentation, including increased use of JerseyClicks and the Center for the Book website, JerseyConnect’s addition of Remote Assist, and participation decreases in programs such as Summer Reading during the pandemic’s first year. In response to COVID-19, NJSL implemented four projects during the evaluation period – Capira Curbside (LSTA-funded), and Zoom, Read Squared, and B&T Axis 360 (state-funded). Even when the pandemic recedes, it is likely that some New Jersey residents will continue to need or prefer virtual services. NJSL may consider continuing its investment in these services and investigating options for providing additional virtual services.

**Implement a systematic process for evaluating LSTA-funded projects:** Currently, limited user feedback is collected for LSTA-funded projects, and these efforts focus primarily on usage. To gain a more thorough understanding of the effectiveness and impact of these projects, NJSL may consider evaluating users’ perceptions of quality and relevance as well as identifying and measuring outcomes. By undertaking these efforts, NJSL will be able to improve these services, gain an awareness of participant/user impact, and better determine where to invest resources.

**Consider the extent to which all New Jersey residents are being served:** While each of the three LSTA goals aimed to serve all New Jersey residents, project documentation and feedback from NJSL staff and the New Jersey library community indicated that certain segments of the population were missed for reasons ranging from



technical limitations to the lack of awareness about NJSL services. In addition, during the evaluation period, the only substantial group that was targeted by an LSTA project was the library workforce. AS NJSL considers refinements to existing services and/or adding new services, it is recommended that it develop a more systematic process for identifying under-served populations and determining how LSTA-funded services may reach all New Jersey residents.

## Process questions

### B-1. Use of the SPR data to guide activities in the five-year plan

During the evaluation period, NJSL staff used SPR data to guide Five-Year Plan activities.

### B-2. Changes made to the five-year plan

During the course of conducting the evaluation, two projects that were initially aligned with one goal were moved into another goal category at the direction of NJSL staff: TBBC (Goal 1 to Goal 3) and Statewide Statistics (Goal 1 to Goal 2). Additionally, in the course of conducting the evaluation, NJSL staff noted that the goals for two projects were misreported in the SPR. These changes are as follows:

Project	Goal Reported in SPR	Updated Goal
Statewide Statistics	Goal 1: Information Access	Goal 2: Institutional Capacity
Professional Development and Continuing Education for Library Staff and Trustees	Goal 3: Lifelong Learning	Goal 2: Institutional Capacity

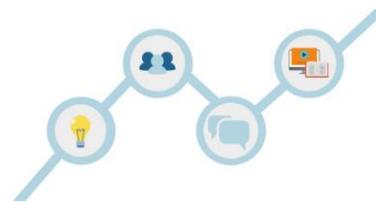
### B-3. Sharing SPR data and evaluation resources

NJSL staff shared data from the SPR and other evaluation resources with various stakeholders.

## Methodology Questions

### C-1. Selection of an Independent Evaluator

NJSL selected an independent evaluator through a public request for quotations process in accordance with NJ state statutes and following guidance outlined in Section 9134 © of IMLS’s authorizing legislation. Linda Hofschire, principal of LJH Consulting, LLC, was selected as the project director and sub-contracted with Amanda Johnson as a co-evaluator. Both evaluators have a breadth of experience working with LSTA funded projects and expertise in evaluation design. Dr. Hofschire has more than 25 years of experience conducting social science research and evaluation, including ten years within an SLAA. For the past seven years, Ms. Johnson has consulted with public libraries across North Carolina on topics related to evaluation including design, implementation, and reporting.



## C-2. Statistical and Qualitative Methods

The consultants worked with NJSL staff to develop an evaluation plan based on a logic model identifying outputs and intended outcomes for each goal area. The evaluation used a mixed methods approach to analyze quantitative and qualitative data. For the data collection activities, NJSL staff assisted in identifying stakeholders who were most familiar with LSTA projects and provided introductions between evaluators and stakeholders. Focus groups and interviews were scheduled and conducted independently by the evaluators. The online survey was designed independently and distributed by NJSL staff to all appropriate statewide listservs.

### Focus Groups and Interviews

The evaluators conducted focus groups and interviews with key staff and stakeholders to gather in-depth information about LSTA-funded activities. Two focus groups (total of nine participants) and three interviews were conducted with New Jersey library leaders including members of the LSTA Advisory Council; administrators of public, school, and academic libraries; and directors of consortia and library support organizations. Two main topics were discussed in both the focus groups and interviews:

- 1) The extent to which the LSTA-funded services met the 5-Year Plan Goals, and
- 2) Participants' perspectives about the major challenges and opportunities for New Jersey libraries in the next five years

In addition, evaluators interviewed nine NJSL staff who oversee the LSTA-funded services to gather their perspectives on the extent to which the LSTA-funded services met the 5-Year Plan Goals, barriers to achieving the goals, and major challenges and opportunities for New Jersey libraries in the next five years.

The interviews and focus groups were audio-recorded and transcribed, and the evaluators conducted a thematic analysis of the transcripts to identify overarching themes and patterns within the context of the LSTA goals.

### Survey

All New Jersey library staff were invited to participate in an online survey administered over a three-week period. The survey measured the following:

- Familiarity with LSTA funded services
- Perceptions of the extent to which the LSTA funded services met the 5-Year Plan goals
- How the LSTA funded services helped libraries serve their communities
- Future support needs
- Demographics

A total of 250 respondents completed the survey. About four-fifths of the respondents (81%) worked in public libraries, 8% worked in school libraries, 7% worked in academic libraries, and the remaining respondents worked in other library types such as consortia, government, or special. A little more than one-third of the respondents (36%) were the director or CEO of their organization, about one-fourth (27%) were librarians, 22% were paraprofessionals, 9% were managers, 3% were assistant/associate directors, and the remainder worked in other positions. More than half of the respondents (54%) indicated that their libraries were located in a suburban area, about one-fourth (24%) were in a town, 12% were in an urban area, and 10% were rural.

Survey data analysis included calculating descriptive statistics and stratifying results by subgroup where appropriate. Open-ended survey items were coded by topic. Because convenience sampling was used for the survey, the results should not be generalized to all New Jersey library staff.



### Data Review

The SPR activity file provided by IMLS as well as narrative and other data collected by NJSL staff in the course of program operations were analyzed to identify major activity areas related to intent, focal areas, and targeted groups. SPR Activity data was aggregated and analyzed with additional LSTA expenditure data. A listing of data supplied by NJSL staff can be found in Appendix A.

### Reliability and Validity

The available data (SPR, project narratives, and other existing data) for some projects was scant and inconsistently reported. In these cases, the evaluators verified the validity of the data with NJSL staff where possible. In addition, to increase validity, the evaluators employed multiple methods of data collection and triangulated data for each project, so that no project was evaluated based on a single data source. In addition, most close-ended survey questions included “don’t know” and “not applicable” response options, which reduced the risk of invalid responses from respondents who lacked familiarity with the LSTA-funded services.

To ensure reliability, a 5-point agreement scale (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree) was used for most survey questions. This scale is familiar to most respondents, which reduces reliability concerns due to response errors. In addition, the survey contained multiple items evaluating each LSTA-funded service, enabling the evaluators to check for consistency in response patterns.

## C-3. Engagement of Stakeholders

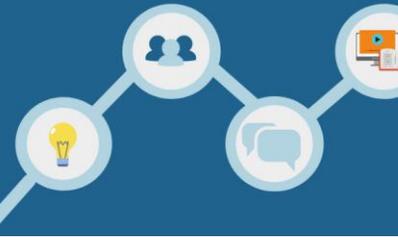
A variety of stakeholders were involved in the Five Year Evaluation and had the opportunity to provide feedback. The evaluators consulted with NJSL administration to develop a logic model for the project and to identify potential interview and focus group participants. NJSL administration and staff, Advisory Council members, consortia and library support directors, and directors of academic, public, and school libraries participated in interviews and focus groups. All New Jersey library staff were invited to participate in the Five Year Evaluation survey.

## C-4. Strategies for Sharing Key Findings and Recommendations

The evaluators and NSJL staff will implement several strategies to share the key findings and recommendations, including a presentation to NJSL staff and stakeholders in spring 2022, and distribution of the one-page visual summary of findings and recommendations with the New Jersey library community. In addition, this one-page summary may be used as one means for soliciting feedback about the 2023-2027 Five Year LSTA Plan.



