

A Study of Public LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT in TEXAS



Prepared by
Himmel & Wilson, Library Consultants

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Texas State Library and Archives Commission, Library Development Division

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Texas' public libraries, when treated as a whole, have traditionally performed poorly in comparison to most other states in terms of standard measures of inputs (funding, collection, staffing) and outputs (circulation, library visits, etc.). Many factors contribute to this state of affairs; however, the consultants believe that inadequate funding levels and ineffective governance structures contribute most significantly to the problem.

The consultants believe that a status quo approach to library development will result, at best, in Texas maintaining its position near the bottom of the national rankings. If the State is truly interested in improving the level of library service for all Texans, some bold actions and a proactive approach must be taken. While we recognize that breaking away from the current state of affairs will be painful, we also believe that such changes are necessary if progress is to be made. The following objectives and recommendations call for a break from the status quo. A few of the changes suggested are incremental and may be accomplished with relative ease. However, others will require real effort, a spirit of cooperation, and significant concessions to accomplish.

The following report outlines the challenges that exist and establishes a set of principles and recommendations to improve the quality of library services in Texas. The principles we have applied are as follows:

- 1) Increase efficiency
- 2) Expand governance options
- 3) Increase funding
- 4) Improve cooperation and coordination
- 5) Adopt and implement higher standards

The report contains 15 recommendations designed to improve public library development in Texas. They are:

Recommendation # 1

Encourage and provide incentives for the formation of "larger units of service."

Recommendation # 2

Eliminate or reduce indirect charges applied to system grants.

Recommendation # 3

Reduce the number of system administrative units.

Recommendation # 4

Consider a significant reduction in the number of Interlibrary Loan “clearinghouses.”

Recommendation # 5

Explore the possibility of establishing a program that would enable libraries to gain the maximum benefit from the State’s program for leasing computers and computer peripherals.

Recommendation # 6

Encourage the exploration of the establishment of joint school-public libraries under interlocal agreements in areas where stand-alone public libraries are unlikely to remain viable.

Recommendation # 7

Encourage libraries that would benefit from current library district legislation to consider this course and work to expand library district legislation to allow for districts funded with property tax revenues.

Recommendation # 8

Encourage regional library systems to consider alternative governance structures.

Recommendation # 9

Consider long-term strategies to link funding with the implementation of standards as the TSLAC/TLA Joint Task Force on Public Library Standards and Accreditation carries out its work.

Recommendation # 10

Explore non-traditional sources of potential income for libraries including, but not limited to, impact fees.

Recommendation # 11

TSLAC, TLA, and the regional library systems should work together with charitable organizations to develop a coordinated plan designed to ensure that all libraries are aware of, and take advantage of, opportunities to secure gifts and grants of all types.

Recommendation #12

TSLAC and the regional systems should use their mutual interest in continuing education as a platform for developing a new and higher level of cooperation.

Recommendation # 13

Regional library systems should explore ways to cooperate more closely with each other.

Recommendation # 14

TSLAC should continue to work closely with all of the partners in public library development to ensure that all public libraries continue to have access to a significant selection of online databases.

Recommendation # 15

The Joint TSLAC/TLA Task Force on Public Library Standards should develop a plan for standards implementation that accomplishes three goals. They are:

- creating an awareness that standards can be a valuable tool in public library development,
- identifying a core subset of minimum standards that are challenging but, with assistance, achievable, and
- clearly spelling out the kind of assistance and aid that will be sought to help libraries meet standards.

BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

Himmel & Wilson, Library Consultants received a contract from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) to conduct a study of public library development in Texas in December 2002. By the conclusion of the data-gathering efforts, the consulting team, composed of seven experienced library consultants and practitioners, had had contact with approximately 700 members of the Texas library community representing every region of the state.

The project began with a review of national level statistical data comparing Texas libraries to libraries in the rest of the United States. The consultants also reviewed background documentation on various programs and services such as Texas' implementation of the Federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), TexShare, Loan Star Libraries, and the State's regional library systems. In December 2002, the consultants met with the project Steering Committee to present a summary of the findings of the background review and to seek the group's assessment of the major issues facing Texas public libraries.

In early January 2003, the consultants conducted a total of 42 focus groups with library directors, library trustees, lay representatives, and representatives of library "Friends" organizations in 21 locations across the State. An additional session (the 43rd) was held in Fort Stockton in late March. These meetings were attended by a total of 488 people representing 251 different libraries. Following are the sites of the focus group sessions. Map 1 shows the geographic distribution of these sessions.



Map 1

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| Abilene | Lufkin |
| Amarillo | Lubbock |
| Arlington | McAllen |
| Austin | Mt. Pleasant |
| Conroe | Odessa |
| Corpus Christi | Pasadena |
| Denton | San Angelo |
| El Paso | San Antonio |
| Garland | Victoria |
| Fort Stockton | Waco |
| Longview | Wichita Falls |

The focus group sessions explored the opinions and perceptions of librarians and of laypersons, who are highly involved with public libraries, on topics ranging from strengths and weaknesses of local libraries to the effectiveness of regional library systems and of the programs and services provided by TSLAC.

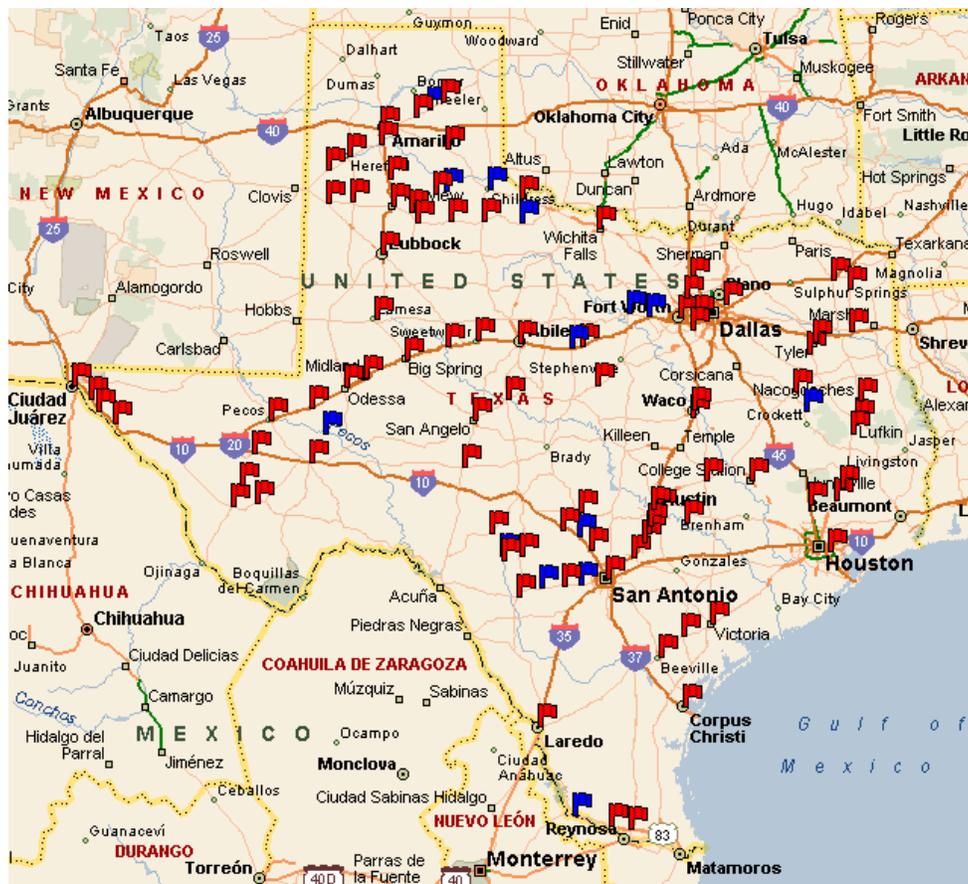
Because regional library system staff and TSLAC staff had been asked *not* to participate in focus groups in order to ensure that participants felt free to express their opinions openly, separate interviews were scheduled with both of these groups of individuals. The consultants interviewed all ten of the regional system coordinators; some of the interviews were held on site at the system offices; some were conducted at focus group sites, and two were conducted by telephone. Two of the consultants spent two days at the State Library interviewing staff individually and in small groups and collecting background materials and data. Follow up e-mails and telephone conversations have also been conducted throughout the project to clarify answers and details with system coordinators and TSLAC staff.

Separate follow-up conversations and interviews were held with a variety of individuals and groups to gain better insight into particular issues and programs. Examples include a telephone conference call held with a group of library directors representing “district” libraries and a personal interview with Darryl Tocker of The Tocker Foundation.

On March 14, 2003, the consultants held a second meeting with the Steering Committee to review the results of the data gathering to date and to conduct a “scenario building” exercise to focus issues and to identify priorities to guide the consultants in gathering further data and in drafting preliminary recommendations. Specific attention was given to the very different needs of large and small libraries.

Between January and late March the consultants visited as many libraries as possible to observe conditions and services firsthand. The consulting team logged over 5,000 miles on the ground visiting 110 libraries in every region of the State. The consultants visited more than three times the number of libraries included in our proposal. Because the consultants took the opportunity to visit libraries in the course of travel between focus group sites, many are located in proximity to major highways; however, the consultants also made several separate trips to Texas specifically for the purpose of visiting libraries in more remote areas. Fort Davis, Quitaque, Camp Wood, Marfa, and Eldorado are just a few examples of libraries that fit this category.

Members of the consulting team were provided staff directed tours in 86 of these libraries. The consultants conducted self-guided “walk-through” tours in ten additional libraries. The consultants also did “drive-bys” of other libraries that were not open on a schedule that allowed for actual visits. Map 2 shows the locations of libraries visited as a part of this study.



Map 2

The vast majority of these visits were documented with digital photographs. A compact disc containing over 500 photographs taken at Texas libraries was distributed to Steering Committee members and to the State Library. An updated version of this CD will be provided to the Library Commissioners as part of the final report.

A list of libraries visited, arranged by the system area in which they are located, is included as Appendix A. It should be noted that a number of visits were made to several libraries that are not currently members of regional library systems. These libraries are listed under the system that serves the area in which they are located. Libraries at which the consultants did a “self-guided” tour (libraries at which the director or another staff member was not available to conduct a formal tour) are designated with an asterisk (*). Libraries that were the subjects of drive-by visits only are designated by a double asterisk (**).

Through the site visits, the consultants were able to talk with many librarians who had been unable to participate in focus group sessions. The site visits enabled the consultants to pursue some of the same areas explored in the focus groups in one-on-one conversations with library directors particularly in the small

communities that were somewhat under-represented in the focus groups. The site visits also afforded the consultants a chance to see library service “in context.” That is, to have an opportunity to understand the nature of the communities served, to observe indicators of economic health firsthand, and to understand the sparseness of population in some areas and the density of population in others. Among the libraries visited were joint school-public library facilities, district libraries, and libraries organized as non-profit entities.

Interviews were completed with the directors of 19 of the 21 libraries serving the largest populations in the State, those with service populations of 150,000 and greater. While a few of the interviews were conducted in person, most were held via telephone and typically were 20 – 30 minutes in duration.

The initial findings of the study, a set of guiding principles for decision-making and a set of draft recommendations were presented at the Texas Library Association Conference on April 4, 2003. During the following week, the consultants conducted a series of “Town Meetings.” Over 200 individuals participated in the sessions designed to provide an opportunity for interaction regarding some of the emerging findings and recommendations of the study. “Live” sessions were held in Houston at the Texas Library Association, and at the public libraries in Nacogdoches and Amarillo. Three videoconference sessions, originating from the Texas State Library and Archives in Austin, reached an additional nine sites (Abilene, Austin, Brownsville, Corpus Christi, El Paso, Euless, Garland, Houston, Lubbock) around the State. Technical difficulties prevented a planned teleconference opportunity at the San Antonio Public Library.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT

This project was characterized in the Request for Proposals that was issued as being a study of “**public library development**” in Texas. While most in the public library community have heard the phrase, far fewer have ever taken the time to consider the origin and meaning of the term. We believe that a short history of public library development activities in the United States may be helpful in understanding what is involved in library development and in determining the appropriate focus of future public library development efforts in Texas.

Although the history of the American public library can be traced back to social, subscription, and fee-based “circulating” libraries that existed in various places throughout the 1700s, most scholars credit either Peterborough, New Hampshire or Boston, Massachusetts as having the first “public” libraries. The Peterborough library was the first to receive public funding for its operation in

1833; Boston's claim to the title is that the Boston library was the first created under a state statute allowing a municipality to establish and maintain a tax-supported library open to the general public. This took place in 1854. The "free library" movement spread gradually from New England to other areas of the country throughout the last half, and especially during the last quarter, of the 1800s. Interest was particularly keen in Northeastern states and in the Midwest.

This growing fascination with the free library concept turned into a significant amount of action following the Civil War. The last quarter of the nineteenth century saw such notable events as the creation of the first state library commissions, the introduction of the first "branch" libraries, establishment of the American Library Association, and the beginnings of the philanthropic efforts of Andrew Carnegie and others in support of the public library concept. It should be noted that the events noted above involve a number of different players including state governments, local units of government, professional associations, and philanthropic organizations.

It was during this period of vigorous activity in the late 1800s that the phrase "library development" first came into common use. In particular, newly established state library commissions were given "library development" responsibilities. For example, when the Wisconsin Free Library Commission was created in 1895, it was given the responsibility of providing "suggestions as to establishing, organizing, and administering them (free public libraries) and (providing) other useful information for members of library boards, librarians, and others who are interested in libraries."

When the Nebraska Library Commission was formed in 1901, its library development responsibilities were outlined in the enabling statute as being to "...give advice and instruction to all libraries or individuals and to all communities which may propose to establish libraries as to the best means for establishing, organizing, and administering such libraries, selecting and cataloging books and other duties of library management." The Nebraska law went on to say that "The said Commission shall, so far as possible, promote and assist by counsel and encouragement the formation of libraries where none exist, and the Commission may send at its expense members or officers to aid in organizing new libraries or improving those already established."

A good number of "state libraries" were created to serve state governments without being given specific responsibilities for library development. In fact, the history of the Texas State Library actually predates statehood with the establishment of a "national" library for the Republic of Texas in 1839. However, the genesis of library development activities at the state level in Texas dates back to 1909 with the creation of the Texas Library and Historical Commission. Statewide public library development activities expanded in Texas, as they did in many other states, with the passage and implementation of the Federal Library Services Act in 1955-56.

Today, the Texas State Library and Archives Commission's responsibilities in regard to library development are spelled out in Section 441.006 of the Texas State Statutes. Specifically, the Statutes say that the Texas State Library and Archives Commission shall:

- adopt policies and rules to aid and encourage the development of and cooperation among all types of libraries, including public, academic, special, and other types of libraries;
- give to any person contemplating the establishment of a public library advice regarding matters such as maintaining a public library, selecting books, cataloging, and managing a library;
- conduct library institutes and encourage library associations.

What then is the working definition of public library development that has been applied in this study? The consultants believe that the Nebraska legislation of 1901 provides a simple, direct definition of library development that remains valid today. Public library development can be understood as, "...providing aid in organizing new libraries and in improving those already established." While the statutory responsibilities of TSLAC form a foundation for our understanding, it is helpful to retain the historic perspective offered in the 1901 Nebraska language as well. Over time, emphasis has shifted in most states from encouraging new library start-ups to efforts that improve existing libraries; however, efforts aimed at helping new libraries form and encouraging them to adopt sound management practices still exist.

It was noted earlier that library development activity in the late 1800s involved state governments, local libraries, professional associations, and philanthropic organizations. The four categories of players remain as important today as they were 100 years ago. However, several others have joined these four actors over the years. The Federal government through the Library Services Act (LSA) mentioned above, through the subsequent Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA), and through the current Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) has played an important role in shaping library development since the mid-1950s. Regional library systems, most of which were established in the 1960s and 1970s, have also been actively involved in library improvement in many states.

Public library development in Texas then must be seen as a joint effort and a joint responsibility. Rather than being the sole duty of the state library agency, library development involves local libraries and units of government, the regional library systems, the Texas Library Association, the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (the Federal agency responsible for the LSTA program), philanthropic organizations such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Tocker Foundation, as well as many generous individual donors who freely contribute their time, talent and funds to benefit libraries.

In the end, public library development is really about two things. The first is access to information resources. Efforts to start new libraries have generally been motivated by individuals' lack of convenient access to library and information services. The second is quality. Simply having a library facility provides no assurance that the services offered through that library will be good library service. For well over 100 years, countless individuals and organizations have worked to improve access to, and the quality of, library services. These twin goals have been elusive both in Texas and throughout the nation. In 2003, there are still more than a million Texans who lack legal access to public library service. Many more Texans are served by libraries that lack the resources required to meet even basic contemporary standards for library and information services.

The balance of this report attempts to pinpoint the challenges facing Texas' public libraries, to identify the impediments to improvement that exist, and to suggest actions aimed at meeting the challenges of the future. It is not the purpose of this report to assess blame for existing inadequacies. Nor is it the purpose of the report to either preserve or dismantle extant programs and services. Rather, the purpose of this study, and of the document that follows, is to help all those who are interested in improving public library service in Texas to understand the challenges they face and to offer constructive ideas for making real progress toward the noble, albeit difficult, goal of providing all Texans with high quality library and information services.

THE CHALLENGE

OVERVIEW

In many ways, public library service in Texas can be seen as a microcosm of public library service throughout the United States. As is the case nationally, public library service in Texas is offered through a large number of libraries that vary widely in size, funding, governance, staffing, technology, and resources. To a large extent, the public library development challenges faced by the State of Texas are similar to those that exist on the national level.

However, while Texas is confronted with many of the same obstacles to quality library services that exist nationally, it also has a set of unique conditions and circumstances it must face that are not present or that are not as pronounced in some other states and regions. One challenge is simply the geographic size of Texas. Another is the very uneven distribution of the population. A third is the great disparity in the relative wealth or poverty that exists in certain regions of the State. A fourth, and truly significant challenge, is history. The consultants

believe that two historical factors significantly impact library development in Texas. One is the great value that Texans place on independence. The second is a lackluster history of substantive tax support for public library service. All of these factors serve to make it difficult to fashion a comprehensive statewide public library development plan. Furthermore, the diversity and complexity of the State's public library environment serve to make the task even more demanding. Following is an accounting of some of the realities of the existing situation.

First, Texas has a large number of autonomous libraries. With over 550 separate library administrative units, Texas trails only New York and Illinois in terms of the number of independent libraries. Texas also ranks third in the nation, behind only New York and California, in the total number of service outlets (including branches) with well over 800 library facilities. Given the enormous size of Texas, it is not totally unexpected that the State would have a large number of libraries; however, the sheer number of autonomous units in existence makes it difficult, if not impossible, to coordinate library improvement efforts centrally.

Furthermore, the number of separate library entities in Texas continues to increase. An unpublished chart compiled by TSLAC staff indicates that a total of 380 independently governed public libraries were identified in 1980. The TSLAC publication entitled ***Texas Public Library Statistics for 1990*** identified a total of 475 autonomous public library entities. ***Texas Public Library Statistics for 2000*** acknowledges the existence of 538 separate library governance units, an increase of over 13% (13.3%) in the number of libraries over a ten-year period.

Texas doesn't just have a large number of libraries; the libraries of the State are also very diverse. Texas' public libraries range in size from some of the largest in the nation to some of the smallest. The Lone Star State has four public libraries that are among the 20 largest in the United States in terms of population served, while at the opposite end of the scale, Texas is home to over 60 libraries that serve populations of 2,000 or less.