# APPENDICES

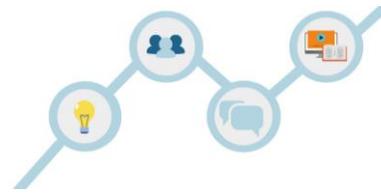


## Appendix A: Bibliography of Documents Reviewed

Collaborative Summer Reading Survey (2021)  
Evaluators Project File provided by IMLS  
JerseyConnect User Satisfaction Surveys (2019, 2021)  
JerseyConnect Services by Outlet (2021)  
NJ Evaluator Activities File provided by IMLS  
New Jersey State Library State Program Reports (2018, 2019, 2020)  
New Jersey Talking Book and Braille Center Usage reports (2018, 2019)  
Public Libraries Survey (2019)

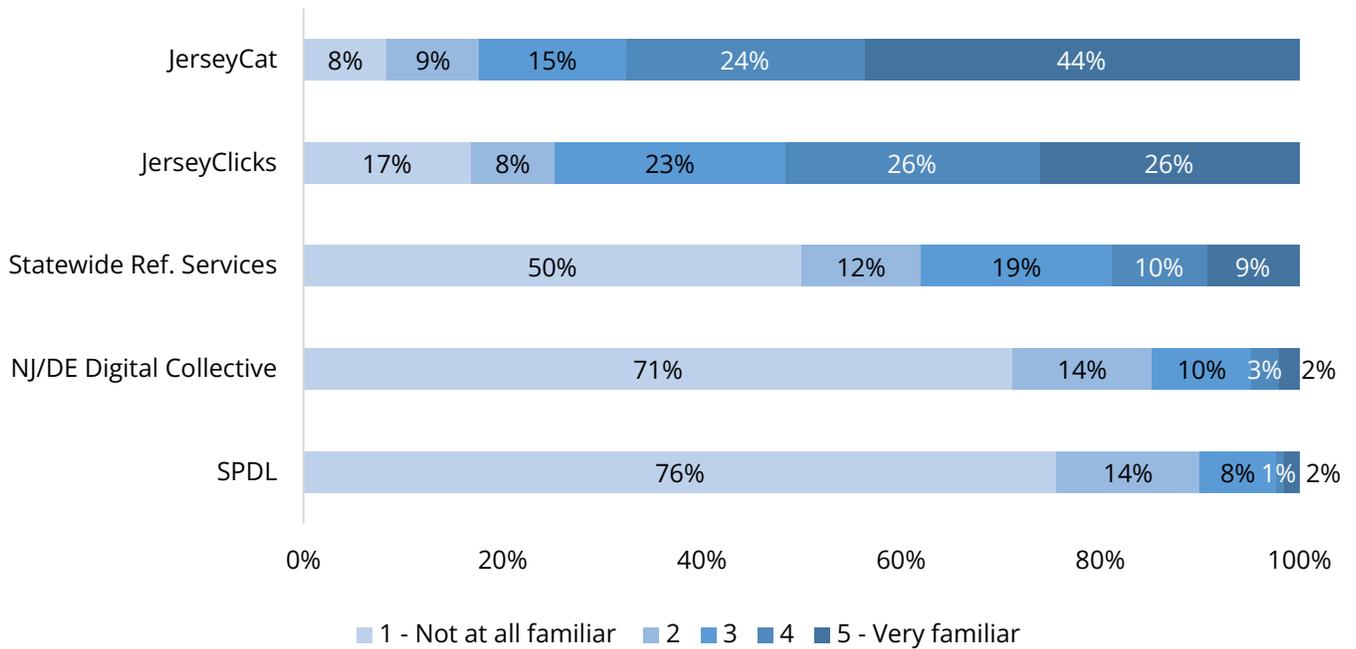
## Appendix B: List of Acronyms

CARES: Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act  
CBVI: Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired  
COSLA: Chief Officers of State Library Agencies  
DPLA: Digital Public Library of America  
ESL: English as a Second Language  
ILL: Interlibrary Loan  
ILS: integrated library system  
IMLS: Institute of Museum and Library Services  
LEAP: Library Equal Access Program  
LSTA: Library Services and Technology Act  
NJCB: New Jersey Center for the Book  
NJLN: New Jersey Library Network  
NJSL: New Jersey State Library  
NJSL TBBC New Jersey State Library Talking Book and Braille Center  
NJ/DE Digital Collective: New Jersey/Delaware Digital Collective  
SDPL: State Publications Digital Library  
SLAA: State Library Administrative Agency  
UX: User Experience  
YALSA: Young Adult Library Services Association



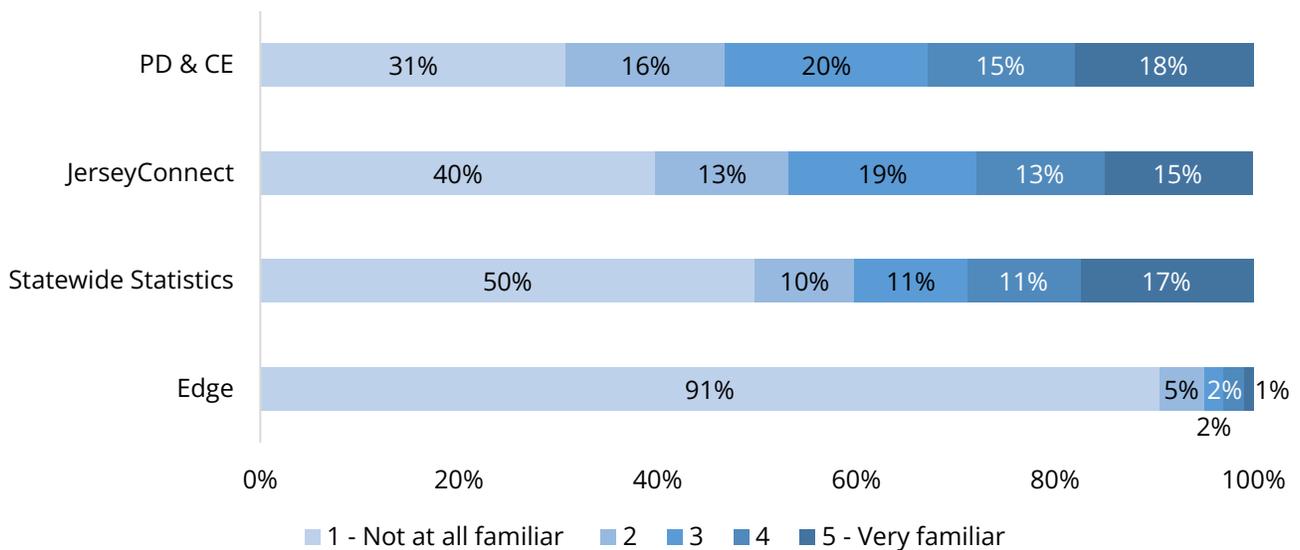
## Appendix C: Survey Respondents' Familiarity With LSTA-Funded Services

Figure C1. Familiarity With Goal 1 Services\*



\*The State Publications Digital Library is abbreviated as "SPDL."

Figure C2. Familiarity with Goal 2 Services\*



\* Professional Development and Continuing Education are abbreviated as "PD & CE." Edge, JerseyConnect, and Statewide Statistics responses are reported for public library respondents only.

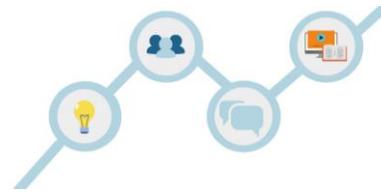
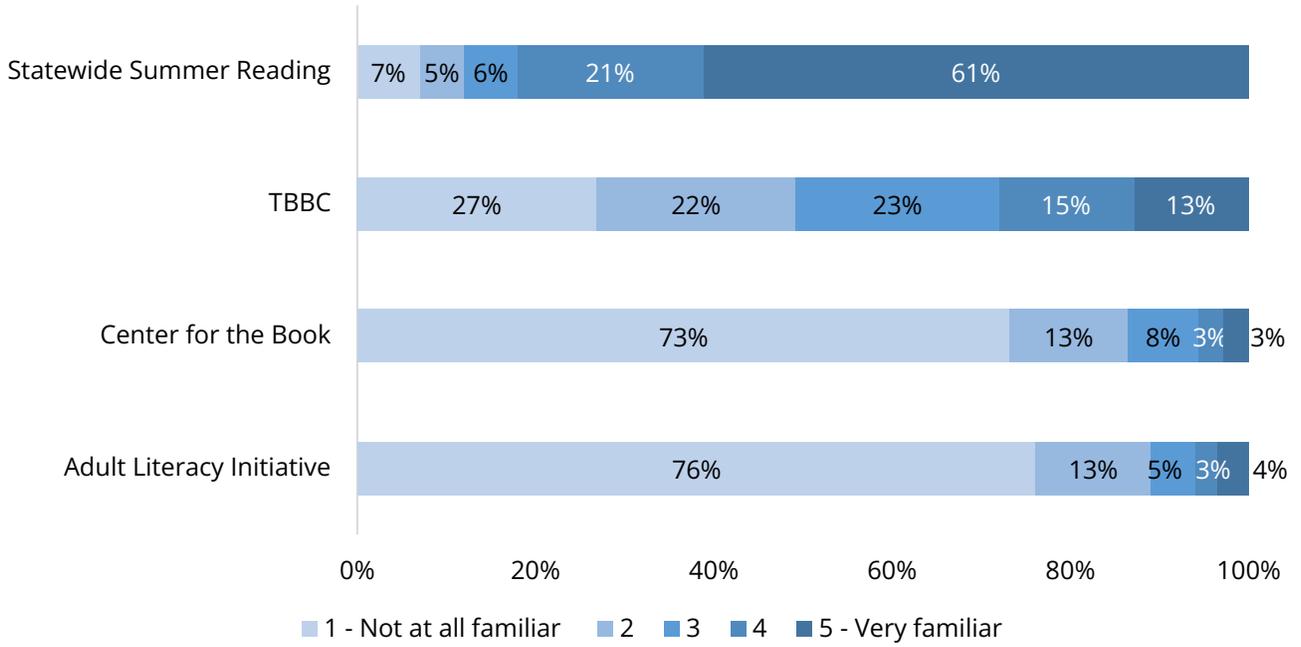
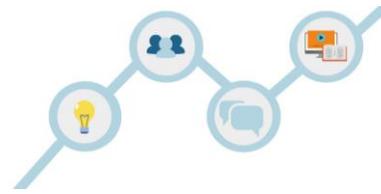


Figure C3. Familiarity With Goal 3 Services\*



\*Adult Literacy Initiative and Statewide Summer Reading responses are reported for public library respondents only.



## Appendix D: Professional Development and Continuing Education Offerings

- Academy of Library Leadership (FY18, FY19)
- Active Shooter Trainings for Cultural Institutions (FY18)
- Active Sustainable Thinking for the Future of Libraries (FY18)
- Adult Literacy Forum (FY18)
- Build a Better Library Website (FY20)
- Experienced Directors Summit (FY19)
- Flow Circus Workshop (FY18)
- Grant-Writing Workshops (FY19)
- Leap into Science Network Initiative (FY18)
- Libraries, Acceleration and the Reality Spectrum (FY18)
- Mentor NJ (FY18, FY19, FY20)
- Mother Goose on the Loose workshops (FY18)
- New Library Directors' Training (FY19, FY20)
- NJ Cultural Alliance for Response: Disaster Preparation (FY18, FY19)
- NJ Grows Biz Summit (FY18, FY19)
- Opioid Overdose Prevention Training (2018)
- Trends and Topics in Library Security and Safety (FY20)
- Trustee Institute (FY18, FY19, FY20)
- UX Boot Camp (FY18, FY19)
- YALSA/COSLA IMLS Transforming Teen Service: A train the trainer approach to performing arts readiness project (FY19)

Additionally, in FY20 the following professional development items that were not programs or presentations were made available:

- A Disaster recovery/Resiliency Guidebook was updated to include a section on Pandemics, Epidemics and Infestations
- A scholarship to the Association of Rural and Small Libraries Conference was provided for one public library staff member.



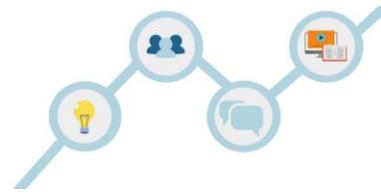
## Appendix E: List of People Interviewed

### Interviews:

- 9 NJSL staff
- 3 academic and school library directors

### Focus groups:

- 4 public library directors
- 1 public library manager
- 4 directors of library consortia and support organizations



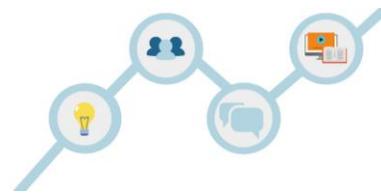
## Appendix F: Interview, Focus Group, and Survey Instruments

### New Jersey Five-Year Evaluation Interview Guide – NJSL Staff

1. Please tell me about your role at the New Jersey State Library.
2. One of the goals in the New Jersey State Library's current 5-year plan focuses on [information access/institutional capacity/lifelong learning]: [All New Jersey residents will have convenient access to quality information resources in a format they can use to achieve their educational, occupational, and personal/recreational goals/ All New Jersey residents are served by local libraries that are technologically advanced and that employ knowledgeable, community-focused staff members who incorporate the best professional practices to deliver high quality library services./ All New Jersey residents have an opportunity to reach their full potential and to participate in and contribute to their communities.]

Here is a list of the state library projects that support this goal. Which of these projects do you work on?

3. Tell me about how this project works.
4. Please share some examples of how [project] has contributed to meeting the [information access/institutional capacity/lifelong learning] goal.
5. What have been the most effective aspects of [project]?
6. What have been the least effective aspects of [project]?
7. To what extent have you used data from the State Program Report or other sources, such as the Public Libraries Survey, to guide [project]?
8. Now I'd like to turn our discussion to the future. What do you think will be the major challenges and opportunities over the next five years for New Jersey and for New Jersey libraries?
9. What changes to [project] would you recommend to address these challenges and opportunities?
10. What new services – in addition to [project] - would you recommend to address these challenges and opportunities?
11. What else you would like to share about [project]?

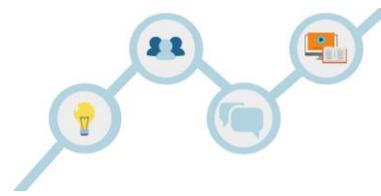


New Jersey Five-Year Evaluation  
Interview Guide – New Jersey Library Directors

1. Please tell me about your role in your organization.
2. How long have you worked in New Jersey libraries?
3. We are evaluating New Jersey State Library services that are funded by the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) [share list of services].
  - Which of these services does your library use?
  - [If none] Are you familiar with any of these services?

All of these services fall under one of three goals that guide the New Jersey State Library's work. You mentioned you use [service]. This falls under [goal] [share goal].

4. In your work, have you seen examples of how [service] contributes to [goal]? Please describe these examples.
5. Now I'd like to turn our discussion to the future. What do you think will be the major challenges and opportunities over the next five years for your library?
6. In what ways will your library need support to meet these challenges and/or capitalize on these opportunities?
7. What should the role of the New Jersey State Library be to help your library meet these challenges and/or capitalize on these opportunities?
8. Is there anything else you would like to share?



## New Jersey Five-Year Evaluation Focus Group Guide

1. Please introduce yourself, and let us know what organization you are from and your position within that organization.

Today we are going to focus on the services the New Jersey State Library provides that are funded by the Library Services and Technology Act. This work is guided by three goals.

We are going to discuss these goals one at a time and consider the services that the New Jersey State Library offers to support each goal. Let's start with Goal 1 – Information access: All New Jersey residents will have convenient access to quality information resources in a format they can use to achieve their educational, occupational, and personal/recreational goals.

2. The New Jersey State Library offers a variety of services to support this goal. Here is a list of these services: NJ/DE Digital Collective (NJ's Digital Public Library of America service hub), digitization projects such as the New Jersey State Publications Digital Library, JerseyCat Statewide ILL, JerseyClicks Statewide Databases, JerseyConnect Statewide Technology Program, Statewide Reference Services, Urban Libraries Council Edge Project.

Which of these services does your library use currently or has used in the past three years?

3. Now, take a minute to think about these services in the context of goal 1. Please share some examples you've observed in your work of how these services contribute to meeting goal 1.

4. Consider which of these services have been particularly valuable to your work to support information access. What value have they contributed?

5. What suggestions do you have for improving these services?

6. Now let's move to Goal 2 – Institutional capacity: All New Jersey residents are served by local libraries that are technologically advanced and that employ knowledgeable, community-focused staff members who incorporate the best professional practices to deliver high quality library services. The services that the New Jersey State Library provides to support this goal include: NJ statewide statistics (annual public library survey), professional development and continuing education for library staff and trustees, and adult literacy collection development (2018 Literacy Boot Camp + collection development grant to support adult literacy skills).