Approximately 36% of Texas' population of nearly 21,000,000 people is served by only seven library administrative units. Over half of the State's population is served by the 21 largest libraries. At the other extreme, the 200 smallest libraries in the State serve approximately 2.5% of the total population, or only slightly more than 500,000 people. In other words, 3.8% of the library administrative units serve 50% of the population while 36% of the libraries serve less than 3% of the people of Texas. Appendix B contains charts that show the distribution of libraries serving various population levels by regional library system area.

Complicating the situation even more is the fact that Texas libraries are governed in a wide variety of ways. Well over half (55%) are legally established

as city libraries. County libraries account for the next largest percentage (21%). Texas also has a large percentage (17%) of libraries that are established as non-profit organizations. Rounding out the mix is a smattering of city/county libraries, district libraries, and a number of school-public libraries established under interlocal agreements. Chart 1 shows the percentage of libraries by governance structure as reported for the year 2001. Appendix C contains additional charts that show the diversity of governance types by regional library system area.

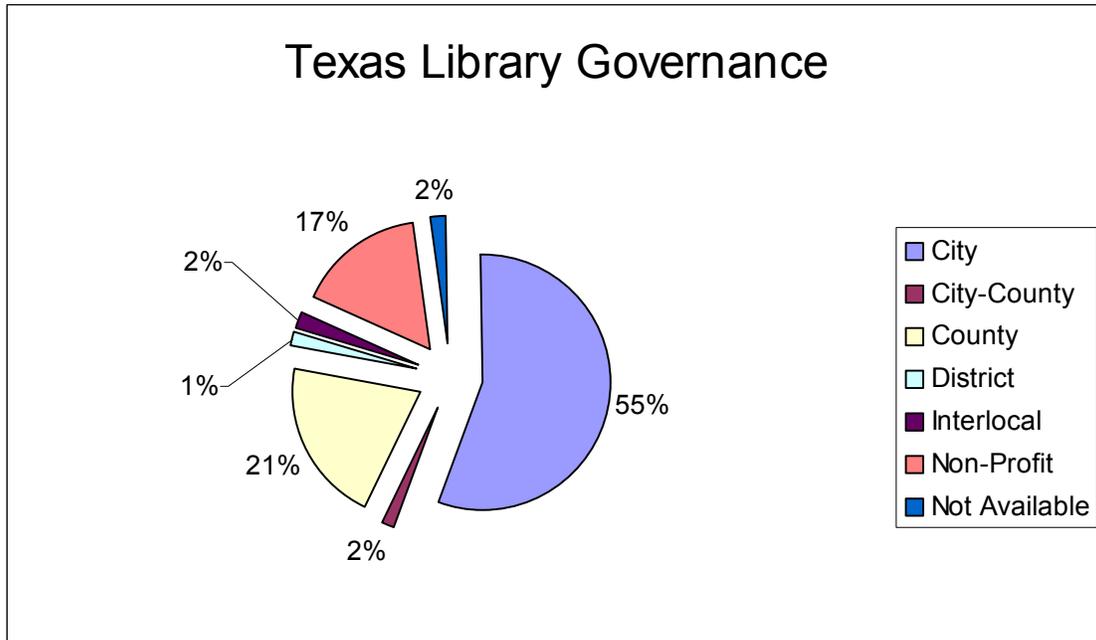


Chart 1

Funding for Texas libraries is also quite diverse. One hundred and seventy-three (31.4%) of the 551 public libraries listed in the 2001 statistics compiled by TSLAC reported operating expenditures of less than \$ 50,000 while six indicated annual expenditure levels in excess of \$ 10 million. Perhaps the most telling figure, however, is the fact that the median expenditure level for all Texas public libraries in 2001 was less than \$ 90,000. In simple terms, half of the public libraries in the State expended less than \$ 90,000 during 2001. Appendix D contains charts that show the disparity in funding levels for libraries by regional library system area.

NATIONAL RANKINGS

Texas has traditionally performed poorly in library rankings compiled by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Statistics submitted to NCES by the fifty state library agencies and by the District of Columbia through the Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data place Texas in the bottom quartile for almost all input and output measures.

The single ranking that best explains the plight of Texas libraries is “Total Income per capita.” The following chart (Chart 2), based on the NCES publication entitled *Public Libraries in the United States: Fiscal Year 2000* (FY 2000), shows that Texas ranks 45th among the fifty states in the average amount of money available for public library purposes during the 2000 Fiscal Year. With an income per capita of just \$ 16.11, Texas libraries were funded at only 56% (55.63%) of the national average and at a meager 27% (26.88%) of the top-ranked State of Ohio.

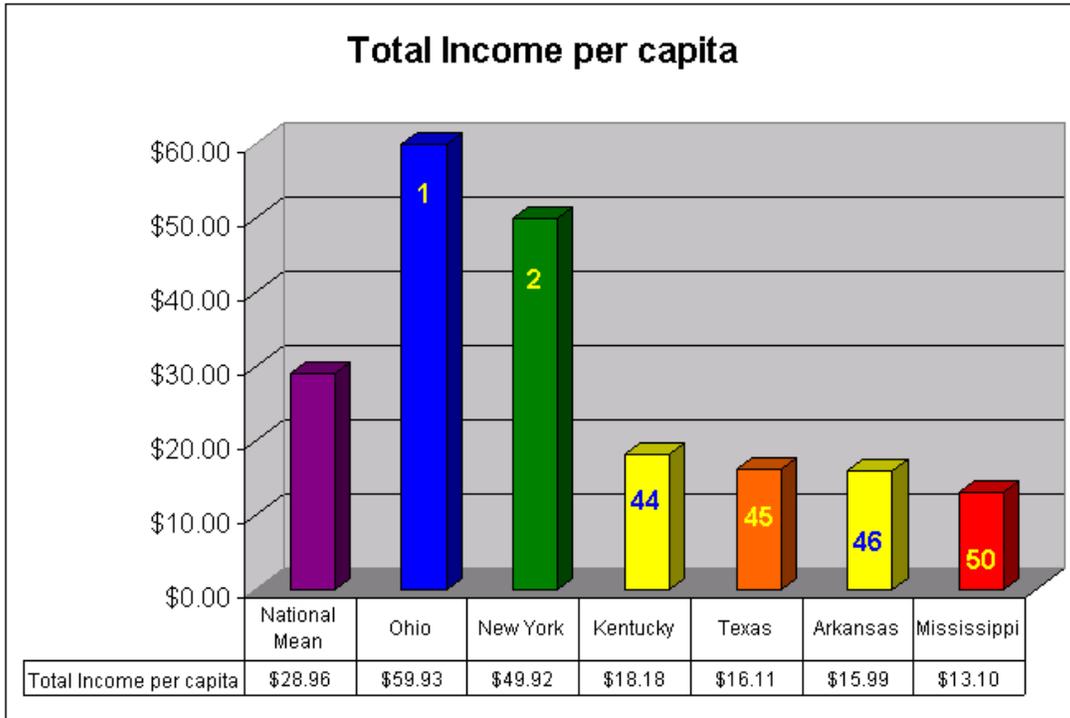


Chart 2

This lack of income is directly reflected in expenditure categories. For example, Texas, with a ranking of 43rd, fares only slightly better in terms of expenditures for new books and other library materials (see Chart 3) than it did in income per capita. At \$ 2.52 per capita, Texas is at only 63% (62.69%) of the national average and expends less than 28% (27.69%) of what is spent by libraries in Ohio. This category of expenditure is particularly telling for two reasons. First, books and other library materials can be considered a public library’s “stock in trade.” In business terms, materials represent a public library’s major product line. Secondly, library materials are not subject to the regional variations that affect salaries and wages. The cost of a book or of a DVD is very consistent regardless of geographic location. The simple fact of the matter is that, generally, Texas public libraries are not stocked as well as public libraries in most other states.

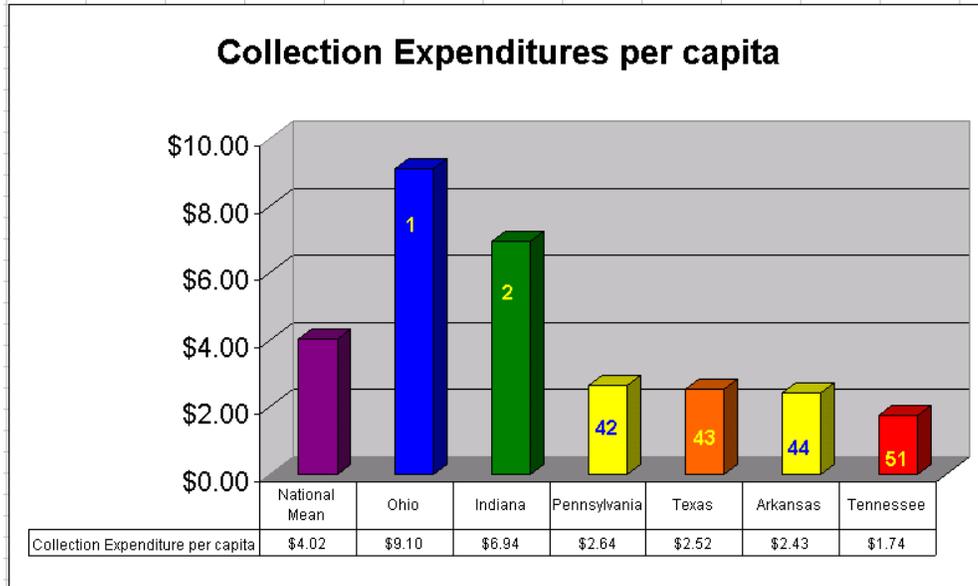


Chart 3

Texas public libraries are also staffed at lower levels than public libraries in most other places. The Lone Star State placed 47th (see Chart 4) among all states and the District of Columbia in the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff per 25,000 of population in FY 2000. Libraries in states such as Indiana and Ohio have more than double the number of paid staff members per 25,000 population as do their Texas counterparts. Texas ranks 43rd among the states in per capita expenditures on library staff.

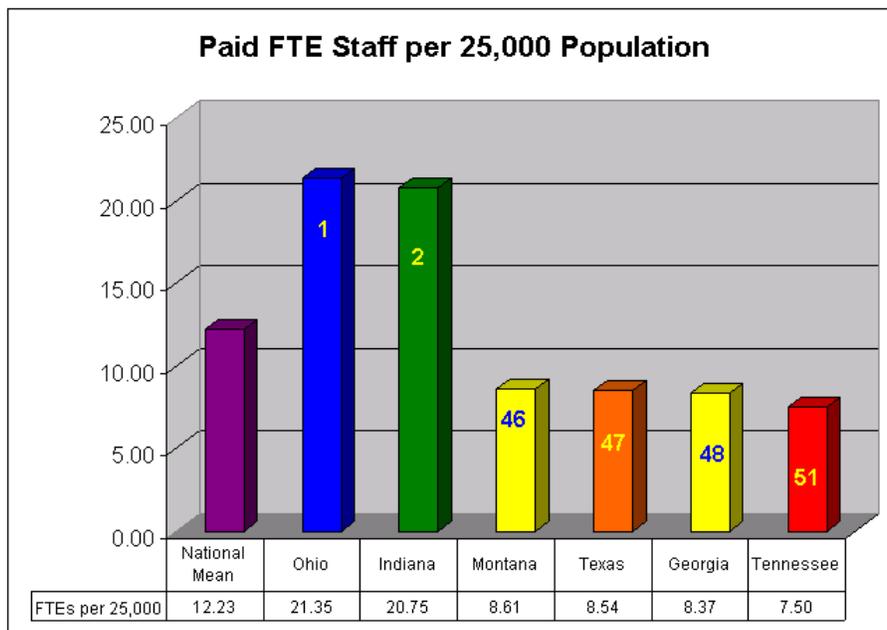


Chart 4

The lack of funding for staffing is particularly severe in rural areas. In 2001, 82 Texas libraries reported total expenditures on salaries and wages as being under \$ 10,000. Many library workers serving as library directors receive little or nothing in the way of benefits.

The staffing situation is somewhat better in urban areas. The fact that Texas has three Library Science programs that are accredited by the American Library Association and the fact that accredited programs also exist in Louisiana and Oklahoma have contributed to a relatively good supply of professional librarians in Texas. In fact, Texas ranks considerably higher (31st) in the number of librarians holding a Master’s degree in Library Science (MLS) per 25,000 of population than it does on most other measures. Unfortunately, salary scales even in Texas’ larger public libraries are frequently not competitive with peer libraries in other areas of the nation.

Not surprisingly, low rankings in inputs such as total expenditures and expenditures on materials and on staff translate into poor performance on output measures such as items circulated per capita and number of library visits per capita. In fact, expenditures and performance appear to be very closely correlated. For FY 2000, Texas libraries ranked 43rd in library visits per capita (see Chart 5) and 45th in circulation per capita (see Chart 6). The reader will recall that Texas ranked 43rd in expenditures for new materials and 45th in total income per capita devoted to library purposes.

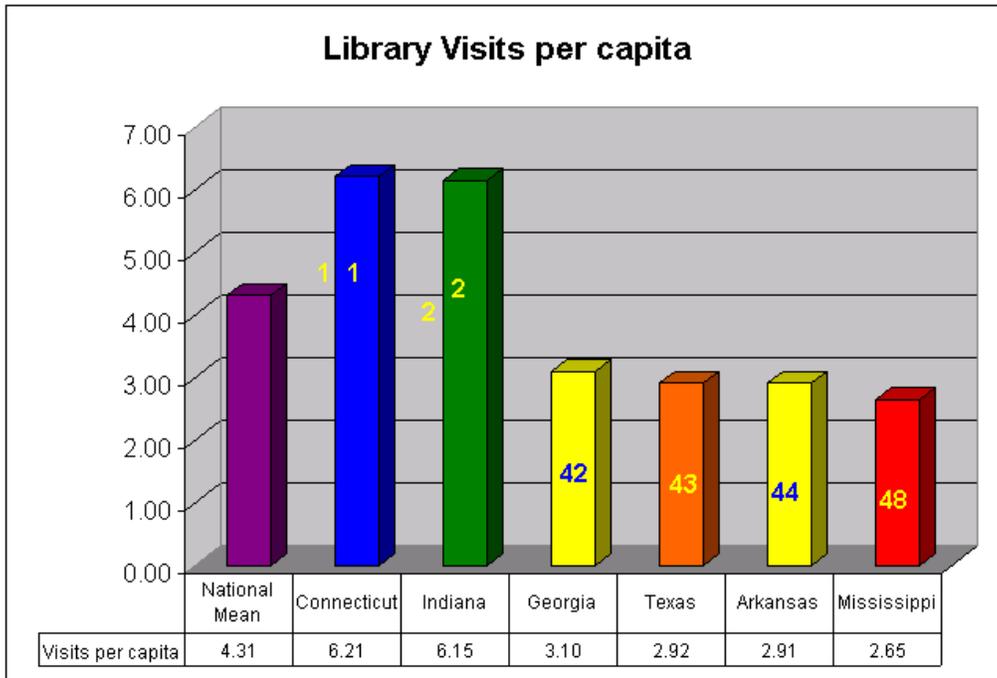


Chart 5

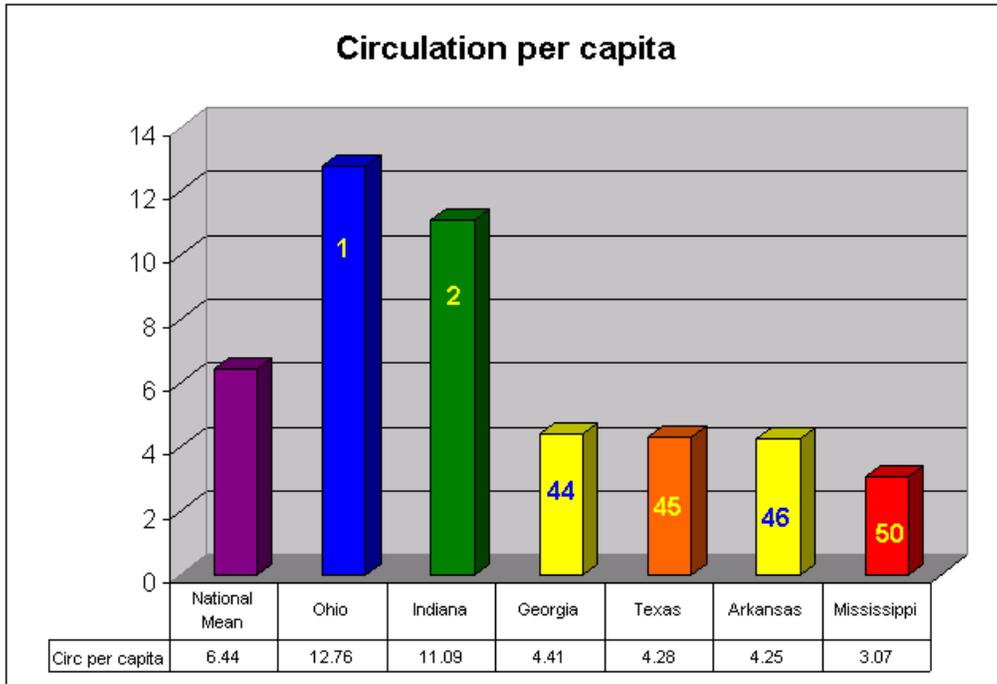


Chart 6

The point of presenting these charts is *not* to point out the significant disparity that exists between Texas and states such as Ohio and Indiana that frequently top the rankings. We believe that the most valid way to use the charts is to compare Texas to the “National Means” (shown in purple) and the states that are nearby in rank (shown in yellow). The state that appears most frequently as comparable in performance is Arkansas. Comparisons to national means and an examination of comparable performers indicate that Texas public libraries significantly lag their counterparts in most of the nation. A full set of comparison charts is included in Appendix E.

PARTNERS IN PUBLIC LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT

The conclusion that a lack of adequate funding is the root cause of the relatively poor performance of Texas libraries may seem simplistic. However, it was not reached without examining other factors. In fact, other factors *do* contribute to sub-par performance. Texas trails the nation in a number of categories that are related to library use. Factors such as educational attainment and literacy rates also affect the overall health of library services in the Lone Star State.

For example, U.S. Census data for 2000 reveals that Texas is one of only five states in which the percentage of the population over age 25 that has completed high school is below 80%. The other states are Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and West Virginia. An estimate of the adult population in Texas that falls into the Level 1 literacy category (the lowest level) is between 27 – 28% compared to a

national level of approximately 21%. However, some other factors actually tend to favor public library use. For example, Texas places solidly in the middle of the pack in comparison to other states in regard to the percentage of the population holding at least a Bachelor's degree. Clearly, funding is not the only factor at work; nevertheless, the statistics show that it is the driving force responsible for the inadequacy of collections and staffing in public libraries.

Earlier in this document, a point was made that public library development is a shared responsibility that involves at least six categories of players. Those players were:

- Local libraries and local units of government
- Regional library systems
- The Texas State Library and Archives Commission
- The Texas Library Association
- The Institute of Museum and Library Services
- Philanthropic organizations and individuals

We will examine first each of these individual players in relationship to public library development in Texas and we will then look at the cooperation and coordination between and among these organizations.