Which of these services does your library use currently or has used in the past three years?

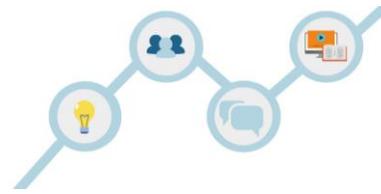
7. Please share some examples you've observed in your work of how these services contribute to meeting goal 2.

We're interested in hearing more about your examples. Let's start with the examples for Statewide

8. Consider which of these services have been particularly valuable to your work to increase the capacity of your institution. What value have they contributed?

9. What suggestions do you have for improving these services?

10. Now let's move to Goal 3 – Lifelong learning: All New Jersey residents have an opportunity to reach their full potential and to participate in and contribute to their communities. The services that the New Jersey State Library



offers to support this goal include the Talking Book & Braille Center and statewide literacy initiatives including summer reading and Center for the Book.

10. Which of these services does your library use currently or has used in the past three years?

11. Please share some examples you've observed in your work of how these services contribute to meeting goal 3.

12. Consider which of these services have been particularly valuable to your work to support lifelong learning. What value have they contributed?

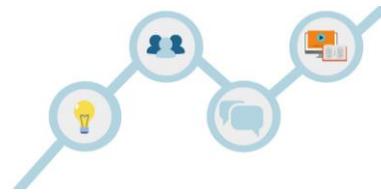
13. What suggestions do you have for improving these services?

14. Now I'd like to turn our discussion to the future. What do you think will be the major challenges and opportunities over the next five years for your library?

15. In what ways will New Jersey libraries need support to meet these challenges and/or capitalize on these opportunities?

16. What should the role of the New Jersey State Library be to meet these challenges and/or capitalize on these opportunities?

17. Is there anything else you would like to share?



## New Jersey State Library LSTA-Funded Services Survey

The New Jersey State Library (NJSL) is working with LJH Consulting – an independent researcher – to evaluate the services that it has offered New Jersey libraries from 2018-present with funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services' Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). This survey will ask for your feedback on these services. Your feedback is very important and will be used for evaluation, improvement, and planning purposes. Your responses are anonymous and your participation is voluntary. You can choose to stop participating at any time. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete, depending on your level of familiarity with the various services that are covered.

Thank you very much for participating in this survey. If you have any questions, please contact Linda Hofschire at [linda@ljh-consulting.net](mailto:linda@ljh-consulting.net).

1) To begin, please indicate how familiar you are with [JerseyClicks](#) (statewide databases) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:\*

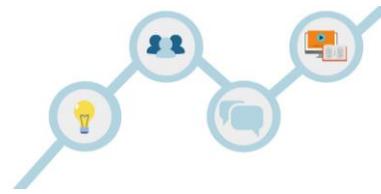
- 1 - Not at all familiar
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 - Very familiar

Logic: Hidden unless: #1 Question "To begin, please indicate how familiar you are with [JerseyClicks](#) (statewide databases) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")

2) Does your library use JerseyClicks?

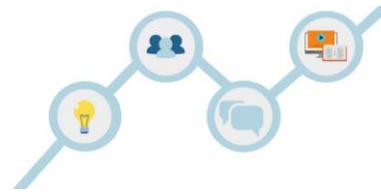
- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Not applicable

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3) Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about JerseyClicks:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
I have the skills I need to use JerseyClicks effectively.							
JerseyClicks helps my library to better serve the community.							
JerseyClicks provides New Jersey residents with convenient access to information resources.							
JerseyClicks is easy for New Jersey residents to use.							
JerseyClicks helps New Jersey residents achieve their educational goals.							
JerseyClicks helps New Jersey residents achieve their occupational goals.							
JerseyClicks helps New Jersey residents achieve their personal/recreational goals.							



4) Please indicate how familiar you are with the [NJ/DE Digital Collective](#) (New Jersey's Digital Public Library of America service hub) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:\*

- 1 - Not at all familiar
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 - Very familiar

Logic: Hidden unless: #4 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with the [NJ/DE Digital Collective](#) (New Jersey's Digital Public Library of America service hub) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")

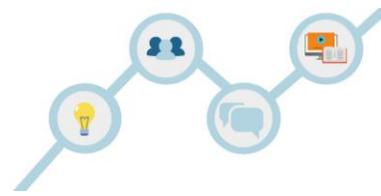
5) Have you used the NJ/DE Digital Collective?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Not applicable

Logic: Hidden unless: #4 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with the [NJ/DE Digital Collective](#) (New Jersey's Digital Public Library of America service hub) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")

6) Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about the NJ/DE Digital Collective:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
I have the skills I need to use the NJ/DE Digital Collective effectively.							
The NJ/DE Digital Collective helps my library to better serve the community.							
The NJ/DE Digital Collective provides New Jersey residents with convenient							



	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
access to information resources.							
The NJ/DE Digital Collective is easy for New Jersey residents to use.							
The NJ/DE Digital Collective helps New Jersey residents achieve their educational goals.							
The NJ/DE Digital Collective helps New Jersey residents achieve their occupational goals.							
The NJ/DE Digital Collective helps New Jersey residents achieve their personal/recreational goals.							

7) Please indicate how familiar you are with the [New Jersey State Publications Digital Library](#) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:\*

1 - Not at all familiar

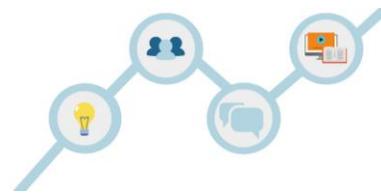
2

3

4

5 - Very familiar

Logic: Hidden unless: #7 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with the [New Jersey State Publications Digital Library](#) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")



8) Have you used the New Jersey State Publications Digital Library?

Yes

No

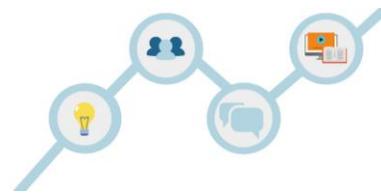
Don't know

Not applicable

Logic: Hidden unless: #7 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with the [New Jersey State Publications Digital Library](#) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")

9) Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about the New Jersey State Publications Digital Library (SPDL):

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
I have the skills I need to use SPDL effectively.							
SPDL helps my library to better serve the community.							
SPDL provides New Jersey residents with convenient access to information resources.							
SPDL is easy for New Jersey residents to use.							
SPDL helps New Jersey residents achieve their educational goals.							
SPDL helps New Jersey residents achieve their occupational goals.							



	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
SPDL helps New Jersey residents achieve their personal/recreational goals.							

10) Please indicate how familiar you are with [JerseyCat](#) (statewide interlibrary loan) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:\*

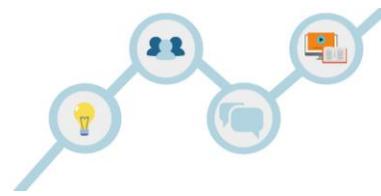
- 1 - Not at all familiar
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 - Very familiar

Logic: Hidden unless: #10 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with [JerseyCat](#) (statewide interlibrary loan) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")

11) Does your library use JerseyCat?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Not applicable

Logic: Hidden unless: #10 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with [JerseyCat](#) (statewide interlibrary loan) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")



12) Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about JerseyCat:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
I have the skills I need to use JerseyCat effectively.							
JerseyCat helps my library to better serve the community.							
JerseyCat provides New Jersey residents with convenient access to information resources.							
JerseyCat is easy for New Jersey residents to use.							
JerseyCat helps New Jersey residents achieve their educational goals.							
JerseyCat helps New Jersey residents achieve their occupational goals.							
JerseyCat helps New Jersey residents achieve their personal/recreational goals.							



13) Please indicate how familiar you are with [JerseyConnect](#) (statewide technology program) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:\*

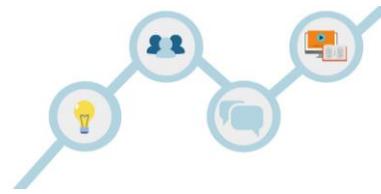
- 1 - Not at all familiar
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 - Very familiar

Logic: Hidden unless: #13 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with [JerseyConnect](#) (statewide technology program) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")

14) Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about JerseyConnect:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
I have the skills I need to use JerseyConnect effectively.							
JerseyConnect helps my library to better serve the community.							
JerseyConnect helps library staff deliver high quality library services.							

Logic: Show/hide trigger exists. Hidden unless: #13 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with [JerseyConnect](#) (statewide technology program) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")



15) Does your library use JerseyConnect?\*

Yes

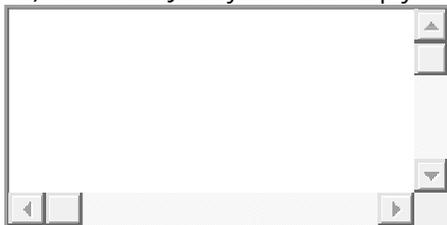
No

Don't know

Not applicable

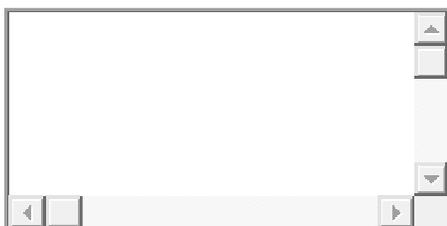
Logic: Hidden unless: #15 Question "Does your library use JerseyConnect?" is one of the following answers ("Yes")

16) How does JerseyConnect help your library to better serve the community?



Logic: Hidden unless: #15 Question "Does your library use JerseyConnect?" is one of the following answers ("Yes")

17) How could JerseyConnect be improved? What recommendations do you have for additions or changes to this service?



18) Please indicate how familiar you are with [Statewide Reference Services](#) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:\*

1 - Not at all familiar

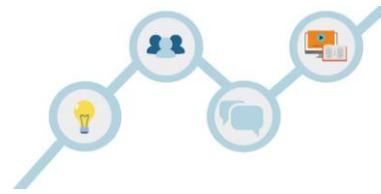
2

3

4

5 - Very familiar

Logic: Hidden unless: #18 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with [Statewide Reference Services](#) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")



19) Have you used Statewide Reference Services?

Yes

No

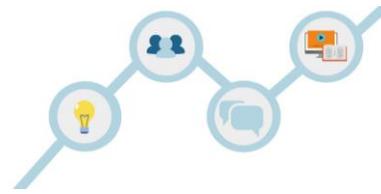
Don't know

Not applicable

Logic: Hidden unless: #18 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with [Statewide Reference Services](#) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")

20) Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about Statewide Reference Services:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
Statewide Reference Services helps my library to better serve the community.							
Statewide Reference Services provides New Jersey residents with convenient access to information resources.							
Statewide Reference Services is easy for New Jersey residents to use.							
Statewide Reference Services helps New Jersey residents achieve their educational goals.							
Statewide Reference Services helps New Jersey residents achieve their occupational goals.							



	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
Statewide Reference Services helps New Jersey residents achieve their personal/recreational goals.							

21) Please indicate how familiar you are with the [Urban Libraries Council Edge Project](#) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:\*

- 1 - Not at all familiar
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 - Very familiar

Logic: Hidden unless: #21 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with the [Urban Libraries Council Edge Project](#) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")

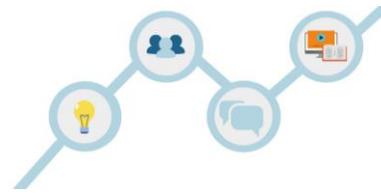
22) Has your library used Edge?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Not applicable

Logic: Hidden unless: #21 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with the [Urban Libraries Council Edge Project](#) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")

23) Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about the Urban Libraries Council Edge Project (Edge):

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
I have the skills I need to use Edge effectively.							



	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
Edge helps my library to better serve the community.							
Edge helps library staff deliver high quality library services.							

24) Please indicate how familiar you are with [New Jersey Statewide Statistics](#) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:\*

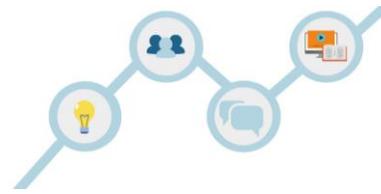
- 1 - Not at all familiar
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 - Very familiar

Logic: Hidden unless: #24 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with [New Jersey Statewide Statistics](#) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")

25) Have you used New Jersey Statewide Statistics?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Not applicable

Logic: Hidden unless: #24 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with [New Jersey Statewide Statistics](#) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")

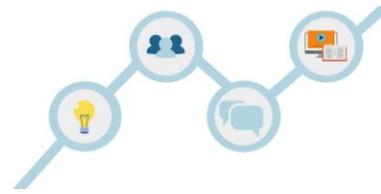


26) Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about New Jersey Statewide Statistics:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
Statewide Statistics helps my library to better serve the community.							
Statewide Statistics helps library staff focus on the needs of the community they serve when developing library services.							
Statewide Statistics helps library staff deliver high quality library services.							

27) Please indicate how familiar you are with the New Jersey State Library's [professional development and continuing education offerings](#) for library staff and trustees on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:\*

- 1 - Not at all familiar
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 - Very familiar



Logic: Hidden unless: #27 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with the New Jersey State Library's [professional development and continuing education offerings](#) for library staff and trustees on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")

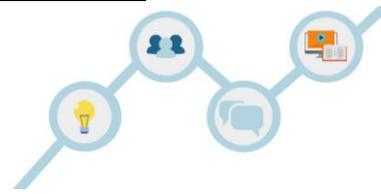
28) Have you participated in a continuing education or professional development event offered by the New Jersey State Library [within the past three years](#)?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Not applicable

Logic: Hidden unless: #27 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with the New Jersey State Library's [professional development and continuing education offerings](#) for library staff and trustees on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")

29) Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about the New Jersey State Library's (NJSL) professional development and continuing education offerings (NJSL's PD & CE offerings) for library staff and trustees:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
NJSL's PD & CE offerings help my library to better serve the community.							
NJSL's PD & CE offerings help my library to serve diverse populations.							
NJSL's PD & CE offerings help library staff focus on the needs of							

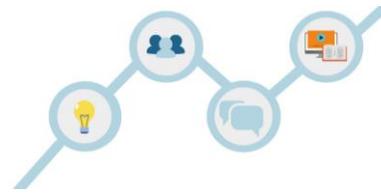


	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
the community they serve when developing library services.							
NJSL's PD & CE offerings help library staff to develop leadership skills.							
NJSL's PD & CE offerings help library staff deliver high quality library services.							

30) Please indicate how familiar you are with the New Jersey State Library's adult literacy collection development initiative, which included the [2018 Literacy Boot Camp](#) and [collection development grants](#) to support adult literacy skills, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:\*

- 1 - Not at all familiar
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 - Very familiar

Logic: Hidden unless: #30 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with the New Jersey State Library's adult literacy collection development initiative, which included the [2018 Literacy Boot Camp](#) and [collection development grants](#) to support adult literacy skills, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")



31) Did your library participate in the adult literacy collection development initiative (2018 Literacy Boot Camp and/or collection development grants)?

Yes

No

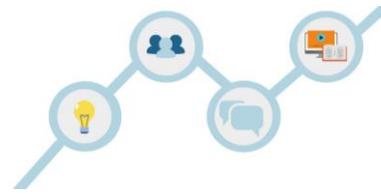
Not sure

Not applicable

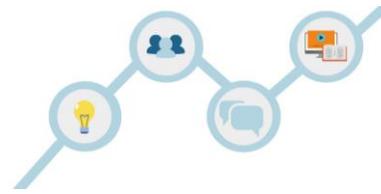
Logic: Hidden unless: #30 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with the New Jersey State Library's adult literacy collection development initiative, which included the [2018 Literacy Boot Camp](#) and [collection development grants](#) to support adult literacy skills, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")

32) Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about the New Jersey State Library's adult literacy collection development initiative, which included the 2018 Literacy Boot Camp and collection development grants to support adult literacy skills:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
The adult literacy collection development initiative helped my library to better serve the community.							
The adult literacy collection development initiative helped my library to serve diverse populations.							
The adult literacy collection development initiative							



	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
helped library staff focus on the needs of the community they serve when developing library services.							
The adult literacy collection development initiative helped library staff to develop leadership skills.							
The adult literacy collection development initiative helped library staff deliver high quality library services.							