Local Libraries and Local Units of Government

In our interaction with some 700 members of the Texas public library community, we saw little indication that a lack of dedication or a lack of hard work plays any part in hindering public library development. The commitment and enthusiasm of librarians, library staff, volunteers, members of library "Friends" organizations, lay representatives, and library board members repeatedly impressed us. Texans involved with public libraries at the local level love their libraries and demonstrate it through hard work.

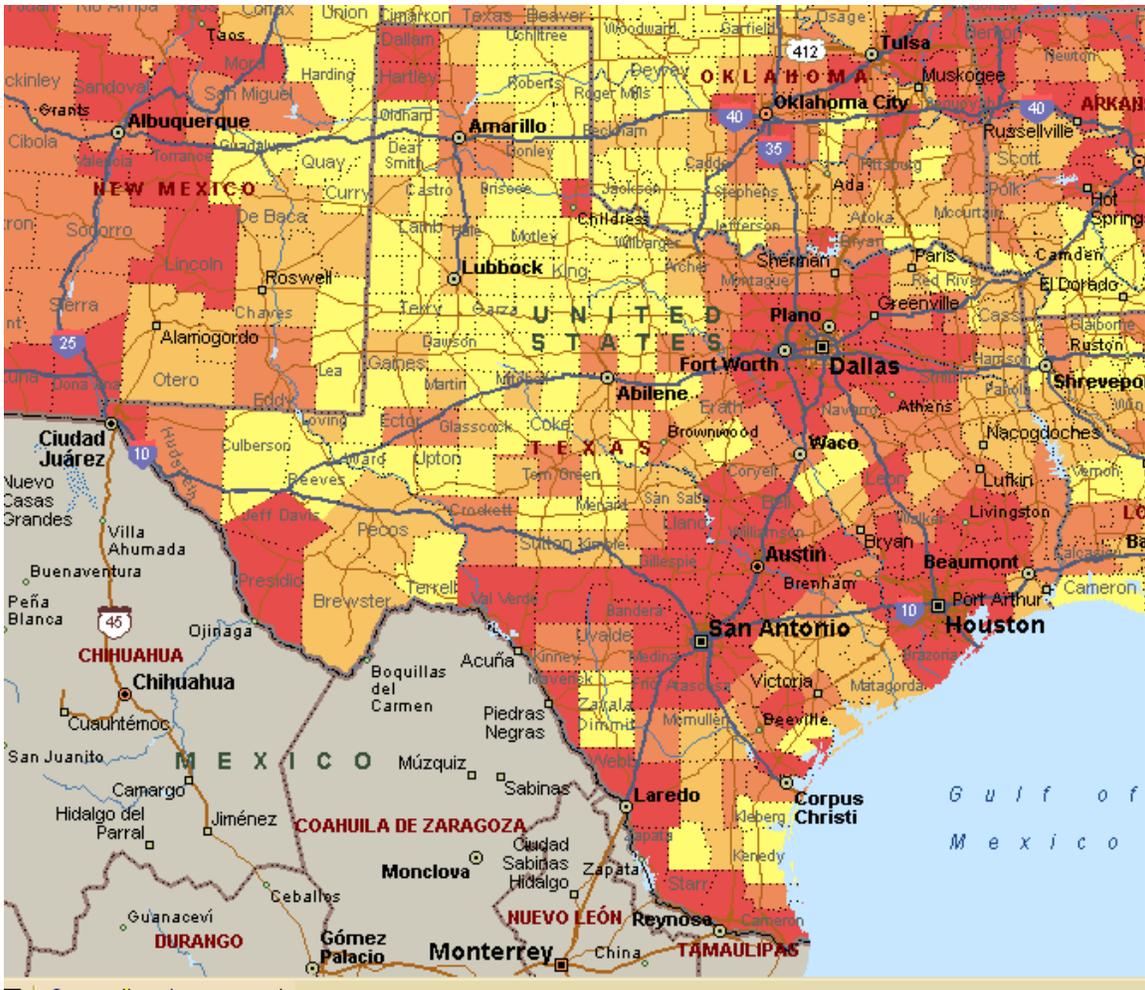
Nevertheless, it became clear very quickly that many of these dedicated people are working within a "no-win" system. Texas libraries rank 38th nationally in the local income per capita provided for library purposes. While this is somewhat better than the mid-40s ranks the State achieves on many measures, it is nevertheless a serious problem.

In FY 2000, 77.1 % of all support for public libraries in the nation came from local tax revenues. Texas' public libraries are considerably more dependent on local funding than the national average. In fact, in FY 2000, nearly 95% (94.8%) of

the funding that directly supports library operations came from local sources. The primary reason that this figure is so high is **not** that local support is adequate. Rather, it is because direct aid from the State of Texas has been completely missing. While the small amount of direct aid through the Loan Star Libraries program is a step in the right direction, **both local and state** support have been inadequate. The \$ 15.26 per capita in local funding for libraries is well below the national mean for 2000 of \$ 22.32. Furthermore, the large percentage of the State's population served by larger, and generally somewhat more adequately funded, libraries masks the dire situation facing many smaller rural libraries.

Several real problems contribute to relatively low local funding. One factor is that Texas is not, as a whole, a wealthy State. However, it is not among the poorest of states either. In 2001, Texas ranked 29th among the fifty states in median household income. However, a good number of areas within the state **are** extremely poor. In spite of its mid-level performance in household income, Texas has the 10th highest percentage of population living in poverty. The U.S. Census Bureau indicates that 15.0% of Texas' 20 million people are living below the poverty line. This compares to 12.1% on a national basis.

The fact of the matter is that Texas as a whole would seem to have a greater capacity for supporting public library services than it has done; however, it is also clear that some regions of the State simply lack the resources to do much more than they are already doing. The long-term forecast for many small libraries in areas of the State that have been losing both population and tax base is not good. Short of consideration of new models of library service, it is likely that libraries in a good number of small communities, especially in the Panhandle area, will likely be forced to close. The following map (Map 3) compares projected 2005 population to the 1990 U.S. Census population on the county level. Areas shown in yellow have lost or are projected to lose a significant percentage of population. Areas shown in red have gained or are gaining in population.



Map 3

Light yellow - Population Decline
Red - Significant Population Growth
Shades of orange - Low to Moderate Population Growth

The local funding problems in other regions of the State are quite different. Rapid population growth in some areas has placed a heavy burden on local governments to support the construction of new infrastructure. While wealth and property development have accompanied growth in some sections of the State, others, including some portions of the Rio Grande Valley, have experienced significant population growth in areas with low average incomes. In growth areas, libraries often find themselves competing with roads, sewers, water treatment facilities and new schools for tax support. These situations call for different kinds of solutions.

We do not wish to create the impression that urban residents in the State have good library service and that rural residents receive poor service. When the

largest libraries in Texas are compared with their peers nationally (other libraries serving similarly sized populations), the Texas libraries routinely fall in the bottom half in almost all measures. Some of the urban libraries typically place in the bottom quartile. Chart 7 shows expenditure data for Texas libraries serving over 1 million people in comparison with all national averages. Chart 8 presents the same information for Texas libraries serving populations between 250,000 and 499,999. In both cases, the information charted is FY 2001 data drawn from the Public Library Data Service's 2002 Statistical Report.

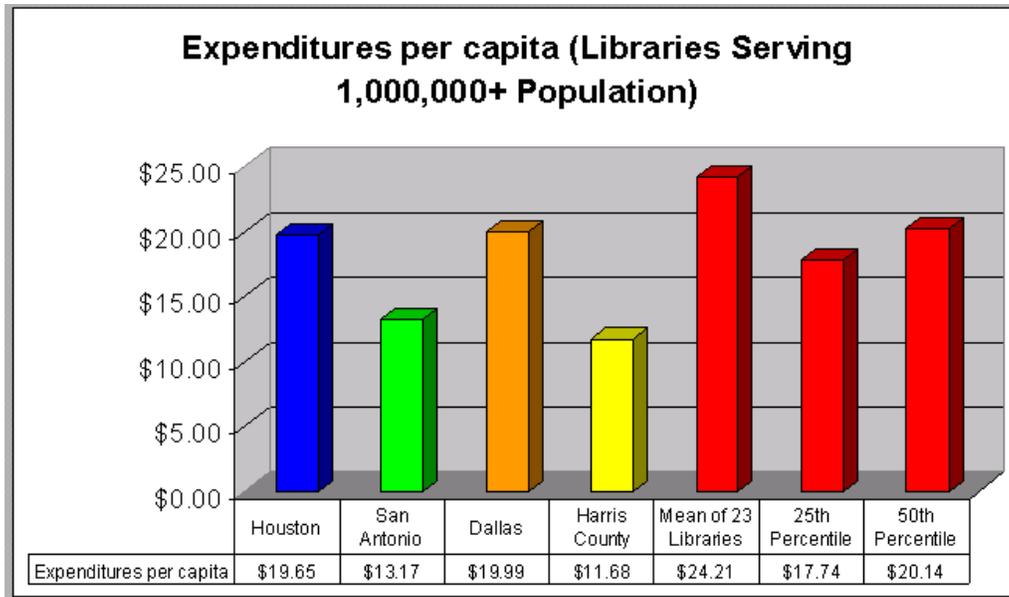


Chart 7

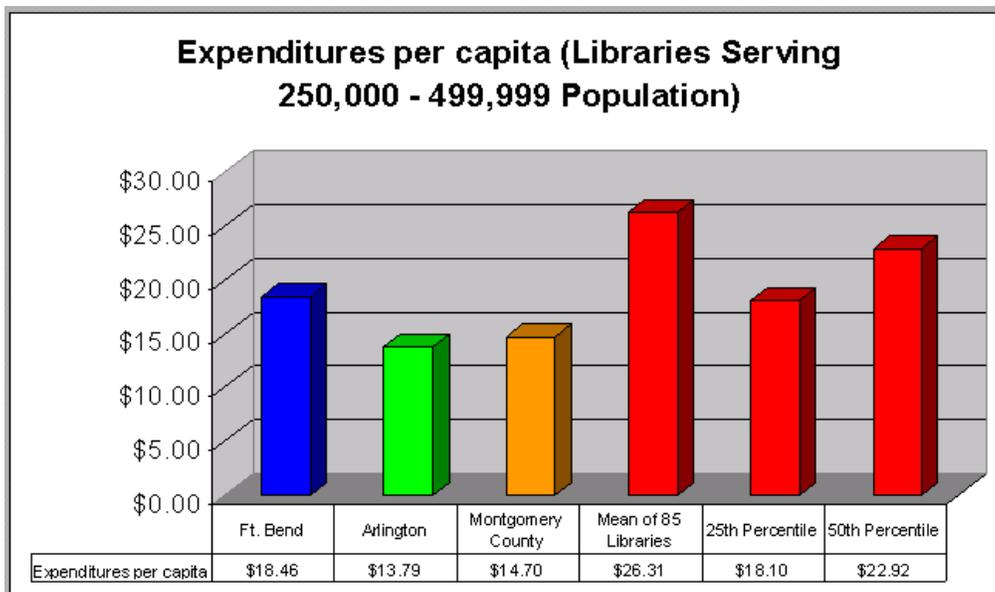


Chart 8

It is also important to note that comparisons for libraries serving between 500,000 and 999,999 repeat almost the same scenario. In fact, one of the Texas libraries in the 500,000 – 999,999 group (El Paso) reported the lowest per capita expenditure amount in that class. Many urban libraries suffer as much from inadequate funding for libraries as their rural counterparts.

A final reason that local funding for libraries is poor in some communities is simply because public library service is not a high priority in the minds of elected officials. These are frequently communities that have either a relatively short history of providing public library service or those that have a long history of providing library service at a relatively meager level. The consultants believe that all three of the situations described above (rural poverty, urban growth, low priority placed on library service) must be addressed if Texas is going to make real progress in improving public library services on a statewide basis.

Regional Library Systems

The idea of having regional library systems in Texas was born in the 1960s and funding for "demonstration" projects began in the mid 1970s. As in most states, the Texas systems focused on public libraries and resource sharing among libraries of all types. Following the pattern adopted by many states during this period of time, systems were attached to established public "resource libraries."

Nearly thirty years later, the regional systems in Texas continue to enjoy considerable support from a majority of their members. The consultants did find a relatively small number in the library community who questioned the need for systems at all and a few more who supported some system efforts and questioned others. For example, one director said, "It's fine for systems to offer workshops and consulting help, but do we really need 10 different organizations buying books for small libraries?"

Overall however, the consulting team found that systems are valued by most of the libraries that participate in them. A significant majority of focus group participants gave a clear indication that the regional systems are important to the well being of many libraries and to the quality of library services that these libraries offer. There was general agreement from representatives of libraries of all sizes that the systems tend to be most important to small libraries and least important to large ones; however, directors of several mid-sized and large libraries also shared some specific examples of services they value that are provided by their regional systems.

The consultants agree with the position, expressed often in focus groups, that a state as large as Texas needs regional library organizations. As was noted earlier, the geography of the State and the large number of autonomous libraries makes centralized library development activities unwieldy. Furthermore, during site visits to libraries around the State as well as in focus groups, librarians

talked about the importance of the human networking that systems facilitate. They spoke of consulting assistance their libraries had received and they praised the rapid response they receive from system staff in reply to questions and concerns. In some system areas continuing education was mentioned as a primary benefit of system membership. Librarians in many other areas stressed the need for the collection development assistance they receive.

Nevertheless, several issues related to regional systems are of great concern as we consider the future of library development in the State. The first concern is a familiar one. General revenue funds available to TSLAC have been in short supply and just maintaining "flat" funding for the systems has required supplementing State revenues with an increasing percentage of LSCA/LSTA dollars.

After a spurt of growth in the early and mid 1980s, the funding provided for regional library system operations has been stagnant while inflation has continued to take its toll on system services. Chart 9 shows the significant deficit in buying power experienced by the systems as a group since 1989.

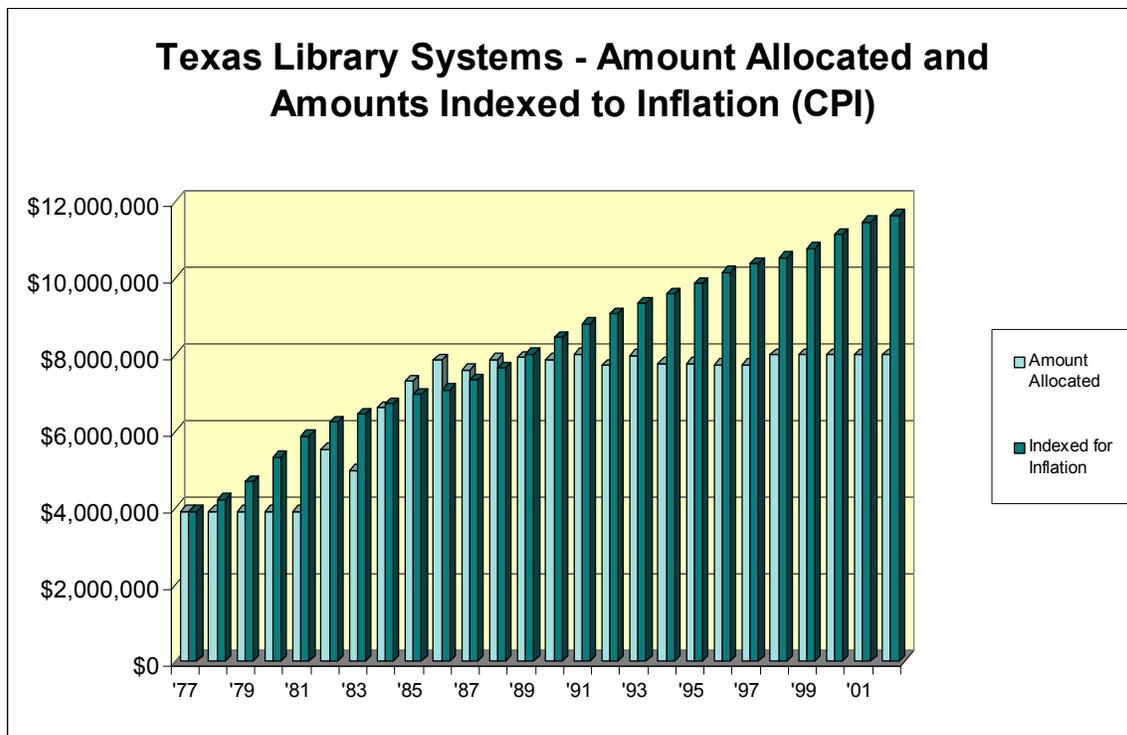


Chart 9

The result is that for more than a decade, funding for the regional systems has been inadequate to enable them to do much more than *respond* to their member's most critical needs. The consultants believe that this highlights another significant concern. Texas' systems have done a valiant job of helping

libraries cope; they have largely lacked the resources to help them build long-term strength and viability.

In an interview the consultants conducted with Sarah Long, the Director of the North Suburban Library System in Illinois, Ms. Long stated that the role of regional library systems in the 21st century is to "take their members to a new place." Due to limited funding, Texas' systems have been unable to do much more than help libraries keep from falling behind. Systems certainly have helped introduce new technologies and have promoted new services and formats; however, their ability to lead libraries to a new place has been severely handicapped by their funding.

While funding has been a problem for all the systems, population growth in some areas and population contraction in others have served to shift funds away from the systems headquartered in smaller cities serving areas with declining populations and into the systems headquartered in larger urbanized centers that have been experiencing growth. The difference in the relative impact of this funding shift among the systems is significant. In order to assess the magnitude of this shift, the consultants used 1978 as a base year and calculated the amount necessary to match 1978 buying power through 2002. The results are startling.

The deficit of the Central Texas Library System (CTLS) seems significant at first glance. CTLS would require a 13.3% increase over its 2002 allocation to match its 1978 buying power. The North Texas Regional Library System would need a 21.8% increase to match the 1978 funding level and the Houston Area Library System (HALS) would require a 29.7% increase to match 1978's level measured in 2002 dollars. However, these deficits pale in comparison to the deficit of the Texas Panhandle Library System (TPLS), which would need a 61.3% increase to match 1978, the Big Country Library System (BCLS), which would need a 64.6% increase to be made whole in comparison to 1978 and to the 72.9% shortfall of the West Texas Library System (WTLS). Given the double hit of actual reductions in dollars added to ongoing inflationary pressures, it is remarkable that TPLS, BCLS, and WTLS have managed to continue operating at all. It is a credit to these systems and their coordinators that the members of these systems still find any real value in the services that they offer. The last decade has been a difficult one for all Texas library systems. It has been a devastating one for three of the systems.

Another issue of great concern is the growing percentage of system budgets that is required for administrative purposes. Given the losses to inflation cited above, it is certainly understandable that the fixed costs of doing business have consumed larger and larger percentages of the budgets of some of the systems. Although administrative costs in several of the systems are quite acceptable, managerial functions and indirect costs now consume very large portions of several system's budgets. The worst example is in Abilene where the Big

Country Library System is assessed a rate of 34% of all salaries and benefits as an indirect cost. This cost, which does not result in any direct benefit to member libraries, amounts to over 13% of the system budget. When other costs characterized by the system as being for administrative purposes are included, only 60% of the system's budget remains for the provision of direct services.

The figures provided above are calculated using the budgets submitted to TSLAC by the regional systems. However, it should be noted that most of the system coordinators believe that the guidelines used to categorize costs as administrative tend to overstate these costs. A recent effort by the systems to estimate "actual" administrative costs presents a somewhat different picture. In fact, these calculations estimate the administrative percentage of six of the systems at less than 10%. In most cases, the percentages reported in this calculation are one-half to one-third of those submitted using the TSLAC guidelines and consist largely of salaries and indirect costs required by resource centers. Indirect costs applied to any salaries other than strictly administrative salaries were not included in these calculations.