33) Please indicate how familiar you are with the [New Jersey State Library Talking Book and Braille Center](#) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:\*

- 1 - Not at all familiar
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 - Very familiar

Logic: Hidden unless: #33 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with the [New Jersey State Library Talking Book and Braille Center](#) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")

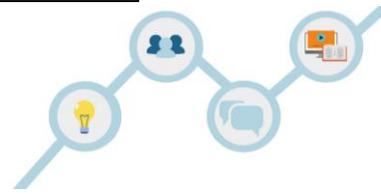
34) Have you used New Jersey State Library Talking Book and Braille Center services?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Not applicable

Logic: Hidden unless: #33 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with the [New Jersey State Library Talking Book and Braille Center](#) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")

35) Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about the New Jersey State Library Talking Book and Braille Center (TBBC):

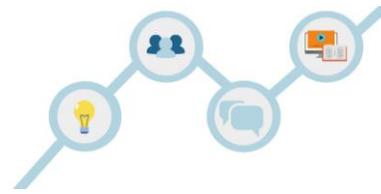
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
TBBC helps my library to better serve the community.							
TBBC helps to keep people who have difficulty reading standard print or trouble							



	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
holding a book connected to reading.							
TBBC helps people who have difficulty reading standard print or holding a book use assistive technology to improve daily life.							
TBBC helps people who have difficulty reading standard print or holding a book feel connected to the community.							

36) Please indicate how familiar you are with the [statewide summer reading program](#) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:\*

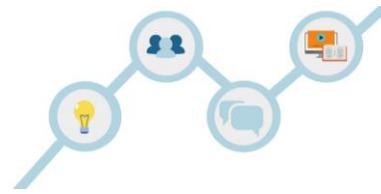
- 1 - Not at all familiar
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 - Very familiar



Logic: Hidden unless: #36 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with the [statewide summer reading program](#) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")

37) Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about the statewide summer reading program:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
The statewide summer reading program helps my library to better serve the community.							
The statewide summer reading program helps to increase New Jersey residents' interest in reading.							
The statewide summer reading program helps to improve New Jersey children's reading skills.							



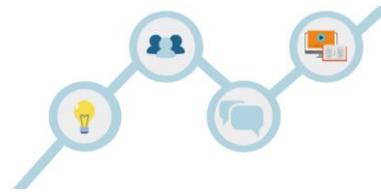
38) Please indicate how familiar you are with the [New Jersey Center for the Book](#) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:\*

- 1 - Not at all familiar
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 - Very familiar

Logic: Hidden unless: #38 Question "Please indicate how familiar you are with the [New Jersey Center for the Book](#) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1=not at all familiar and 5=very familiar:" is one of the following answers ("2","3","4","5 - Very familiar")

39) Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about the Center for the Book:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
The Center for the Book helps my library to better serve the community.							
The Center for the Book helps to raise New Jersey residents' interest in reading.							
The Center for the Book helps to raise New Jersey residents' interest in libraries.							



	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Not applicable
The Center for the Book helps to promote New Jersey's diverse literary heritage to New Jersey residents.							

40) Please share an example of how **ONE** of the New Jersey State Library services mentioned in this survey (adult literacy collection development initiative - Literacy Boot Camp and/or collection development grants, Center for the Book, JerseyCat, JerseyClicks, JerseyConnect, NJ/DE Digital Collective, professional development and continuing education offerings, State Publications Digital Library, Statewide Reference Services, Statewide Statistics, Statewide Summer Reading, Talking Book and Braille Center, Urban Libraries Council Edge Project) has helped your library to better serve the community:

41) What type of library do you work in?

- Academic
- Consortium
- Government
- Law
- Public
- School
- Special

Other - Please specify:

42) What best describes the location of your library?

Rural

Town

Suburban

Urban

Other - Please specify::

43) What is your role in your library?

Director/CEO

Assistant/Associate Director

Manager

Librarian

Paraprofessional including Library Assistant or Associate

Other - Please specify::

44) What support could the New Jersey State Library offer to help your library better serve your community in the future?

Thank You!

## Appendix G: JerseyConnect Case Study

This appendix contains an optional case study of one LSTA-funded service, JerseyConnect, that NJSL contracted with LJM Consulting to conduct in addition to the LSTA Five-Year Evaluation.

Case Study

# JerseyConnect

Fiscal Years 2018-2020



# CASE STUDY



## Introduction

JerseyConnect is a New Jersey State Library (NJSL) initiative that was established to help bridge the digital divide by providing free technology services and network infrastructure to New Jersey public libraries. The program is designed to be flexible and scalable and at the same time reduce redundancy. JerseyConnect offers a variety of services to libraries including:

Services available to all libraries	Additional services available to connected libraries
Web hosting services with statistics	High speed internet access via fully redundant and scalable statewide network infrastructure
Full-service email hosting and management	Router management and replacement service
Email spam and virus filtering regardless of email host	Real-time and historical bandwidth reporting
Cloud storage	Full-service Cisco firewall management
Domain name hosting	Virtual server hosting for ILS (proprietary or open source)
Wi-Fi management and consultation on technology projects	Device and circuit monitoring with notification
	Quality of Service (QoS) guarantees for services hosted by JerseyConnect

As of January 2021, JerseyConnect provided at least one service to 363 New Jersey public library outlets (80% of all library outlets). The vast majority of outlets served by JerseyConnect are located in suburban areas (83%), which is consistent with the overall composition of New Jersey library settings.<sup>1</sup> JerseyConnect also serves public libraries located in cities (6%), rural areas (5%), and towns (3%).<sup>2</sup>

In addition to serving library outlets, JerseyConnect provides technology services to 16 other organizations including COSLA National Library Training Center, consortia, community colleges, and schools.

As part of NJSL's 2018-2022 Five-Year Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Evaluation, the evaluators conducted a case study of JerseyConnect to assess the resources invested in this service, usage, and user perceptions of the service. The case study included analyses of the following data:

- JerseyConnect documentation provided by NJSL, including State Program Report data, usage data, and user satisfaction surveys. Most of this documentation covered FY18-FY20, which was the same period of time that was studied for the Five-Year Evaluation. One user satisfaction survey was administered in FY21.

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<sup>1</sup> The Institute of Museum and Library Services assigns locale codes to all United States library outlets that denote outlets' geographic setting and proximity to urban or suburban areas.

<sup>2</sup> Locales could not be identified for 3% of library outlets.

- Five-Year Evaluation Survey of all NJSL LSTA-funded services (see Appendix A for the survey instrument), which included additional items regarding JerseyConnect. All New Jersey library staff were invited to participate in this online survey, which was administered during a three-week period in fall 2021. A total of 201 public library staff responded, and three in five (60%) had at least some level of familiarity with JerseyConnect (see Appendix B for respondent demographics). These respondents were asked to answer a set of close- and open-ended items assessing JerseyConnect.
- Two focus groups (see Appendix C for the focus group guide) which were conducted in fall 2021 as part of the Five-Year Evaluation with a total of nine New Jersey library leaders including members of the LSTA Advisory Council and administrators of public libraries, consortia, and library support organizations. In the focus groups, all LSTA-funded services, including JerseyConnect, were discussed.
- Interviews (see Appendix D for the interview guide) with staff working in seven public libraries that use JerseyConnect. These interviews were conducted in fall 2021 and focused on how the service has benefitted the library and areas where it could be improved, as well as any current technology needs or challenges the library was experiencing. Interviewees were offered a small incentive in exchange for their participation.

## Findings

### Funding and expenditures

JerseyConnect is supported by both LSTA and state funds (Figure 1). During the evaluation period, the overall funding levels varied from a low in FY19 of \$1.24 million to a high of \$1.55 million in FY20, a 25% increase:

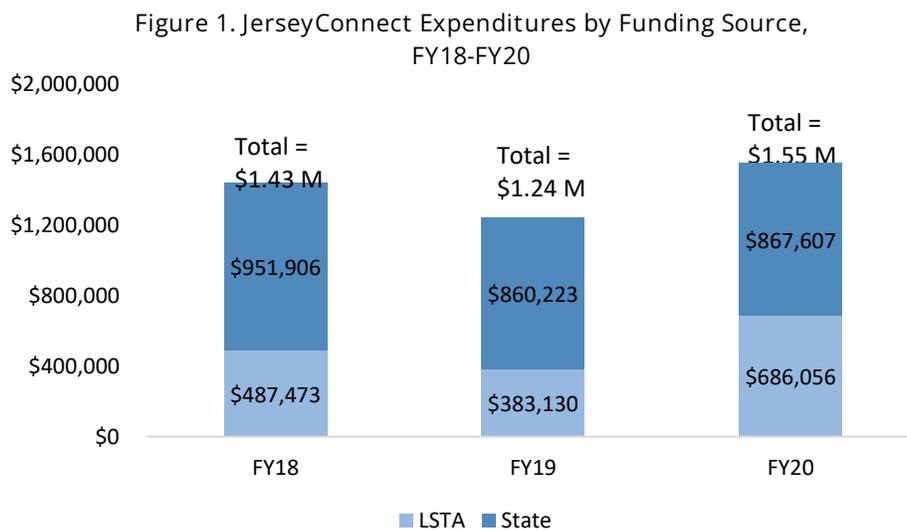


Figure 2 provides a detailed breakdown of LSTA and state expenditures during the three years of the evaluation period. As this figure shows, in FY18 and FY19, all LSTA funds were spent on salaries, wages, and benefits. From FY19 to FY20, LSTA funds expended on JerseyConnect increased by 79%. Most of these additional funds were used for replacing and upgrading equipment. Across all three years of the evaluation period, the majority of state funds were spent on services, followed by salaries, wages, and benefits.



Figure 2. JerseyConnect Expenditures, FY18-FY20

Expenditures	FY2018			FY2019			FY2020		
	LSTA	State	Total	LSTA	State	Total	LSTA	State	Total
Salaries/Wages/Benefits*	\$487,473	\$235,010	\$722,483	\$383,130	\$231,270	\$614,400	\$317,241	\$244,182	\$561,423
Consultant Fees**	\$0	\$37,750	\$37,750	\$0	\$37,750	\$37,750	\$0	\$37,500	\$37,500
Travel	\$0	\$787	\$787	\$0	\$980	\$980	\$0	\$591	\$591
Supplies	\$0	\$90,432	\$90,432	\$0	\$47,976	\$47,976	\$9,702	\$12,326	\$22,028
Equipment	\$0	\$62,124	\$62,124	\$0	\$68,981	\$68,981	\$245,292	\$89,844	\$335,136
Services	\$0	\$525,803	\$525,803	\$0	\$473,266	\$473,266	\$113,821	\$483,164	\$596,985
Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$487,473	\$951,906	\$1,439,379	\$383,130	\$860,223	\$1,243,353	\$686,056	\$867,607	\$1,553,663

*Usage*

During the evaluation period, public library outlets using at least one JerseyConnect service increased slightly from 361 in FY18 to 363 (80% of all New Jersey public library outlets) in FY20. In FY20, 16 other organizations (e.g., schools, community colleges, consortia, etc.) also used JerseyConnect, resulting in a service expenditures per organization cost of \$4,099.

On average, library outlets used six JerseyConnect services as of FY20. A quarter (25%) of library outlets used eight or more services. The five most used services across the evaluation period can be found in Figure 3. Usage of all five services dropped from FY19 to FY20.

Figure 3. Number of Library Outlets Utilizing Selected Jersey Connect Services

Service	FY18*	FY19*	FY20
DNS hosting	265	265	163
Spam/Antivirus filtering	220	220	160
Email hosting	186	186	143
Website hosting	185	185	113
Bandwidth reporting	180	180	67

\*The same usage figures were reported in FY18 and FY19.

*User Satisfaction*

NJSL administered a survey assessing user satisfaction with JerseyConnect services and customer service in FY19 and FY21. Selected results are presented in Figure 4:



Figure 4. User Satisfaction with JerseyConnect Services and Customer Service\*

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	N**
<i>Satisfaction with Services</i>				
Email hosting FY19	65%	29%	6%	17
Email hosting FY21	50%	43%	7%	14
Email spam filtering FY19	59%	29%	12%	17
Email spam filtering FY21	40%	33%	27%	15
Email archiving FY19	67%	20%	13%	15
Email archiving FY21	33%	53%	13%	15
Web hosting FY19	67%	33%	0%	15
Web hosting FY21	53%	47%	0%	17
Web statistics FY19	43%	50%	7%	14
Web statistics FY21	36%	64%	0%	11
Domain registration FY19	80%	10%	10%	10
Domain registration FY21	43%	57%	0%	7
Disaster recovery storage FY19	40%	40%	20%	5
Disaster recovery storage FY21	0%	100%	0%	2
Hosted ILS server FY19	67%	0%	33%	3
Hosted ILS server FY21	50%	50%	0%	2
Managed Wi-Fi service FY19	100%	0%	0%	13
Managed Wi-Fi service FY21	73%	18%	9%	11
Virtual meetings and webinars FY19	***	***	***	***
Virtual meetings and webinars FY21	46%	46%	8%	13
Remote assistance and chat FY19	***	***	***	***
Remote assistance and chat FY21	71%	29%	0%	7
Network speed FY19	43%	50%	7%	14
Network speed FY21	36%	64%	0%	11
Network reliability FY19	62%	31%	8%	13
Network reliability FY21	55%	45%	0%	11
Variety of services FY19	42%	47%	11%	19



	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	N**
Variety of services FY21	43%	43%	13%	23
<i>Satisfaction with Customer Service</i>				
Support competency FY19	88%	12%	0%	17
Support competency FY21	75%	25%	0%	20
Support response time FY19	78%	22%	0%	18
Support response time FY21	75%	25%	0%	20
Support friendliness FY19	94%	6%	0%	17
Support friendliness FY21	79%	21%	0%	19
Time to set up/provision service FY19	56%	44%	0%	16
Time to set up/provision service FY21	50%	50%	0%	14
New service notification FY19****	57%	38%	5%	21
Notice of new services or service changes FY21****	28%	56%	17%	18
Problem notification FY19****	52%	43%	5%	21
Notice of interruptions or problems FY21****	35%	65%	0%	17

\*"Not applicable" responses were removed before calculating the percentages in Figure 4.

\*\*This column reports the number of responses for each item.

\*\*\*These services were not offered in FY19.

\*\*\*\*These items had slight phrasing differences in FY19 and FY21.

The results indicate that the vast majority of respondents were satisfied with JerseyConnect services and customer service in both years of the survey. However, satisfaction ratings decreased across both the services and the customer service dimensions (shifting from "very satisfied" to "satisfied") from FY19 to FY21. Due to the small sample sizes, these results should be interpreted with caution and should not be considered representative of all JerseyConnect users.

### Five-Year Evaluation Survey

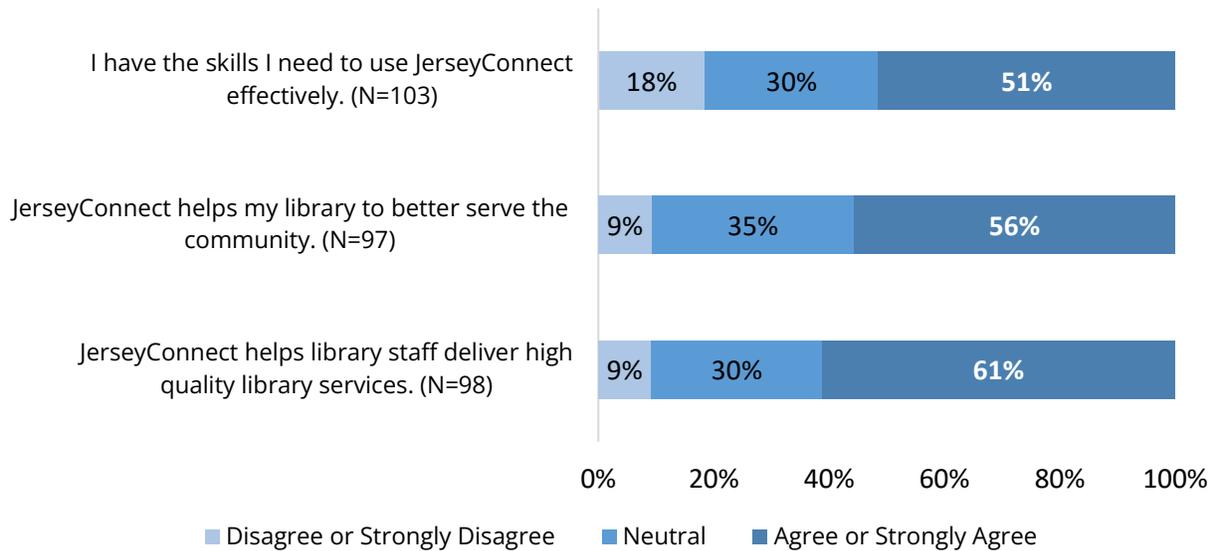
Those Five-Year Evaluation Survey respondents who worked in public libraries and were familiar with JerseyConnect were asked to indicate their agreement with three items:

- I have the skills I need to use JerseyConnect effectively.
- JerseyConnect helps my library better serve the community.
- JerseyConnect helps library staff deliver high quality library services.

The results showed that about three in five respondents (61%) strongly agreed or agreed that JerseyConnect helps staff deliver high quality library services, and 56% strongly agreed or agreed that JerseyConnect helps their library better serve the community (Figure 5). About half of the respondents (51%) strongly agreed or agreed that they had the skills they needed to use JerseyConnect effectively.