While it is obvious that some clarification of what should be characterized as administrative cost and what should not is needed, it should be noted that two of the systems still exceed 20% in administrative costs (22.9% and 24.3%) even under the strict guidelines applied by the coordinators. Furthermore, indirect charges continue to rise.

While the administrative cost situation is not dire in all systems, it clearly has impacted the ability of some to offer valuable direct services to their members. In the case of the Big Country System, what has given way is continuing education. In 2002, the system was able to allocate less than \$ 12,000 for continuing education (CE) purposes. We wish to make it clear that we are not placing blame on BCLS for this situation. They have arrived at this point as a result of external pressures such as increasing indirect costs, inflationary pressures, and a formula for allocating State funds that has shifted support away from areas with declining population such as theirs. Regardless of the reasons, the consultants believe that several systems will suffer similar fates unless there are fundamental changes in the way that the system program is administered.

It should also be noted that some of the systems have made valiant efforts to reverse the tide of creeping administrative costs. For example, the Texas Panhandle Library System managed to reverse the trend of increasing administrative costs to less than 25% after these costs had crept up over the 30% mark for the first time in 2002.

As was noted above, one of the primary costs that contribute to high overhead costs are largely beyond the control of the systems. For example, the City of Austin imposes indirect charges on CTLS that have been increasing in recent years. The process used in 2002 included two steps and applied a percentage

of 36% to a discounted rate of 85% of salaries and wages. Application of this process made the effective rate of the indirect charges 34% for 2002 or 12.72% of CTLS's total budget before any services are provided. The 2003 percentage applied to actual time worked will be 45%! Houston will double its indirect cost rate from 14.82% to 29.96% and Abilene has increased its rate from 34% to 39.55%. Not all of the systems hosted by Major Resource Centers are subject to these high indirect costs. In several instances, the charges appear to be quite reasonable.

The pressures of administrative costs have resulted in shifts over time in the focus of system services. As was noted above, one of the systems allocates only a minimal amount to continuing education activities. Another system has moved away from regularly scheduled CE events in favor of providing workshops "on demand." The amount allocated to the provision of consulting services has also decreased significantly over time in many systems. Other programs and services including public relations activities and certain types of technology assistance have completely fallen by the wayside. TSLAC has made some attempt to help systems fill some of these service gaps with specific targeted services funded under separate grants. The Technical Assistance Negotiated Grants (TANG) program is perhaps the best, and most effective, example of this kind of effort. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that most of the regional systems have been forced to eliminate or seriously curtail many of their services.

One of the programs that has been offered by all of the systems in some form or another has, with few exceptions, been maintained. Collection development support, in the form of specific allocations to individual libraries, has grown significantly as a percentage of system budgets. Although collection development assistance is highly valued by member libraries, the consultants believe that this support is less important than continuing education and consulting in terms of the sustainability of libraries over the long haul. While libraries are bound to value direct grants for materials and while these grants provide an obvious direct benefit to users, it can also be argued that this practice gives local libraries (and their communities) a convenient excuse for not funding what is usually seen as a local responsibility.

The consultants visited many libraries that had little or no collection development funds other than those provided by their regional system. While a few systems have attempted to "leverage" local funds through offering incentives for higher local support, this appears to be the exception rather than the rule.

A number of concerns about regional systems were expressed in focus groups. Many centered on the indirect charge issue that was raised earlier. However, other concerns relate to the negative effect of policy decisions made by host communities on system services. Examples included long waits to fill vacant system positions due to highly bureaucratic city human resources departments, travel restrictions imposed on system staff, and in one case, the refusal of a host

city to purchase certain types of computer equipment. It is apparent that this problem also varies significantly from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Nevertheless, some systems are burdened, or at least suffer from a loss of flexibility, because of their association with large city bureaucracies.

One final area of concern regarding regional library systems relates to the increasing dependence of the regional systems on Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds. Over time, first Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) funds and later LSTA funds have represented a growing percentage of the operational funds provided to the regional library systems. Such a high level of dependency on a single source of funding is troublesome, especially in light of the fact that the activities of the regional systems only marginally align with LSTA priorities. While the systems have not created this dependency, it is nevertheless a concern in regard to the long-term viability of the systems.

The use of LSTA funds for basic, ongoing services also negates the benefit of the Federal funding as a source of competitive grants directly to libraries, efforts that leverage other public and private contributions, and for “research and development” activities aimed at innovation.

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC)

Several of the programs and services of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission received praise from the library community in focus groups and in the course of site visits to libraries. The Loan Star Libraries program, and in particular the flexible nature of the direct grants provided under this program, was the subject of many positive comments. While a few complained about the paperwork involved in order to get what in some cases is a very small grant, most felt the effort was well worth it and expressed hope that the program could be expanded over time.

There was also significant praise for the State’s significant role in TexShare, and specifically in making the TexShare databases available to public libraries and their patrons. However, great concern was expressed about the long-term prospects for the databases given the pending demise of Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (TIF) support. Many librarians stressed that the databases had become a valued, and expected, resource. Some pointed out that the databases have enabled small and medium-sized libraries to offer sophisticated reference services and several quoted specific dollar amounts that reflected what their library would have to pay to license even a portion of what has been available through TexShare. Indications were that local libraries could never afford to acquire access to the databases on their own.

Library staff also expressed their support and approval for the Small Library Management Program. There was broad agreement that the program is well done and that it is invaluable to librarians, especially to those assuming

directorships in rural areas who previously had little or no formal library training. Several graduates of the program gave specific examples of how the program had been relevant in their libraries. Diplomas from the program were prominently displayed in a number of libraries that were visited.

A number of focus group participants mentioned the availability of the Library Science Collection at the State Library as an asset and praised the staff in that area for their helpfulness and responsiveness. Others made positive mention of specific direct services such as the Talking Book Program and the provision of historical resources by TSLAC.

While some participants in every focus group found positive things to say about TSLAC, the agency also came in for some criticism. Some felt that the State Library had no central focus and that it was prone to head off in multiple new directions depending on whatever happened to be the newest and latest trend. For example, one focus group participant characterized TSLAC's enthusiasm for new programs by saying, "...it never met a new idea it didn't like."

At the same time TSLAC was criticized for embracing too many new programs without adequate concern for long-term sustainability, others condemned the agency for being slow to action. One example provided was the perceived slowness to act on the Texas Library Association's new **Standards for Texas Public Libraries**. It should be noted that the TLA Council also moved rather slowly in officially adopting the standards. Furthermore, it must be stated that TSLAC and TLA have now joined together to appoint a task force to review the standards and to make recommendations regarding important issues such as the relationship between the standards and the minimum criteria for system membership. Given the intensity of disagreement about standards expressed to the consultants, it is not surprising that all parties have moved cautiously on this topic.

The consultants found a great deal of uncertainty and a lack of knowledge in the library community regarding TSLAC services and programs and about how these services and programs relate to each other and to other non-TSLAC programs and initiatives. Although the lack of specific details was understandably highest among the laypersons who attended focus groups, librarians also failed to associate the State Library with a number of major programs that are coordinated through TSLAC. There was little recognition that TSLAC (or the Institute of Museum and Library Services) played any significant role in programs receiving considerable State and/or LSTA funding such as regional systems and the Technical Assistance Negotiated Grants (TANG) program.

Many of those who attended focus groups held the impression that the State Library was somewhat disconnected from the field. The consultants found this somewhat surprising in light of the fact that there was much evidence that TSLAC representatives (including the State Librarian and the Director of Library

Development) had visited many of the libraries the consultants called on during their site visits. The consultants also detected rather widespread feelings that the State Library “doesn’t value small libraries or the regional library systems.”

Based on personal interviews and interaction with TSLAC staff, the consultants believe that these impressions are both incorrect and unfortunate. While it is clear that TSLAC and the coordinators of the regional systems do not currently share the same vision for the regional entities, we saw no evidence that the State Library wanted to do away with regional systems. We also found no evidence that the State Library didn’t care about small, rural libraries. To the contrary, we saw evidence that TSLAC had carefully considered the smallest of libraries in designing programs and services. The Small Library Management Program and the Loan Star Libraries Program are examples.

Unfortunately, perception that TSLAC doesn’t care about small libraries has become reality for many in the library community. We are left with the conclusion that TSLAC must redouble its efforts to open lines of communication with the regional systems and with local libraries. The State Library needs to reexamine what it says and how it says it in an effort to clarify its commitment to library development in the State. We see several positive signs that TSLAC intends to use the conversations started through this study as the basis for a new dialogue regarding its important library development responsibilities. The pending appointment of a joint TSLAC/TLA “Task Force on Implementation of the Study of Public Library Development in Texas” is definitely a step in the right direction.

The Texas Library Association (TLA)

Much of what the Texas Library Association does can be considered library development activity. The TLA Mission Statement clarifies the Association’s position as a critical player in statewide public library development as well as in the development of libraries of other types.

Following are TLA’s objectives taken directly from their website:

The Texas Library Association was established in 1902 to promote and improve library services in Texas. Specific objectives are:

1. To encourage the identification, development, and maintenance of library services which will meet the informational, cultural, educational, and recreational needs of the citizens of Texas.
2. To provide for and stimulate the professional and career development of personnel in academic, public, school, and special libraries of Texas;

3. To facilitate effective cooperation among library personnel in academic, public, school, and special libraries of Texas;
4. To increase the effectiveness of libraries;
5. To advance the standards and ideals of the profession;
6. To provide a vehicle whereby library personnel may be aware of and cooperate with other associations and organizations which have similar or allied interests;
7. To increase attention to intellectual freedom and social responsibility as an action-oriented association;
8. To provide appropriate services to members for the benefit of the profession;
9. To work cooperatively with other associations in developing joint activities which relate to the provision of library services, the selection, distribution and use of books and other materials, the support of intellectual freedom, and the enhancement of educational opportunities, provided that:
 1. The purpose of the joint activity is supportive of the emphases named above;
 2. The other association has a major role in those activities relating to libraries;
 3. The financial commitment required does not place a major burden upon the regular financial responsibilities of the Association;
 4. The activity has been approved by the Executive Board.
 5. To operate exclusively for charitable, scientific, literary, and educational purposes.

Many, if not most, of TLA's objectives can clearly be construed as "library development" activities. Furthermore, the Texas Library Association has long been recognized as one of, if not *the*, premier state library association(s) in the nation. TLA's annual conference is rivaled only by national gatherings in terms of quality, scope, number of exhibitors, and number of attendees. TLA's role as an advocate for libraries and as a major player in continuing education for librarians and library workers is widely acknowledged.

The Library Association also is in a unique position to bring disparate parties together in support of libraries. Its role in developing new standards for public libraries is an example of its involvement in this regard. The decision of the State Library to partner with TLA in two emerging efforts is both sensible and commendable. The first is a “Joint Task Force on Library Standards and Accreditation.” The second is the “Joint Task Force on Implementation of the Study of Public Library Development in Texas.”

It is highly unlikely that many components of either the standards document or the public library development study document will be implemented without the involvement of broad-based teams of dedicated practitioners. Because TLA serves as an umbrella organization that represents all who care about and value libraries, it is seen as an informed but, nevertheless, neutral convener.

TLA has demonstrated its ability to bring people together through its involvement in the legislative process. The Texas Library Association is in the best position to unite local libraries, the regional library systems, and the Texas State Library and Archives in finding common ground in ways to implement the standards and in deciding what actions should be taken in response to the public library development study.

A wide variety of players are involved in continuing education (CE) for librarianship in Texas. TLA, TSLAC, the regional library systems and the three ALA accredited library schools are all involved in CE efforts in some way. While it is not unusual for CE to be offered by many parties in a state, it is somewhat unusual for CE efforts to be as unstructured and uncoordinated as they are in Texas. Because the Association is already very involved in continuing education, we believe that TLA should be a key player in future efforts to improve the coordination of continuing education.

Another role that TLA has played is serving as a link between libraries and the private sector. The close association that TLA has developed with the Tocker Foundation is particularly relevant to this study. The consultants believe that TLA may have an even greater role to play in the future in connecting libraries with potential donors and coordinating gifts to libraries through foundations, other charitable organizations, and individuals.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) may not be as well known an entity as those previously mentioned. However, as the Federal agency responsible for carrying out the Library Services and Technology Act, it is an important player in library development in Texas. If the dollars that flow through IMLS/LSTA were removed from the equation, the public library development landscape in the State would be much different and much poorer. Many programs, such as the regional systems and TANG that have been either

partially or totally dependent on LSCA/LSTA funding would likely not exist without Federal support.

When the Library Services and *Construction* Act (LSCA) morphed into the Library Services and *Technology* Act (LSTA), goals for the program also changed. The primary goals for LSTA are as follows:

TO:

- establish or enhance electronic linkages among or between libraries
- link libraries electronically with educational, social or information services,
- help libraries access information through electronic networks,
- encourage libraries in different areas and different types of libraries to establish consortia and share resources
- pay costs for libraries to acquire or share computer systems and telecommunications technologies; and
- target library and information services to persons who have difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities.

Two major changes that occurred when LSCA became LSTA were: 1) a much greater emphasis on technology, and 2) a greater emphasis on cooperation between and among different types of libraries (academic, public, school, and special). Several states radically altered the five-year plans that are required by IMLS. In several cases, these changes affected library systems that had been supported in part or in whole with LSCA dollars. For example, Ohio completely withdrew Federal funding for regional systems except for competitive grants to carry out specific projects related to the LSTA goals. A significant portion of Ohio's LSTA allocation was shifted to support library automation in Ohio schools.

In most other states, including Texas, shifts were far less dramatic. Although certain programs, such as TANG, TexNet and TexShare, clearly align with the LSTA's technology and multitype cooperation objectives, ongoing support for Texas' library systems is somewhat more of a stretch. While it is certainly possible to argue that the regional library systems in Texas do **some** of what is described in the LSTA goals, it is increasingly difficult to argue that a program that expends as much as it does on traditional library materials and on administration is fully in keeping with the spirit of LSTA as is captured in the goals provided by IMLS.

This situation illustrates an important point that has been the source of some frustration on the part of both the system coordinators and TSLAC. While TSLAC is inclined to see the systems as a State administered grant program designed to implement a specific set of goals, the system coordinators tend to

see the systems as being member-driven membership organizations. Clearly, a high level of membership involvement was intended when Texas' regional library systems were established. However, the ongoing and increasing dependence of systems on LSTA funds raises another question. Are LSTA funds being used as they were intended to be used by Congress?

There is little doubt that the work performed by systems is important and valued by most of their members. Clearly, the regional library systems do have a positive impact on public library development. However, because systems are being funded largely with LSTA dollars that are intended to achieve very specific aims, the practice creates a tension between TSLAC, which is accountable to IMLS for the allocation of LSTA funds, and the regional systems, which see their membership as the guiding force. The consultants believe that this is the source of at least some of the tension that has existed between TSLAC and the systems.

If systems were primarily supported with funding from State General Revenues or, as they are in some states, through fees assessed to member libraries, the member-driven model would be more applicable; however, since this is not the case, TSLAC and IMLS do have a legitimate interest in setting the direction for the regional systems. There is a great tendency for member libraries to value direct aid above all else. In terms of the old adage, this can be seen as the "give the man a fish" method of aid. We believe that the "teach a man to fish" approach is preferable, at least in regard to the use of LSTA funds. LSTA is one of the few sources of funding available that can be used to leverage local and private funds or that can foster innovation.

IMLS is, and is likely to remain, an important player in public library development in Texas simply because it is the source of funding for a number of important programs that contribute to the health and well being of libraries. However, it must be recognized that the LSTA program is **not** intended to provide operational funding for libraries.

One of the questions that begs to be asked is how the public library development picture in Texas would be different if the LSCA and LSTA dollars expended for regional library systems had been spent in other ways. Although speculation on the question of "lost opportunities" might be entertaining, the results of such conjecture would likely be more contentious than helpful. However, there is no question that Texas would have realized more progress than it has if the regional systems had been fully funded with State dollars leaving LSCA/LSTA funds for specific targeted programs and initiatives.

Philanthropic Organizations and Individuals

It was noted earlier that Texas, as a whole, is not a wealthy State; however, it is also clear that individuals have made great fortunes in the Lone Star State.

Fortunately for Texas' public libraries, many individuals who have prospered have shared their wealth with their home or adopted communities. Examples range from gifts to individual libraries such as in the case of the Joe Barnhart – Bee County Library to the superb ongoing work of The Tocker Foundation on behalf of all small libraries in Texas. State-based businesses such as the H-E-B supermarket chain have actively supported libraries, as have countless individuals. National players such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation have also contributed significantly to libraries in the last few years.

The Canyon Area Library received support, both large and small, from a wide variety of foundations, businesses and individuals to erect its beautiful new facility. However, charitable giving to Texas libraries is not restricted to capital projects. Philanthropy also supports the operational costs of many Texas libraries. Although the consultants believe that ongoing public funding for public libraries provides greater stability and underscores the status of the institution as a basic public service, the existence of so many non-profit "501 (c)(3)" libraries in the State certainly gives testimony to the generosity of the State's people.

The gift of personal time should also be mentioned as a valuable asset possessed by Texas libraries. Many libraries are able to achieve a higher level of service and/or are able to offer longer hours of service due to the donations of personal time provided by hundreds of volunteers who work in public libraries across the State. Formal "Friends" organizations exist in many libraries as well and provide volunteer assistance and help with fund-raising and special projects.

Gifts from individuals, from corporations, and from foundations are likely to remain an important, if not a growing, part of the library development picture in Texas. However, given the fact that charitable giving is voluntary and that the individuals and organizations donating can specify how the funds will be spent, the question arises, how can this partner in public library development be harnessed to accomplish the greatest results?

The Tocker Foundation has set a wonderful example for others to follow. Tocker has worked closely with TLA, with TSLAC, with regional library systems, as well as with local libraries in an attempt to understand library needs and to ensure that libraries adopt sound practices and purchase products and equipment that meet high professional and industry standards. Tocker works with a committee of librarians to ensure that its grants promote sound purchasing decisions.

The consultants believe that foundations like Tocker can be extremely helpful in encouraging libraries to embrace higher standards by stipulating that certain conditions be met to qualify for assistance. We also believe that the Tocker Foundation's extensive experience in working with libraries can help other charitable organizations and individuals avoid common pitfalls.

Summary

The consultants' experience working with libraries and state library agencies across the nation has taught us that the states that have performed best in the library development arena have been those in which each of the partners in library development work together in a coordinated fashion. This requires a clear understanding and acceptance of specific roles and responsibilities and the funding necessary to carry out these complementary roles.

It is clear to us that the public libraries of Texas have been seriously handicapped by a lack of funding. Low levels of expenditure on library resources and staff have resulted in similarly low levels of library use. However, this situation has been exacerbated to some degree by a lack of clarity and lack of agreement on the appropriate roles of the partners in public library development that have been identified in the preceding text.

We also believe that the partners in library development must seek to increase their efficiency to the highest degree possible by reinventing their organizations and refining their processes. Finally, we believe that higher standards for library service need to be adopted and that a plan must be put in place to ensure implementation of these standards.