Figure 5. Respondents' Agreement with JerseyConnect Survey Items\*



\*Response options included a 5-point agreement scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree as well as “don’t know” and “not applicable.” All don’t know and not applicable responses were removed before calculating the percentages in Figure 5.

Survey respondents were also asked two open-ended questions regarding how JerseyConnect helps their library better serve their community and how the service could be improved.

There were 43 comments regarding how JerseyConnect helps respondents’ libraries better serve their community, and they focused on the following topics:

- Saving money (19% of comments): Respondents indicated that using JerseyConnect saved their library money that they were able to redirect to other programs and services, and that it allowed them to provide services that they otherwise would not be able to afford.
- Connecting with the community (19% of comments): Respondents indicated that they were able to develop, maintain, and deepen connections with their community through JerseyConnect website and email services.
- Support (17% of comments): Respondents commented on being able to rely on JerseyConnect support to handle service disruptions and other technical issues. One respondent said, “Managed WiFi is great. I don’t have to worry about personally upgrading routers, or keeping statistics. Jersey Connect handles all that for us so patrons can simply connect without worry.”

Twenty-eight respondents commented on how JerseyConnect could be improved. The most common topics included:

- Raising awareness (29% of comments): Respondents commented that they were unsure of what services JerseyConnect offered and recommended increasing marketing and communication efforts. One respondent said that “JerseyConnect has excellent services, but many libraries may not understand or know how to implement them in their library. They often send out material, but they may need to present their services in person or virtually.”



- Broadening high speed internet availability (18% of comments): Respondents were frustrated that high speed internet is not available to all New Jersey libraries. As one respondent commented: “Concentrate on widening gig speed availability to libraries in all areas of NJ, rather than relying on a single vendor. That should be the #1 through #10 priority.”
- Training (14% of comments): Respondents commented on the need for in-depth training, online demonstrations, and user-friendly help documentation so that libraries would be better able to utilize JerseyConnect services.
- Email issues (14% of comments): Respondents commented that the JerseyConnect email interface was “clunky,” difficult to use, and unreliable. One respondent said that “the email system is good and valuable in principle, but the platform is frustrating enough that we regularly consider moving to a paid service.”

## Focus Groups and Interviews

In focus groups with New Jersey library leaders – which included discussion of all LSTA-funded services – multiple participants commented on the critical role of JerseyConnect in “bridging the digital divide for some libraries and communities” and for providing services that some libraries otherwise would not be able to afford.

Interviews with JerseyConnect users expanded on these sentiments. Participants indicated that the service provides various benefits to their libraries, including cost savings, technical expertise that the library otherwise would not have access to, and reliable service. One participant commented: “One of the pieces that I’ve always liked about Jersey Connect is the fact that they know their stuff. They really know their stuff...if you come up with something where they haven’t done it before, they will research the whole thing, investigate it, and go on from there.” In addition, multiple participants remarked on JerseyConnect’s excellent customer service and responsiveness. Participants commented that if JerseyConnect were not available, their libraries would struggle to afford the costs of providing and managing their technology services.

Participants also had several recommendations for improving JerseyConnect, some of which echoed the open-ended survey comments. These included raising awareness of the services JerseyConnect offers, expanding access to high speed internet to all parts of the state, and providing a more robust and sophisticated email interface. In addition, some participants had suggestions for services JerseyConnect could add, including onsite visits to maintain hardware, technology plan consulting, chat support, and group purchasing discounts for software such as Google Workspace and Microsoft 365.

Participants were also asked to identify any current technology needs or challenges their libraries were experiencing. Several participants mentioned technical limitations due to the age and/or design of their buildings. As a result of these limitations, libraries lacked adequate power for public computers as well as appropriate space for hardware such as servers, and struggled to optimize their WiFi configurations. Multiple participants also commented on COVID-related issues, including finding a storage solution other than YouTube for recorded programs, and the need for ongoing access to software to offer virtual programs.

## Recommendations

Based on the results of this case study, NJSL may consider the following recommendations as it plans for the future of JerseyConnect:



**Expand communication and marketing efforts to raise awareness of JerseyConnect:** A common theme across the interviews and open-ended survey comments regarded the need to raise awareness about JerseyConnect services among library staff. Multiple participants commented on their lack of familiarity with JerseyConnect and their need for more information so that they could determine how to take better advantage of the services JerseyConnect provides.

**Offer training opportunities to develop users' skill levels and attract new users:** About half (48%) of the survey respondents chose ratings of "neutral," "disagree," or "strongly disagree" when asked if they had the skills they needed to use JerseyConnect effectively. In addition, in interviews and open-ended survey comments, participants mentioned the need for training to fully utilize JerseyConnect services. NJSL may consider offering virtual and/or in-person training opportunities to further develop users' skill levels as well as to add new users.

**Explore options for expanding the broadband infrastructure:** A common theme in interviews and open-ended survey comments concerned the geographic limitations of JerseyConnect's high speed internet service. It is recommended that NJSL explore options for expanding the broadband infrastructure, whether with the current provider or alternative providers.

**Increase the response rate for the biennial user satisfaction survey and investigate why satisfaction has decreased:** While the sample sizes were small, the FY19 and FY21 user satisfaction surveys provided a preliminary indication that user satisfaction has decreased with JerseyConnect services as well as with customer service. To investigate this further, it is recommended that NJSL take measures to increase the response rate in upcoming surveys (for example, by adding the survey as a component of any required reporting). If the decrease in satisfaction is confirmed with larger samples, NJSL may consider following up with user interviews to identify the reasons for this decrease and to determine strategies for improving user satisfaction.

**Explore alternatives to the current email system:** Multiple participants expressed frustration with the current email system, citing its clunky interface and limited features. NJSL may consider exploring alternative options to upgrade this service.

**Reassess priorities in response to the pandemic:** In response to COVID-19, JerseyConnect added new services including virtual meeting software and remote assist. Even when the pandemic recedes, it is likely that New Jersey libraries will need to offer virtual or hybrid programs and services on an ongoing basis to meet community needs. It is recommended that NJSL maintain and/or expand its investment in tools and services that facilitate such offerings.

## Conclusion

JerseyConnect provides valued services to the vast majority of New Jersey public libraries as well as several other types of organizations, expanding their capacity to provide foundational technology and enabling them to redirect resources that would otherwise be spent on technology to offering additional programs and services for their communities. As one user commented, "[My library] is surely appreciative for the support and expertise shared by your JerseyConnect team. From web hosting to network connectivity JerseyConnect is a win for NJ libraries!" In focus groups, interviews, and open-ended survey responses, multiple participants commented that statewide services such as JerseyConnect play a critical role in enabling all libraries – especially small and rural – to provide high quality services and to bridge the digital divide. As NJSL determines its future priorities, it may take into consideration the recommendations made in this report, which focus on broadening JerseyConnect's reach through enhanced marketing and training opportunities, as well as exploring options to improve and expand on



tools such as email, broadband infrastructure, and software that enables virtual and hybrid programs and services.

## Appendix A: Five-Year Evaluation Survey

See Appendix F of the NJSL LSTA Five-Year Evaluation Report.

## Appendix B: Survey Respondent Demographics

A total of 201 staff working in public libraries participated in the Five-Year Evaluation Survey. Of these respondents, 39% were directors, 27% were paraprofessionals, 24% were librarians, 8% were managers, and 3% were assistant/associate directors. About half (52%) worked in libraries located in suburban areas, 23% worked in town libraries, 12% worked in urban libraries, and 11% worked in rural libraries.

## Appendix C: Five-Year Evaluation Focus Group Guide

See Appendix F of the NJSL LSTA Five-Year Evaluation Report.

## Appendix D: JerseyConnect Interview Guide

1. Please tell me about your position at your library. How long have you worked at your library?
2. Did your library use JerseyConnect when you arrived? If not, why did you decide to start using JerseyConnect?
3. How long has your library used JerseyConnect services?
4. I'd like to talk with you about what you like about JerseyConnect, as well as about where you see room for improvement. Let's start with what you like. How has JerseyConnect benefitted your library?
5. If you didn't have these JerseyConnect services, how would this impact your ability to serve your community?
6. Now let's talk about how JerseyConnect could be improved. Thinking about the JerseyConnect services you use, what changes would you recommend to improve them?
7. Does your library have any technology needs or challenges that you are struggling to find a solution for? If so, please tell me about these needs and/or challenges.
8. Is there anything else you would like to share about your library's experience using JerseyConnect?