At the present time, much of the Texas library community seems relatively content with the status quo. Most libraries, while bemoaning the fact that local support is inadequate, have taken few steps to consider alternative governance structures that could improve library services in their communities over the long haul. Too few libraries have created alliances with neighboring communities to share services and reduce costs. Too many have accepted the meager funding offered by municipalities and counties rather than mobilizing their communities to seek better public support. Most libraries support regional systems that follow the model to which they have grown accustomed over several decades. While a good number of people do support the adoption of stronger standards for public libraries, many in the library community resist the implementation of new higher standards because they are currently unable to meet them.

The consultants believe that following the status quo approach in regard to library development will result, at best, in maintaining Texas' position near the bottom of the national rankings. We recognize that breaking away from the current state of affairs could be painful and that it could even involve the demise of some organizations as they now exist. Improving the level of library service for all Texans will require some bold actions and a proactive approach. The following objectives and recommendations call for changes in the status quo. Some of the changes are incremental and may be accomplished with relative ease. However, others will require real effort, a spirit of cooperation, and significant concessions to accomplish.

We do not recommend these changes lightly. Based on our study of the current situation, we have concluded that the status quo approach is actually unlikely to accomplish even the maintenance of Texas' poor level of performance mentioned above. It is our opinion that, measured on a statewide basis, the level of library and information services available to most Texans will actually decline significantly over the next decade.

The consultants believe that real progress in public library development in Texas will require decisive action directed at accomplishing five objectives. They are:

- 1) Increased efficiency
- 2) Expanded governance options
- 3) Increased funding
- 4) Improved cooperation and coordination
- 5) The adoption and implementation of higher standards

These five objectives are described in some detail in the following section, which also outlines the steps we believe are necessary to achieve them.

OBJECTIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OVERVIEW

We have attempted to create a framework for action that presents the challenge of public library development in Texas as a shared problem, as one that will require open discussion, interaction, and a willingness on the part of all parties to entertain change in the pursuit of an improved level of library and information service in the State. We have concluded that incremental action is likely, at best, to result in maintaining an unacceptably low level of service when measured on a statewide scale.

We do believe that the public libraries of Texas are somewhat better off now than they have been in the past. It is possible, and in fact it is natural, to defend the status quo and to point to real success stories. The Texas State Library can legitimately be proud of the fact that, for the first time in history, Texas has a direct aid program for public libraries. TSLAC deserves to feel a sense of accomplishment for its involvement in piecing together the diverse patchwork of programs that have helped Texas libraries make great strides in technology. The regional library systems can point with pride and with a sense of satisfaction to the many libraries that have improved collections due to their efforts. They can rightfully claim responsibility for the creation of supportive regional

“communities of libraries” that have enabled their member libraries to achieve more than they would have been able to accomplish on their own. The Texas Library Association, the philanthropic community, IMLS, and well over 500 public libraries in the State can produce evidence documenting the positive results of some of their efforts.

The real question confronting the Texas library community is not whether some progress has been made in improving the level of public library service available to the residents of the State of Texas. We would agree wholeheartedly that some aspects of library service *have* improved. The real question is whether Texas is willing to pursue a course of action that will result in dramatic improvement rather than the mere maintenance of the status quo.

If Texas continues on its present course, many Texans will detect little difference in the quantity or quality of library service that they receive. People living in some library jurisdictions will continue to receive exemplary service and a large number of people will still have access to a moderate level of library and information service.

However, we have concluded that millions of Texans will not be as fortunate. Short of dramatic action, more than a million people will still be left without legal access to a public library. Hundreds of thousands more in rural areas will see a steady decline in the level of library and information services they receive over the next five to ten years as the tax base on which they draw declines. Furthermore, you will recall that our study has revealed that inadequate library service in Texas is not solely a rural problem. Unless the Texas library community is proactive, inadequate library service will persist in some urban areas where it is already entrenched today and will expand to include additional urban areas of the State.

Complacency and maintenance of the status quo will have devastating results. Short of dramatic action, we believe that several of the existing regional library systems will cease to be viable in three to five years time. We also believe that unless governance options for public libraries are significantly expanded and incentives for adopting new governance structures are provided, that many small libraries in depressed areas will either close or become one or two day per week operations staffed entirely by untrained volunteers and stocked with little more than hand-me-down collections. In essence, the residents now served by these small libraries will join the ranks of the unserved.

We have organized our recommendations into five separate objectives. There are usually multiple recommendations tied to each objective. Often, recommendations made under one objective have some impact that is related to subsequent objectives. Special attention should be given to these recommendations since they represent what some planners refer to as “robust

strategies.” Robust strategies are simply single actions that contribute to more than one positive outcome.

THE OBJECTIVES

Five objectives were presented at the end of the section of this report that presents the challenges faced by the Texas library community in seeking to improve library service. You will recall that the objectives were:

- 1) Increase efficiency
- 2) Expand governance options
- 3) Increase funding
- 4) Improve cooperation and coordination
- 5) Adopt and implement higher standards

THE RECOMMENDATIONS

Increase Efficiency

We have indicated several times that inadequate funding is a significant problem for Texas libraries. We have also highlighted the plight of some of the regional library systems as it relates to funding. However, given the current State budget crisis and an anti-tax mood that seems pervasive, we believe that the first objective must be to make sure that the major players involved in public library development are as efficient as possible.

Many questions can be used to frame an examination of the efficiency of the organizations involved in public library development. Among these questions are:

- Can administrative costs be reduced?
- Can needless duplication of effort be reduced or eliminated?
- Are there services that are currently distributed among many players that could be accomplished more efficiently if they were centralized?
- Could costs be reduced if services were outsourced on a competitive bid basis?

The consultants believe that the answer to most of these questions is, yes. Our first recommendations relate to the reduction of administrative costs.

Recommendation # 1

Texas should encourage and provide incentives for the formation of “larger units of service.”

The concept of larger units of service is not a new one. In fact, the notion of organizing library service under units of government larger than municipalities dates back to the 1930s when Carlton Joeckel proposed a plan that envisioned 641 library districts to serve the entire nation. While Joeckel’s original vision never became a reality, his thinking had a profound influence on library standards and planted the seed of an idea that grew into regional library systems.

The *Encyclopedia of Library History* states that, “Joeckel’s argument (for larger units of service), borrowed from political science, was that libraries acting in concert, rather than as individual units, could achieve a more efficient and broadly-based library service.” We believe that Joeckel’s argument still holds true today.

We are not necessarily recommending fewer service outlets than exist today, although we do believe there are some instances where combining two libraries into a single facility *is* feasible and advisable. The point of this recommendation is, however, not a reduction in the number of buildings but a consolidating of multiple libraries under a single administrative/management structure. Such consolidation could provide a number of benefits in addition to a reduction in some administrative paperwork. Following is a list of just a few of these possible benefits: 1) Consolidation could provide an expanded tax base from which to draw support. 2) Several libraries now each staffed by a part-time person might share a single full-time director. 3) Combinations of libraries with multiple staff members would provide for greater flexibility in scheduling and the potential for hiring staff to specialize in critical areas such as children’s services at more than one location.

The consultants recognize that forging larger units of service is, to say the least, a difficult task. Many states have attempted to encourage such larger units with varying degrees of success. A variety of reasons can be cited for *not* attempting this task. As in many other states, most Texans associate library service with their community rather than with a county or with a multi-county region. Texans also place a high value on independence and on autonomy. However, the consultants believe that the large number of independent libraries that exist in Texas poses an impediment to public library development and that dramatically

reducing the number of administrative units would eventually result in Texas having stronger, more viable libraries.

Many of the more than 550 public libraries in Texas simply lack the tax base that is necessary to support even a moderate level of library service. In fact, in some regions of the state, entire counties lack both the population and the tax base necessary to support library service on an ongoing basis. While the county may well be a sensible unit for organizing libraries in much of the State, multi-county alliances may be the only practical alternative in some areas with declining populations. In some areas, adoption of a multi-county administrative unit with county-based branches may be the only way to preserve library service.

Texas is obviously a very large State; however, it is divided into far more counties than any other state. Texas with 254 counties outdistances runner-up Georgia (with 159) by nearly 100. Consequently, the average size of a county in Texas is only slightly over 1,000 sq. miles (1,031 sq. miles). By contrast, an average county in California, which has many county libraries, is over 2,500 sq. miles (2,689 sq. miles) and an average county in Nevada, most of which is served by county libraries, is 6,460 sq. miles

The multi-county model is not unknown. For example, a three county confederation of libraries serves Elko, Lander, and Eureka Counties in Nevada. There are many ways in which the multi-county model is not ideal; however, in some areas of Texas, it may be the only viable alternative.

We are not recommending that mergers of libraries either within counties or between counties be forced, rather, we are suggesting that Texas should attempt to create a significant incentive program that would strengthen existing county library operations and encourage additional libraries to adopt this governance structure or even a multi-county structure. We think that it is unlikely that Texas will create many larger units of service unless really significant incentives can be provided. LSTA might be a source of funding for some demonstration projects; however, to be successful over the long haul, we feel that an ongoing state-funded aid program for county and multi-county libraries would be needed. Although such incentives are unlikely to be available from the State at any time in the near future, nevertheless, we believe that the “larger unit of service strategy” is worth pursuing as a long-term objective.

Incentives could take a number of forms. One might be an expanded Loan Star Libraries program that provides a higher funding level to libraries serving larger geographic areas under a single administrative unit. Another form of incentive might be alternative standard compliance mechanisms for such larger units of service.

Recommendation # 2

Eliminate or reduce indirect charges applied to system grants.

The consultants have provided considerable documentation regarding the toll that increased administrative costs is taking on the services offered by regional library systems. One of the culprits, at least for some of the systems, is high "indirect" charges assessed by the cities hosting the systems.

We believe that there are a number of different options that might result in a reduction of indirect charges. One of the potential mechanisms is closely related to another objective. It would involve encouraging systems to operate under alternative governance structures (such as becoming a 501 (c)(3) organization as was done in the case of the North Texas Regional Library System). While this step could eliminate indirect charges, it must be noted that it would not eliminate the entire amount now devoted to indirect charges.

The host cities assess indirect charges for a purpose. They perform certain services and accept certain liabilities for system staff. Becoming a non-profit does not remove the need for most of these services nor does it make liability disappear. Rather, these responsibilities are shifted from a government entity to a non-profit entity. The non-profit strategy makes sense in some instances but not in others. This strategy has the potential for reducing costs; however, it is not a panacea.

Some of the recent increases in indirect charges are driven by benefit related costs that are beyond the control of the host municipalities. Nevertheless, given the high percentages currently charged by some municipalities and the enormous increases that are being enacted, we cannot help but believe that some systems would realize significant savings by pursuing the non-profit route.

There is at least one other option for reducing indirect charges that fits under this objective. At first blush, one might suggest the imposition of a maximum allowable indirect percentage as a condition of awarding a system contract. The Federal government routinely restricts the percentage of grant awards that can be spent for administration of grant programs it provides to the states. However, it is highly doubtful whether TSLAC could impose similar restrictions under current State law in awarding grants.

Systems could attempt to negotiate the indirect rate with host cities. This would be difficult to say the least but could be worth trying in some instances. It is likely that some or all of the Major Resource Center municipalities might refuse to accept their system grant at any rate other than their "standard" rate. Consequently, an alternative plan for hosting or governing the system(s) would need to be considered in advance of approaching host municipalities. Unless

the real potential that the system might go elsewhere exists, the systems would have little in the way of bargaining power.

A more feasible alternative for reducing indirect costs would be to establish a competitive bidding process for hosting regional systems. While contracts would probably have to be awarded for a multiple year period to allow for some stability in staffing, we believe that the competitive bidding process could lead to lower operating costs, not just lower indirect rates.

For the competitive bid process to work, the State Library would need to describe the services to be provided and the region to be served in a Request for Proposals document that also outlined minimum qualifications for acting as a host library. As has already been demonstrated in the case of the Northeast Texas Library System, systems can operate successfully without being attached to the largest library in a region.

Recommendation # 3

Reduce the number of system administrative units.

We wish to begin this recommendation by indicating that we do not believe that having 10 regions within a state the size of Texas is unreasonable. Although the consulting team might distribute the systems differently in terms of the number of members and geographic boundaries, Texas must have more than a handful of systems if it is to retain some of the benefits associated with the creation of what we characterized earlier as regional “communities of libraries.”

We are motivated to suggest a reduction in the number of system administrative units because of a history of flat funding for systems and by the relatively bleak outlook for additional State funding in the short-term. We believe that several of the systems are on the edge of becoming non-viable entities that will be impossible to defend on a cost/benefit basis within three to five years.

We believe that several different courses of action might be taken to address this situation. They are:

1. The continuation of ten regional offices operating under a reduced number of administrative hubs.
2. The consolidation of the current 10 systems into 9 systems with significantly different boundaries.
3. The consolidation of the current 10 systems into 7 administrative units with up to 13 regional “presences.”

We do not mean to suggest that these are the only courses of action that are plausible. In fact, we would encourage the Joint TSLAC/TLA Task Force on Implementation of the Study of Public Library Development in Texas to entertain other options that meet the tests of reducing the number of administrative units while preserving a significant geographic presence throughout the State.

The first course of action identified above would consolidate administrative functions without changing the current system boundaries. For example, the Big Country Library System and the North Texas Regional Library System might merge all administrative functions at a single location in the NTRLS area while providing consultation, continuing education, and collection development support services out of a smaller office located somewhere in the current BCLS area. Likewise, West Texas and Texas Panhandle might combine administrative functions while retaining offices providing services out of both existing areas. HALS and NETLS operations would likely remain independent because of the large number of libraries served by each of those systems.

The second configuration we would urge the Joint Task Force to consider would significantly change system boundaries with two purposes in addition to the reduction of administrative costs in mind. The first would be the creation of more demographically coherent regions. The second would be a somewhat more even distribution of the number of libraries among the systems.

This plan would create a new urban system covering libraries in the immediate Dallas/Ft. Worth Metroplex area. A new, largely rural system would be formed in East Texas. This system would include some libraries that are currently in the northernmost section of the HALS territory. The geographic area covered by HALS would decrease and it, like the new Metroplex system, would have an urban/suburban focus. TPLS and WTLS would merge and an additional new system including non-urban/suburban areas of the current NTRLS system and most of what is now BCLS would be formed. TTPLS would extend further to the east and would take in the easternmost areas now served by AALS. AALS would extend further to the south than it does presently and the STLS would become somewhat smaller geographically. CTLS would change the least under this scenario.

Implementing this plan would have some real advantages. Systems that now deal with huge urban libraries as well as with small rural libraries would be able to focus their services somewhat more narrowly. In other areas, efforts could concentrate on the improvement of rural services. The distribution of libraries among systems would be somewhat more even than it is now. While the new urban Metroplex system and the reconstituted HALS would still have the most member libraries, the new TTPLS would have a larger number of libraries than it has had in the past.

Implementing this reconfiguration would require a significant alteration in the distribution of system funds. However, we believe that the population shifts mentioned much earlier in this report demand a new look at this issue quite aside from system reconfiguration.

The final scenario presented above would consolidate the ten systems into seven regions that would provide some service/staff presence in as many as 13 different locations. Following are the offices that would be paired under a seven system plan:

Amarillo & Lubbock

Abilene & Midland

Corpus Christi & McAllen

San Antonio & Austin

Houston & Lufkin or Nacogdoches

Dallas & Ft. Worth

El Paso

Recommendation # 4

Consider a significant reduction in the number of interlibrary loan “clearinghouses.”

Interlibrary Loan (ILL) in Texas is now organized as a highly distributed system. We believe that some efficiencies could result from moving toward a significantly more centralized system.

Most large-scale studies of interlibrary loan have demonstrated that organizations that do the most interlibrary loan tend to be the most efficient both in terms of cost and turnaround time. While we are not suggesting a totally centralized model, we believe that two or three large libraries could handle most of the in-state “fills.” Although some ILL staff would still be necessary in larger libraries for initiating requests on behalf of their own patrons, much of this process can and should be more highly automated.

We believe that additional cost savings might accrue if contracts for providing interlibrary loan clearinghouse functions were bid competitively. Two slightly different Request for Proposals documents might be prepared. One might seek

ILL services from a large public library that possesses collection depth in resources not typically found in academic collections. The other might solicit services from a large academic library with collection depth in research areas not typically associated with public library collections. The RFP would require that libraries wishing to submit a bid be “pre-qualified” based on the depth and breadth of their collections and the ability of their libraries to meet certain technology/automation standards.

Our analysis of the current funding structure of interlibrary loan would suggest that there is enough funding statewide to make the RFP/contract process viable; that is, a sufficient number of libraries would be convinced that they could profit by serving as a primary interlibrary loan clearinghouse. The prospect of serving as an Interlibrary Loan Center would further be enhanced if the State, using LSTA funds, subsidized some of the costs involved in making it practical for individual libraries to initiate most of their interlibrary loan requests for materials directly into the automated systems of the contracting libraries.

Recommendation # 5

TSLAC should explore the possibility of establishing a program that would enable libraries to gain the maximum benefit from the State’s program for leasing computers and computer peripherals.

The Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund has played a major role in helping Texas' public libraries enter the world of digital information. Unfortunately, few libraries are likely to be able to sustain their technology over the long term. Sustainability is a real and growing problem. While emerging efforts of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation aimed at sustainability may help somewhat, public libraries will need encouragement and assistance if they are going to continue to meet the needs of their communities.

We believe that the leasing of computers and computer-related equipment at the highly competitive rates available to the State government would help libraries in their struggle to sustain their technology. Leasing has several advantages. First, it softens the blow associated with a large capital purchase by extending payment over time. Second, it begins to make the purchase of current technology more of an ongoing, operational cost as opposed to a one-time capital cost.

It is our understanding that most, but not all, of Texas’ public libraries are currently eligible for state pricing on computer purchasing and leasing. However, relatively few libraries are taking advantage of this benefit on an ongoing basis. TSLAC needs to explore ways to make this program easily accessible to public libraries and to encourage libraries to take advantage of it.

Although a statewide leasing program for libraries is by no means a solution to the technology sustainability problem, nevertheless, it may help a good number of libraries cope with what is an enormous, and growing, problem.

Expand Governance Options

We believe that an expansion of the governance options available to regional library systems and to local libraries along with the encouragement of systems and local libraries to adopt alternative governance structures holds great potential for addressing problems that currently impede public library development.

Recommendation # 6

Encourage the exploration of the establishment of joint school-public libraries under interlocal agreements in areas where stand-alone public libraries are unlikely to remain viable.

High quality joint school-public libraries are difficult to establish and are even harder to maintain. Over time, there is a tendency for such libraries to become ineffective as a public library, a school library, or both. While the establishment of a joint school public library brings some compromises with it, the consultants believe that it is an option that can enable communities that would not otherwise have reasonable school *or* public library service to have access to adequate services.

Texas already has some successful joint school-public libraries that can serve as models. The Springlake-Earth Library is a particularly good example of a community library located on a school campus that serves the needs of both schoolchildren and the general public. While the school-public library approach is not right for every community, we believe that this approach may be the only viable strategy for providing services in some areas of the State. The approach has the potential for expanding the tax base and the mix of funding for library services while at the same time reducing overhead and administrative costs.

As with the formation of larger units of service discussed earlier, the consultants do not believe that libraries should or could be forced to adopt this governance structure. Rather, we believe that this model should be encouraged, and supported with incentives, particularly in areas where the municipal and county tax base is poor and is in decline.

We believe that TSLAC and the regional systems need to take a proactive stance in encouraging some libraries to consider this alternative. Both TSLAC and the systems have roles to play in helping communities consider whether this is an arrangement that will work for them and in assisting libraries that follow this course.

Recommendation # 7

Encourage libraries that would benefit from current library district legislation to consider this course and work to expand library district legislation to allow for districts funded with property tax revenues.

The establishment of library districts in Texas is one of the library development success stories of the last decade. The dozen or so libraries that have successfully become library districts have derived great benefit from their actions. In most cases, these libraries are now funded at levels several times greater than the amounts they had before the districts were in place.

The consultants believe that the formation of library districts can be a powerful tool for library development in the State. Enabling the formation of districts has been a major strategy for the improvement of library services in a number of states. Although the overall success rate of libraries in levy and bond elections has dropped in recent years, libraries are still winning more of these elections than they lose. Libraries typically fare better when they have the opportunity to take their case for funding directly to the people compared to when their appeal for funding is filtered through municipal or county governments.

Unfortunately, the statutes that enable the creation of library districts in Texas are quite limited and significantly restrict the number of communities that can take advantage of them. The current legislation is of little practical assistance in areas that have a meager retail sector and many other areas are already at or near the tax cap level. Nevertheless, there are still some libraries that would derive great benefit from becoming districts even under the current restrictive enabling legislation. We believe that TSLAC and the regional library systems need to take a proactive stance toward the identification of libraries that are located in areas that have sufficient retail sales and room under the tax caps to benefit from establishing districts. These libraries should then be encouraged to pursue this course of action.

Furthermore, and even more importantly, TSLAC should work with TLA, the regional library systems, and with local libraries and units of government to seek legislative changes that would allow for property tax based library districts. The consultants are aware that property tax districts were considered and have been rejected in the past. However, we believe that the passage of legislation that

would allow for property tax based library districts and the widespread adoption of this form of governance has the potential to transform the face of public library development in Texas. This recommendation should be seen as among the highest in priority. It should be seen as one of the major keys to progress.

One final note; in our opinion, any new district legislation should be crafted in such a way as to allow for the formation of the multi-county libraries mentioned earlier.

Recommendation # 8

Regional library systems should be encouraged to consider alternative governance structures.

A study of exemplary library systems in multiple states conducted by the consultants last year found that systems organized as non-profits exhibited greater flexibility and tended to be more entrepreneurial than those organized as quasi-governmental units or as extensions of “parent” libraries. While the Major Resource Center (MRC) model may still be viable in some regions of the State, we believe that in other areas it has limited the ability of systems to succeed.

Texas has two systems that currently operate outside of what might be seen as the traditional framework. NTRLS stands alone as the only non-profit regional library system in Texas. NETLS is hosted by the Nicholson Memorial Library System in Garland rather than by the largest public library in its region. There are some evidences that the additional flexibility afforded these systems by virtue of their unique situations has enabled them to pursue opportunities not available to other systems.

It should be recognized that there are real costs and problems associated with the operation of a stand-alone non-profit entity. However, an examination of successful systems nationally leads to the conclusion that this governance structure holds the greatest hope for long-term viability. Furthermore, we believe that if more Texas systems were organized as non-profits, they could reduce some costs by sharing some administrative services. For example, multiple systems could form a “group” for the purpose of providing health insurance to system staff (and possibly even for the staff members of libraries who do not have coverage).

The non-profit model also expands opportunities for seeking additional funding. Many foundations offer grants to non-profits that are not available to government entities. Some non-profit systems in other states have improved their “mix” of funding through entrepreneurial efforts that provide premium services to

members or, in some cases, to other types of libraries and even non-library entities.

We believe that a reexamination of the MRC host model is in order and that greater efficiency and lower administrative costs might result from pursuing alternate models including the non-profit governance structure and the hosting of systems by medium-sized libraries. The idea of allowing qualified libraries (other than just the largest library in the region) to bid competitively for the privilege of serving as a system headquarters was mentioned earlier. We believe that this process also has considerable merit and should be considered.

Increase Funding

The inadequacy of funding for libraries and for systems has been cited repeatedly as a major impediment to public library development. Several of the recommendations presented above, particularly those dealing with public library governance structures, are aimed at broadening the base of tax support for public libraries. However, it has also been noted that state aid for library purposes in Texas has been minimal.

Although the magnitude of the direct aid provided through the Loan Star Libraries program is small, the consultants believe that having the program in place is of tremendous importance. This program provides a foundation on which the Texas library community can build.

The consultants suggest that several different strategies must be employed to deal with the funding situation. The first, and perhaps the most difficult to implement, bundles direct aid to local libraries, State funding for regional library systems, and the implementation of new public library standards together. In several of the Town Hall meetings, we characterized this approach as being a “three-legged stool.” In short, the approach argues that public libraries in Texas need both direct aid and assistance from regional systems to achieve a level of service consistent with contemporary library standards.

A second approach to funding seeks to broaden the options available to local libraries to garner better support at the local level. We have already mentioned both the larger unit of service concept and the library district concept. A third strategy for enhancing funding on the local level relates primarily to high growth areas. We believe that the partners in public library development should look at the possibility of positioning libraries to receive impact fees to support new library facilities and opening day collections in rapid growth areas.

The final approach to enhancing library funding relates to philanthropic and charitable organizations. We think that TSLAC and TLA should work together

with the philanthropic “angels” that have traditionally helped Texas libraries to develop strategies aimed at elevating the profile of libraries in the eyes of other foundations. We also believe that the “challenge-grant” concept has great potential for tapping the generosity of individual Texans who love and value public libraries.

Recommendation # 9

The work of the TSLAC/TLA Joint Task Force on Public Library Standards and Accreditation should consider long-term strategies to link funding with the implementation of standards.

The Texas library community needs to approach standards as a tool for public library development rather than as an implement of punishment. One of the ways to accomplish this is to provide incentives to libraries that meet minimum standards. The new Joint Task Force on Public Library Standards and Accreditation has a wonderful opportunity to change the existing mind-set regarding standards by looking at the role that each of the library partners can play in the achievement of standards. Reaching new higher standards should not be seen as solely the responsibility of the local library.

The Texas library community is badly divided in regard to the adoption and implementation of new public library standards. Some argue that the lack of quality standards denies them a valuable tool that can be used to increase funding and improve library and information services. Others are adamant that standards will result in the demise of many small libraries.

A more complete discussion of the consultants’ recommendations regarding standards will be found under Recommendation # 15. However, we would note two key considerations at this juncture. First, library standards should not be approached from the library standpoint. Rather, standards should be considered from the user point of view. It is possible to reach different conclusions regarding the value of standards if the question is posed in terms of “What do library users need, expect, and deserve?” rather than, “What does my library need to have or do?” Second, libraries need to see real evidence that assistance will be available that will enable them to work toward the attainment of the standards that are adopted. The consultants believe that this assistance must include consulting and technical support from TSLAC and from the regional systems as well as incentives in the form of direct funding to partially offset some of the costs associated with reaching standards.

Recommendation # 10

The partners in public library development should explore non-traditional sources of potential income for libraries including, but not limited to, impact fees.

Discovering what non-traditional sources of income may have potential and determining how libraries might access these sources will require significant research. Different types of non-traditional funding may be available in areas that are experiencing distinctive problems. For example, some kinds of funding, such as impact fees, may only be feasible in high growth areas; however, opportunities to tap other alternate funding sources may only exist in areas with depressed economies.

Impact fees are typically charges assessed to developers to help offset the cost of establishing services that will be demanded as a result of their development activities. Sometimes these fees take the form of requirements that the developer bear the cost for improvements such as curb and gutter. In other instances, developers are required to establish a certain percentage of green space or parkland within the development. Library examples of the assessment of impact fees might include requiring a developer of a shopping mall to provide land for a library on the mall property or to actually construct library space within a development.

The consultants believe that the Joint TSLAC/TLA Task Force on Implementation of the Study of Public Library Development should have a sub-committee devoted to the exploration of non-traditional sources of tax and non-tax revenues for libraries. The sub-committee's charge should include looking at potential sources of State and Federal income through programs related to areas such as economic development, workforce development, and agriculture as well as education.

Recommendation # 11

TSLAC, TLA, and the regional library systems should work together with friends in charitable organizations to develop a coordinated plan designed to ensure that all libraries are aware of and take advantage of opportunities to secure gifts and grants of all types.

Fund-raising and grant writing can be difficult work. Many libraries never attempt it because it seems overwhelming. The large number of libraries that have benefited from the generosity of the Tocker Foundation have been able to do so

because that organization has made it extremely easy for libraries to apply for funding. However, libraries are eligible for grants from many other foundations that have application processes that are considerably more intimidating. Many, if not most, libraries need some assistance in accessing these funds.

The consultants saw evidence that TSLAC, TLA, and the regional systems have all helped libraries in their efforts to secure funds from foundations and from other charitable organizations. What we are proposing above is that these partners in public library development work more closely together to develop a comprehensive, coordinated approach to securing private funds in which each of the partners knows and understands its appropriate assigned role. For example, TSLAC might formalize an activity in which it is already involved by officially taking on primary responsibilities for identifying potential sources of funding and for acting as a clearinghouse for providing contact information. TLA might fulfill the role of contacting potential donors to encourage the consideration of specific projects and/or general support for library initiatives. The regional systems may act as the technical support specialists by helping libraries develop a quality proposal and complete required paperwork.

We are also of the opinion that many opportunities are missed because libraries fail to join together to seek funding for projects of mutual benefit. All three of the partners may have roles to play in identifying types of projects that funders might find attractive and “aggregating” libraries into groups to pursue grants.

Finally, we would suggest that TSLAC should carefully explore the role that it might play in encouraging and assisting Texas libraries in pursuing direct IMLS funding through programs such as "National Leadership Grants for Libraries" and "National Leadership Grants for Library-Museum Collaboration."

Improve Cooperation and Coordination

The consultants believe that both the Texas State Library and Archives Commission and the regional library systems share a vision for improved library service. However, it is also apparent that relationships between TSLAC and the systems have been and continue to be strained. This has resulted in less than optimal performance in several areas.

We believe that TSLAC and the regional systems should work to strengthen the relationships between and among the entities by building on common ground. One of the areas of great interest to both the State Library and the systems is continuing education. In fact, several other entities, including TLA, the three ALA accredited library schools, and AMIGOS are also stakeholders in continuing education for librarianship.

In spite of a shared interest in continuing education, there is little evidence that there has been much coordination of CE efforts among these players in the past. Working to improve the coordination of CE efforts could serve several ends. It could reduce needless duplication of efforts, it could enhance the quality of CE offerings, and it could build the relationships among the partners in public library development.

Recommendation #12

TSLAC and the regional systems should use their mutual interest in continuing education as a platform for developing a new and higher level of cooperation.

The consultants believe that TSLAC and the regional systems can work together with TLA and the library schools to develop a statewide plan for continuing education for librarianship that builds on the respective strengths and resources of each of the partners. We think that the timing is good for such an effort. The newly installed videoconferencing sites provide new opportunities for collaborative efforts that have not been fully explored.

The consultants envision all of the parties working together to design a statewide continuing education curriculum with each of the parties taking responsibility for the development of specific components. Each of the partners has something unique to contribute. For example, the regional system coordinators bring a great deal of knowledge of what librarians at the local level need in the way of continuing education. They also have greater capability to deliver CE within the regions. The library schools have exceptional professional resources and personnel that could benefit all libraries in the State. TSLAC has specialized staff that can assist with the development of course content as well a powerful new mechanism for delivering content (videoconferencing). TLA has the ability and resources to attract nationally prominent experts to provide programs of interest to librarians at its annual conference.

The consultants recommend that the Joint TSLAC/TLA Task Force on Implementation of the Study of Public Library Development create a sub-committee devoted to determining the best method of improving the coordination of library CE activities in the State.

Recommendation # 13

Regional library systems should explore ways to cooperate more closely with each other.

The consultants found some evidence that a few of the systems work together on joint continuing education programs; however, this appears to be the exception rather than the rule. As noted in Recommendation # 12, continuing education is an area where cooperative efforts would be beneficial.

However, there are several other good candidates for cooperative efforts among systems as well. Nearly one-quarter of the funding that flows to regional library systems is used for collection development purposes. In spite of this similarity, each of the systems handles this aspect of its program independently. There is little or no cooperation among systems in securing discounts from vendors or in the processes used to implement the variety of different approaches to handling collection development. Greater coordination in this area can lead to greater efficiency and can reduce needless duplication of effort.

We do not mean to suggest that individual systems could not customize their collection development program to meet specific goals or to encourage certain practices. What we are suggesting is that centralizing administrative and clerical functions for collection development could reduce costs, and perhaps more importantly, free some system staff time that could be devoted to higher impact activities.

The consultants also believe that the regional systems can work together to build special talents and skills that can be shared on a statewide basis. Larger systems with greater staffing depth could assist the smaller systems while, at the same time, enhance their revenue. As an example, a system that lacks library facilities planning expertise could contract with a larger system with a staff member that has such expertise to provide a certain number of hours of consulting assistance. If several systems contracted for the service, it could generate supplemental funding for the larger system while offering the members of the other systems a higher level of expertise than would otherwise be available to them. Alternatively, multiple systems could pool their resources to retain a consultant, or a limited term employee with expertise in a particular area of interest.

Recommendation # 14

TSLAC should continue to work closely with all of the partners in public library development to ensure that all public libraries continue to have access to a significant selection of online databases.

Texas' public libraries are faced with a significant challenge in sustaining the availability of online databases. The consultants believe that these resources are extremely important to the future viability public libraries in Texas. Solutions

that provide databases to only large or well-funded libraries should not be seen as acceptable.

It is likely that continuation of a quality (albeit reduced) set of databases will likely require some sharing of costs. Larger libraries are likely to end up facing a larger share of the cost because of the fact that they serve larger populations. A good case can also be made for the argument that the cost for adding the smallest libraries is a "marginal" cost and that therefore, they should be assessed at an even lower rate than simply dividing by service population would produce. We believe that all parties must work with the TexShare Fee Task Force to find a way to make sure all libraries can participate.

This is likely to require the reallocation of some LSTA funds. It may also require careful consideration of the reallocation of some funding now dedicated to collection development grants through regional systems. This decision would certainly be unpopular, particularly with libraries that have not used the electronic resources heavily in the past. However, it is our considered opinion that maintaining universal access to a quality set of databases is essential to maintaining the position of public libraries as a relevant institution in the twenty-first century. There are clearly sacrifices that will have to be made.

Every effort should be made to make it possible for small libraries to participate in the database program. Ensuring the continuation of this program as a statewide program is critically important.

Adopt and Implement Higher Standards

We have already described an approach to standards implementation that ties standards to the funding and assistance needed to achieve the standards. We have also implied that many librarians in Texas see standards as an implement of punishment rather than a tool for public library development.

We believe that the first step in the adoption and implementation of higher standards must be an information campaign that helps librarians understand the role that standards can play in improving services and funding. The library community must be encouraged to look at the TLA Standards developed in 2000 as a description of quality library service.

The consultants believe that many in the library community that are most frightened by the standards have not read them carefully. The committee that worked on the standards went to great lengths to develop a "tiered" system of standards designed to accommodate libraries of varying sizes. It is apparent that many librarians have simply looked at the individual standards without

paying adequate attention to either the tiers or to the required and/or elective designations.

We believe that some other librarians are threatened by the fact that there are so many standards. We believe that the new Joint TSLAC/TLA Task Force on Public Library Standards and Accreditation can help the library community focus on a smaller subset of the standards as it considers “Minimum Standards for Accreditation.” We also believe that an implementation approach that first acknowledges the areas in which libraries are successful will help ease the pain.

Recommendation # 15

The Joint TSLAC/TLA Task Force on Public Library Standards needs to develop a plan for standards implementation that accomplishes three goals. They are:

- **creating an awareness that standards can be a valuable tool in public library development,**
- **identifying a core subset of minimum standards that are challenging but, with assistance, achievable, and**
- **clearly spelling out the kind of assistance and aid that will be sought to help libraries meet standards.**

The job of the Joint Task Force will be a difficult one. There is a great deal of difference between promulgating and publishing standards and motivating libraries to work actively toward meeting them. The Task Force needs to consider ways of conveying both the importance of the standards to the end users of libraries and the benefits that will accrue to the library because those standards are met.

The 1901 definition of library development quoted earlier in this document included giving “...advice and instruction to all libraries or individuals and to all communities which may propose to establish libraries as to the best means for establishing, organizing, and administering such libraries.” Standards are a fundamental means of expressing “the best means for... administering” libraries. They express both what is essential and what is desirable in order to provide library users with the information and resources they want and need.

The first step must be an effort to help all in the library community understand what the standards are and what they are not. They are a description of the essential qualities of a modern public library. They are **not** an arbitrary set of unrealistic goals intended only for well-funded libraries. To argue that the standards should not apply to small or rural libraries is to suggest that library

users in small communities are less important and have less important information needs than their counterparts in larger communities.

Having said that, we also believe that the Task Force needs to identify a sub-set of standards on which all libraries can initially focus. Furthermore, we think that it is essential that any discussion around standards include a dialogue about the resources that will be available to help libraries work toward meeting the new standards.

We anticipate that these resources will include consulting and technical assistance from both TSLAC and the regional systems in addition to some monetary incentive to offset some of the costs related to meeting standards.

APPENDIX A - Site Visits

Alamo Area Library System - AALS

Barksdale (Neuces Canyon Public Library)**

Boerne Public Library

Camp Wood Public Library*

Castroville Public Library**

Comfort Public Library**

Fredericksburg (Pioneer Memorial Library)*

Hondo Public Library

Kerrville (Butt-Holdsworth Memorial Library)*

Leakey (Real County Public Library)

New Braunfels Public Library

Rocksprings (Claud H. Gilmer Memorial Library)*

Sabinal Public Library**

San Antonio (Central Library)

San Antonio (Bazan Branch)

Uvalde (El Progreso Memorial Library)

Big Country Library System - BCLS

Abilene Public Library

Ballinger (Carnegie Library)*

Cisco Public Library**

Colorado City (Mitchell County Public Library)
Comanche Public Library
Eastland (Centennial Memorial Library)
Eldorado (Schleicher County Public Library)
San Angelo (Tom Green County Library System)
Sweetwater (County-City Library)

Central Texas Library System - CTLS

Austin Public Library
Bastrop Public Library
Bryan (Bryan College Station Public Library)
Bryan (Carnegie Center of Brazos Valley History)
Buda Public Library*
College Station Public Library
Hewitt Community Library
Kyle Community Library*
Rockdale (Lucy Hill Patterson Memorial Library)
San Marcos (San Marcos Public Library)
Waco (Waco-McLennan County Library)
Waco (R.B. Hoover Branch)
West Lake Hills (Westbank Community Library)

* Self-Guided Tour

** Drive-by Only

Houston Area Library System - HALS

Cleveland (Austin Memorial Library)

Conroe (Montgomery County Memorial Library System)

Diboll (T.L.L. Temple Memorial Library)

Grapeland**

Lufkin (Kurth Memorial Library)

Nacogdoches Public Library

Pasadena Public Library

Shepherd Public Library

Northeast Texas Library System - NETLS

Daingerfield Public Library

Garland (Nicholson Memorial Library – South Garland Branch)

Longview Public Library

Mt. Pleasant Public Library

Noonday Community Library (no photos)

Palestine Public Library

Tyler Public Library (no photos)

North Texas Regional Library System - NTRLs

Arlington Public Library System (Main Library)

Crowell (Foard County Library)**

Crowley Public Library

* Self-Guided Tour

** Drive-by Only

Denton (Central Library)
Denton (South Branch)
Denton (North Branch – under construction)**
Ft. Worth Public Library
Mansfield Public Library
Mineral Wells (Boyce Ditto Public Library)**
Paducah (Bicentennial City-County Library)
Quanah (Thompson Sawyer Public Library)
Roanoke Public Library
Saginaw (John Ed Keeter Public Library)
Weatherford**
Wichita Falls Public Library

South Texas Library System - STLS

Beeville (Joe Barnhart – Bee County Library)
Corpus Christi Public Library
Goliad (Goliad County Library)
La Joya (La Joya Municipal Library)*
Laredo Public Library
McAllen (McAllen Memorial Library)
Victoria Public Library

* Self-Guided Tour

** Drive-by Only

Texas Panhandle Library System - TPLS

Amarillo Public Library

Canyon Area Library

Childress Public Library**

Clarendon (Burton Memorial Library)

Friona Public Library

Hereford (Deaf Smith County Library)

Pampa (Lovett Memorial Library)

Panhandle (Carson County Public Library)

Quitaque (Caprock Public Library)

Turkey Public Library**

Tulia (Swisher County Library)

White Deer (White Deer Branch – Carson County Public Library)**

Texas Trans-Pecos Library System - TTPLS

Alpine Public Library

Balmorhea Public Library*

Clint (Clint ISD Public Library)

El Paso Public Library

Fort Davis (Jeff Davis County Library)

Fort Hancock (Ft. Hancock ISD/Public Library)

Fort Stockton Public Library

Imperial Public Library**

* Self-Guided Tour

** Drive-by Only

Marfa Public Library

Pecos (Reeves County Library)

Tornillo (Tornillo Media Center)

West Texas Library System - WTLS

Big Spring (Howard County Library)

Earth (Springlake-Earth Community Library)

Floyddata (Floyd County Library – Main Library)

Hale Center Public Library, Inc.

Lamesa (Dawson County Public Library)

Lockney (Lockney Branch – Floyd County Library)

Lubbock City-County Library

Matador (Motley County Library)

Midland (Midland County Public Library)

Monahans (Ward County Library)

Muleshoe Area Public Library*

Odessa (Ector County Library)

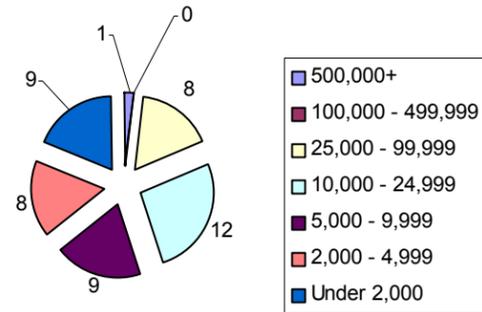
Plainview (Unger Memorial Library)

* Self-Guided Tour

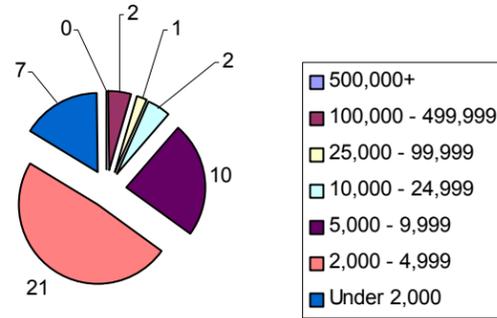
** Drive-by Only

Texas Libraries by Service Population – Displayed by Region

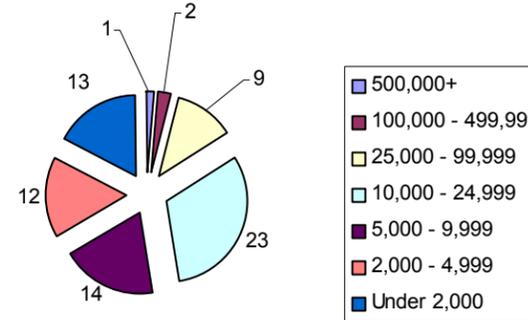
Alamo Area Library System - Libraries by Service Population



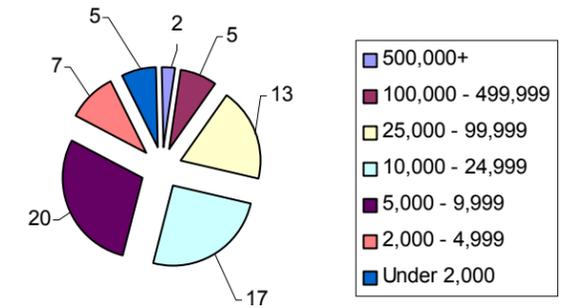
Big Country Library System - Libraries by Service Population



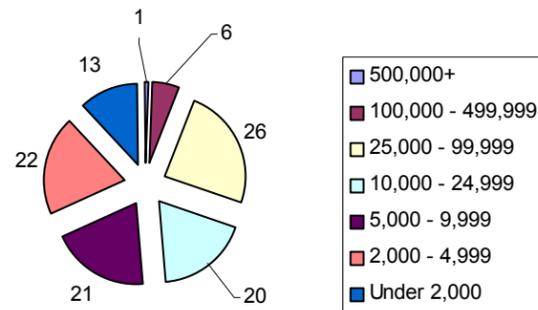
Central Texas Library System - Libraries by Service Population



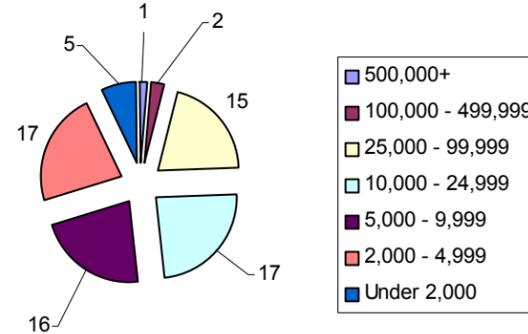
Houston Area Library System - Libraries by Service Population



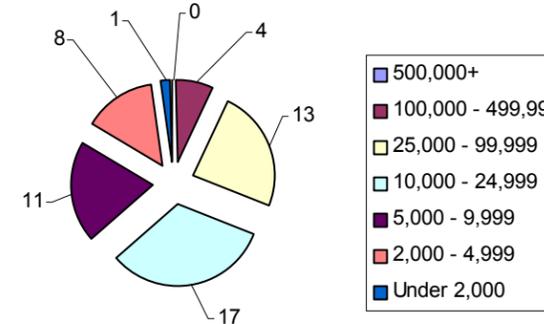
Northeast Texas Library System - Libraries by Service Population



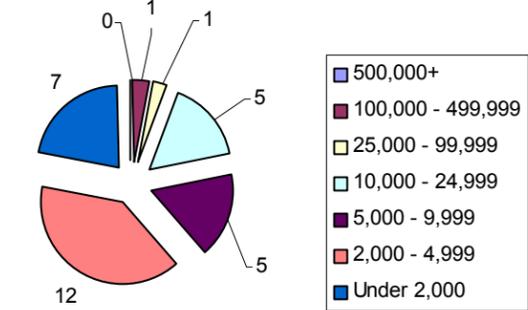
North Texas Regional Library System - Libraries by Service Population



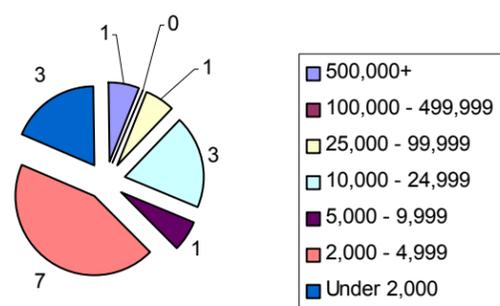
South Texas Library System - Libraries by Service Population



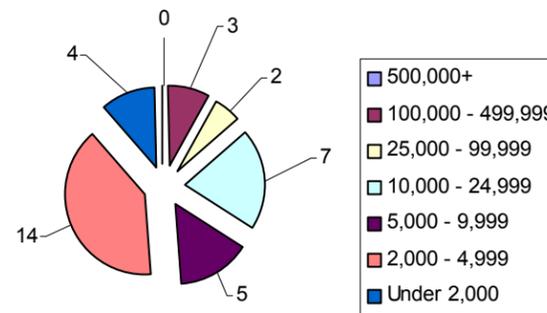
Texas Panhandle Library System - Libraries by Service Population



Texas Trans-Pecos Library System - Libraries by Service Population

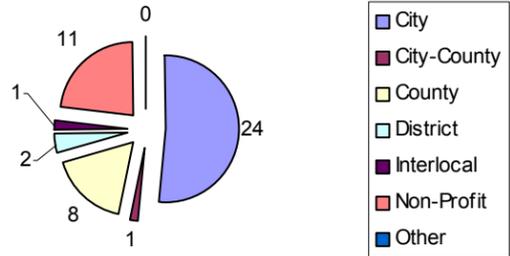


West Texas Library System - Libraries by Service Population

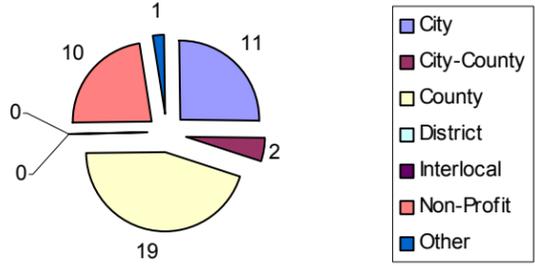


Texas Libraries by Governance Type – Displayed by Region

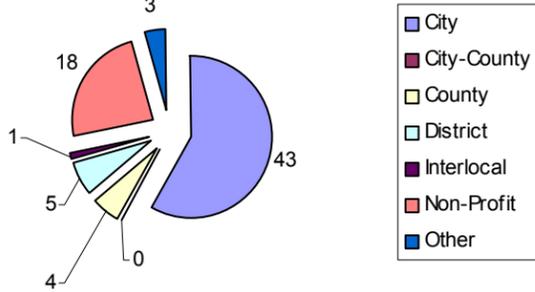
Alamo Area Library System - Libraries by Governance Type



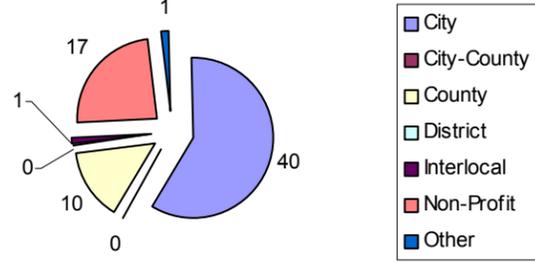
Big Country Library System - Libraries by Governance Type



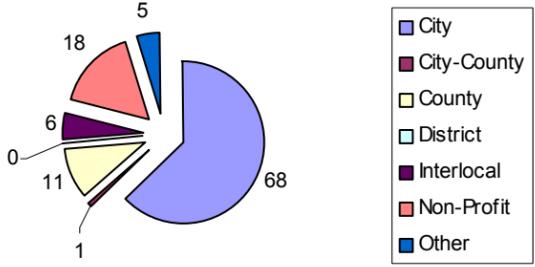
Central Texas Library System - Libraries by Governance Type



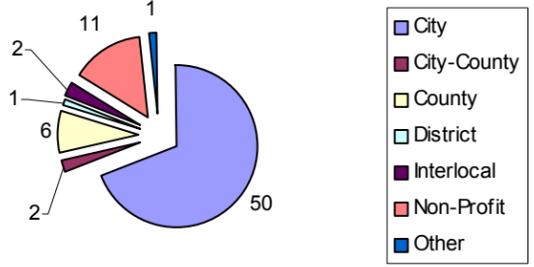
Houston Area Library System - Libraries by Governance Type



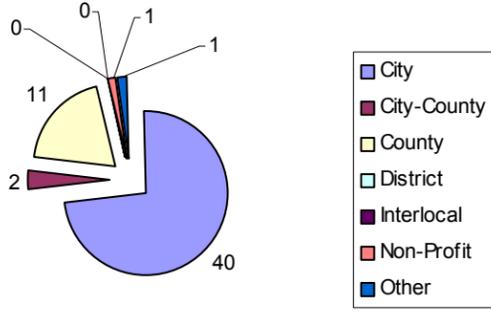
Northeast Texas Library System - Libraries by Governance Type



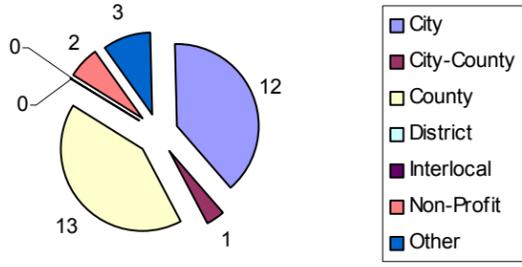
North Texas Regional Library System - Libraries by Governance Type



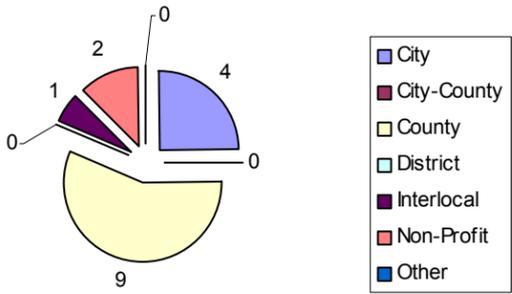
South Texas Library System - Libraries by Governance Type



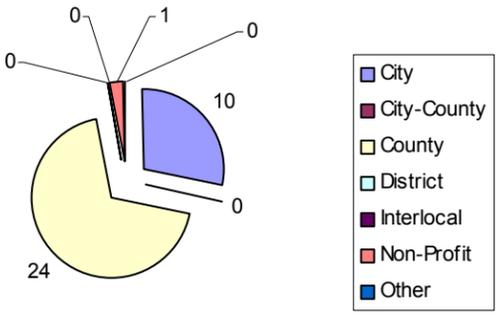
Texas Panhandle Library System - Libraries by Governance Type



Texas Trans-Pecos Library System - Libraries by Governance Type

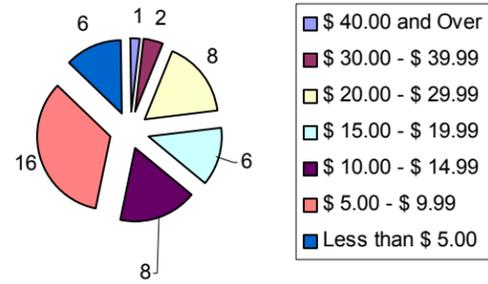


West Texas Library System - Libraries by Governance Type

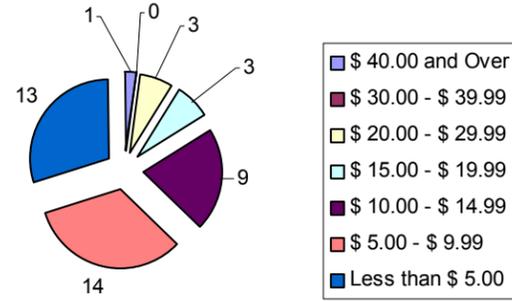


Texas Libraries by per capita Support – Displayed by Region

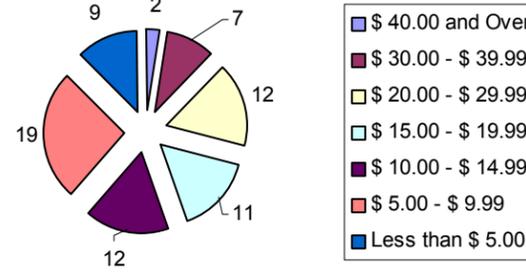
Alamo Area Library System - Libraries by per capita funding



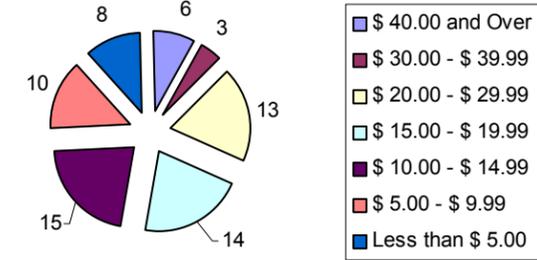
Big Country Library System - Libraries by per capita funding



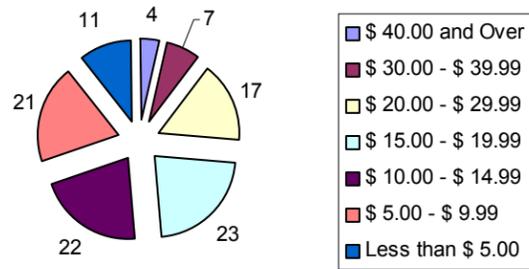
Central Texas Library System - Libraries by per capita Funding



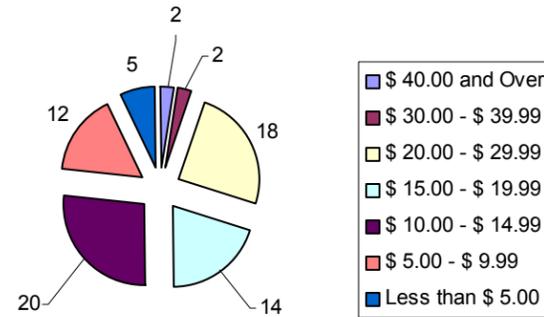
Houston Area Library System - Libraries by per capita Funding



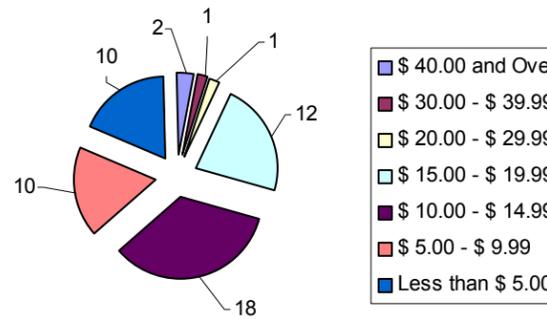
Northeast Texas Library System - Libraries by per capita Funding



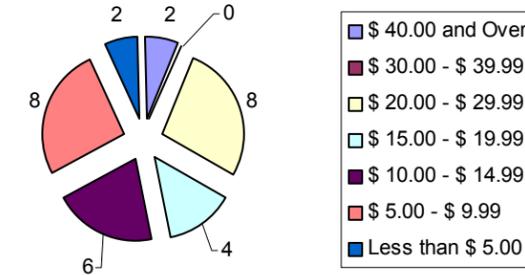
North Texas Regional Library System - Libraries by per capita Funding



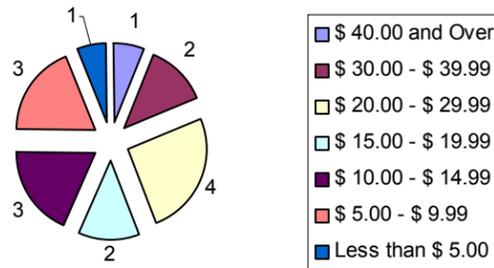
South Texas Library System - Libraries by per capita Funding



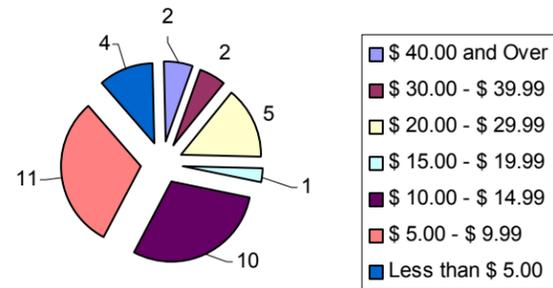
Texas Panhandle Library System - Libraries by per capita Funding



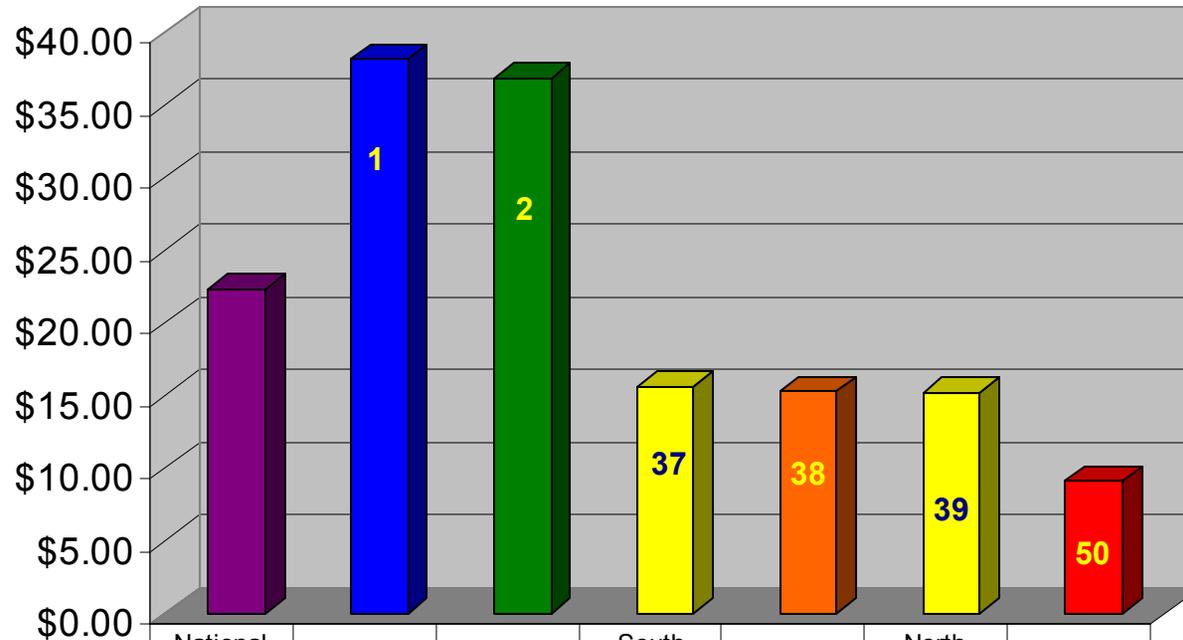
Texas Trans-Pecos Library System - Libraries by per capita funding



West Texas Library System - Libraries by per capita Funding



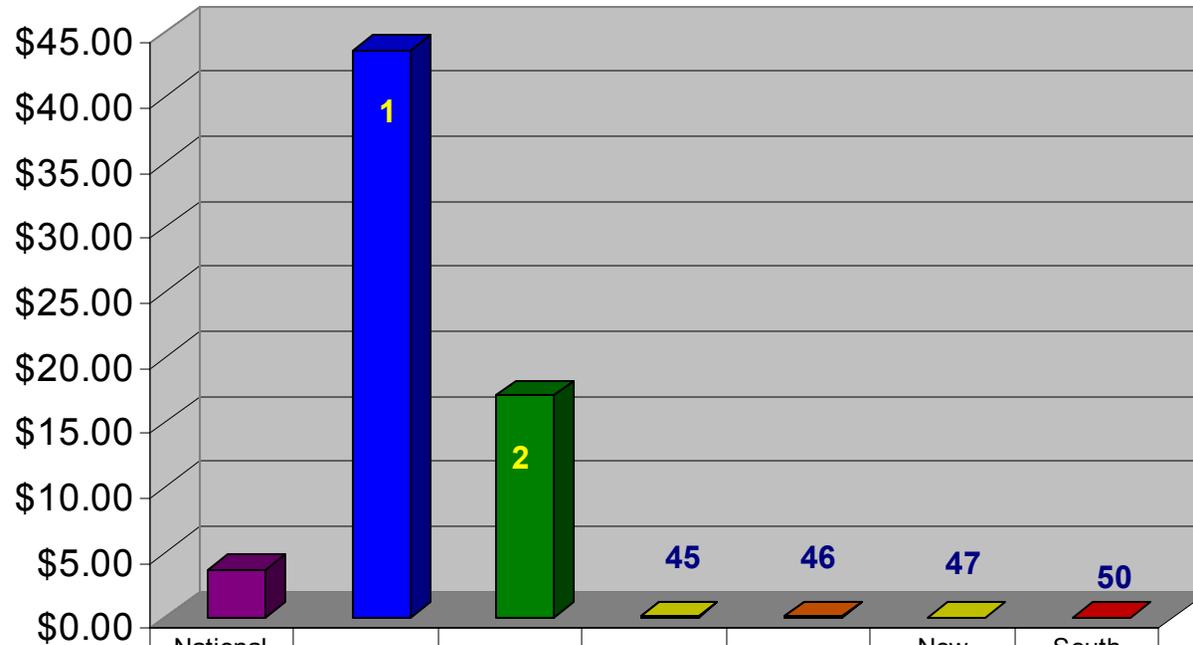
Local Income per capita



	National Mean	New York	Indiana	South Carolina	Texas	North Carolina	Mississippi
Local Income per capita	\$22.32	\$38.12	\$36.88	\$15.61	\$15.26	\$15.22	\$9.10

Source: National Center for Education Statistics
 Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data
Public Libraries in the United States: Fiscal Year 2000
 National Comparisons - Appendix E – Page 1

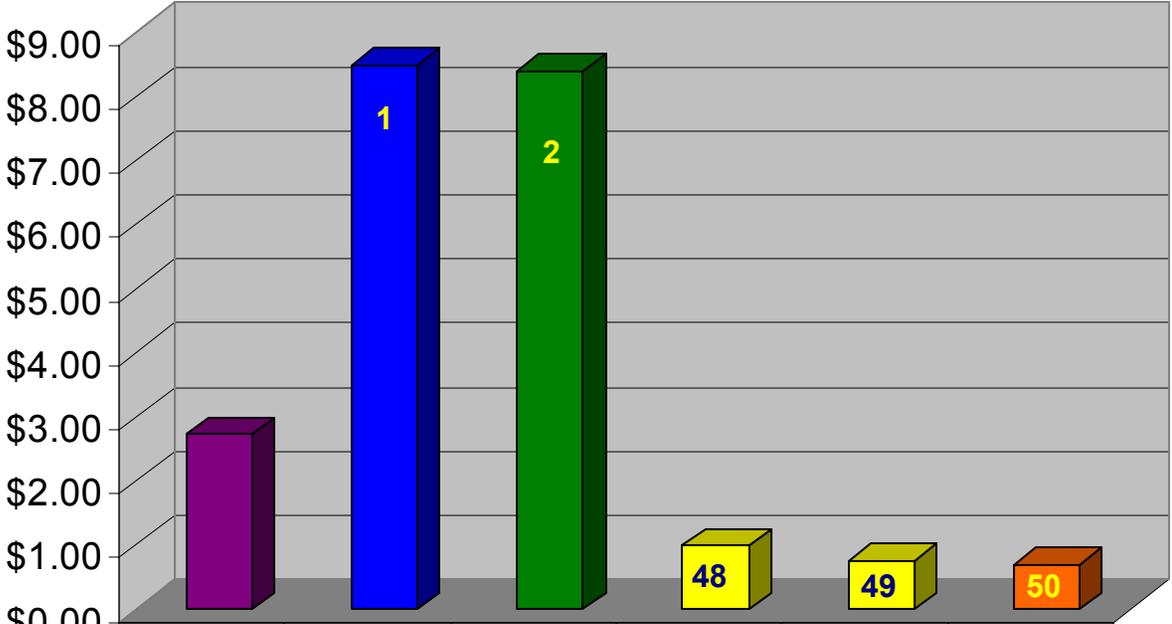
State Income per capita



	National Mean	Ohio	Hawaii	Arizona	Texas	New Hampshire	South Dakota
State Income per capita	\$3.70	\$43.59	\$17.04	\$0.08	\$0.07	\$0.04	\$0.00

Source: National Center for Education Statistics
 Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data
Public Libraries in the United States: Fiscal Year 2000
 National Comparisons - Appendix E – Page 2

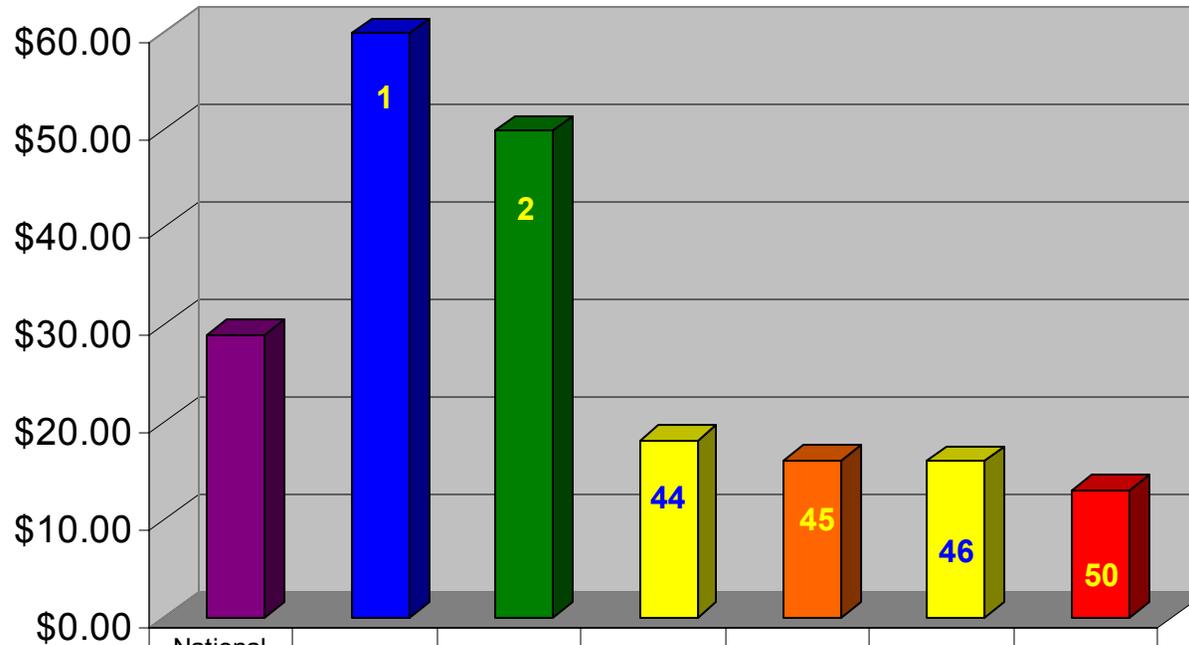
Other Income per capita



	National Mean	Nevada	New York	Mississippi	Arizona	Texas
Other Income per capita	\$2.73	\$8.49	\$8.40	\$0.99	\$0.75	\$0.70

Source: National Center for Education Statistics
 Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data
Public Libraries in the United States: Fiscal Year 2000
 National Comparisons - Appendix E – Page 3

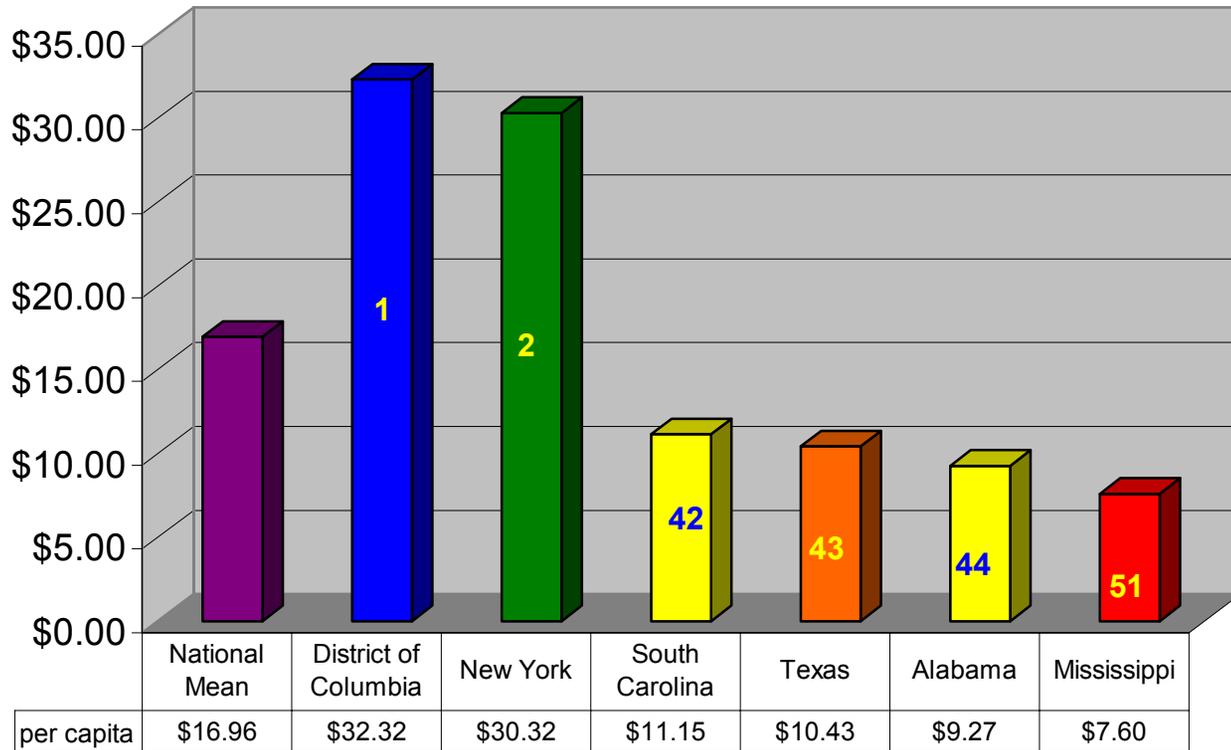
Total Income per capita



	National Mean	Ohio	New York	Kentucky	Texas	Arkansas	Mississippi
Total Income per capita	\$28.96	\$59.93	\$49.92	\$18.18	\$16.11	\$15.99	\$13.10

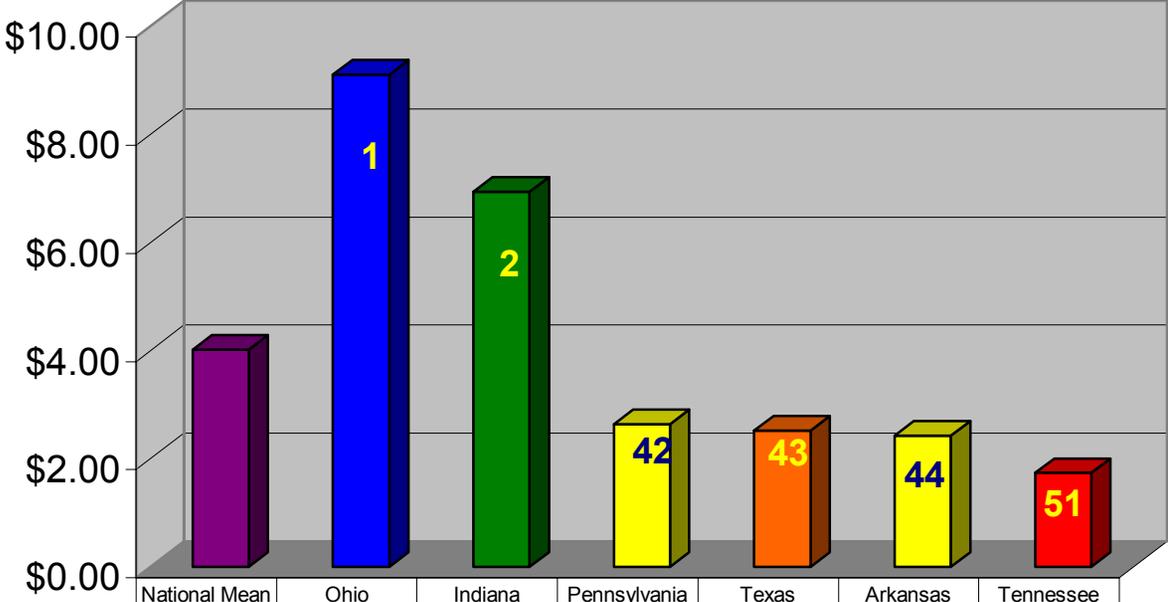
Source: National Center for Education Statistics
 Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data
Public Libraries in the United States: Fiscal Year 2000
 National Comparisons - Appendix E – Page 4

Total Staff Expenditures per capita



Source: National Center for Education Statistics
 Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data
Public Libraries in the United States: Fiscal Year 2000
 National Comparisons - Appendix E – Page 5

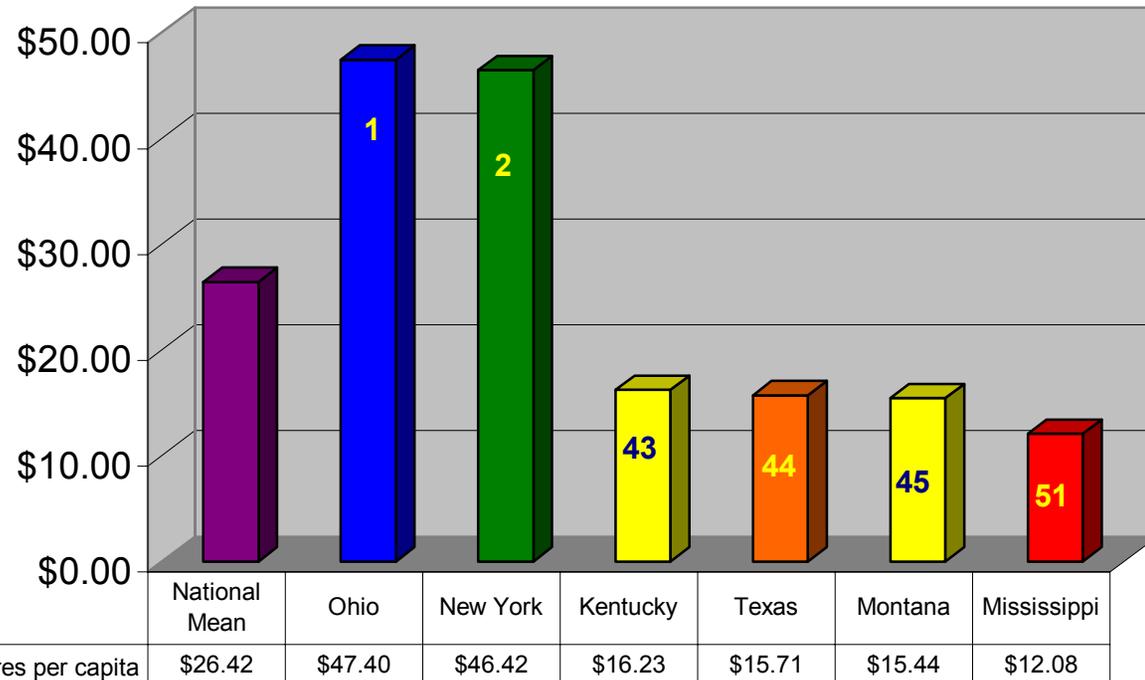
Collection Expenditures per capita



Collection Expenditure per capita	\$4.02	\$9.10	\$6.94	\$2.64	\$2.52	\$2.43	\$1.74
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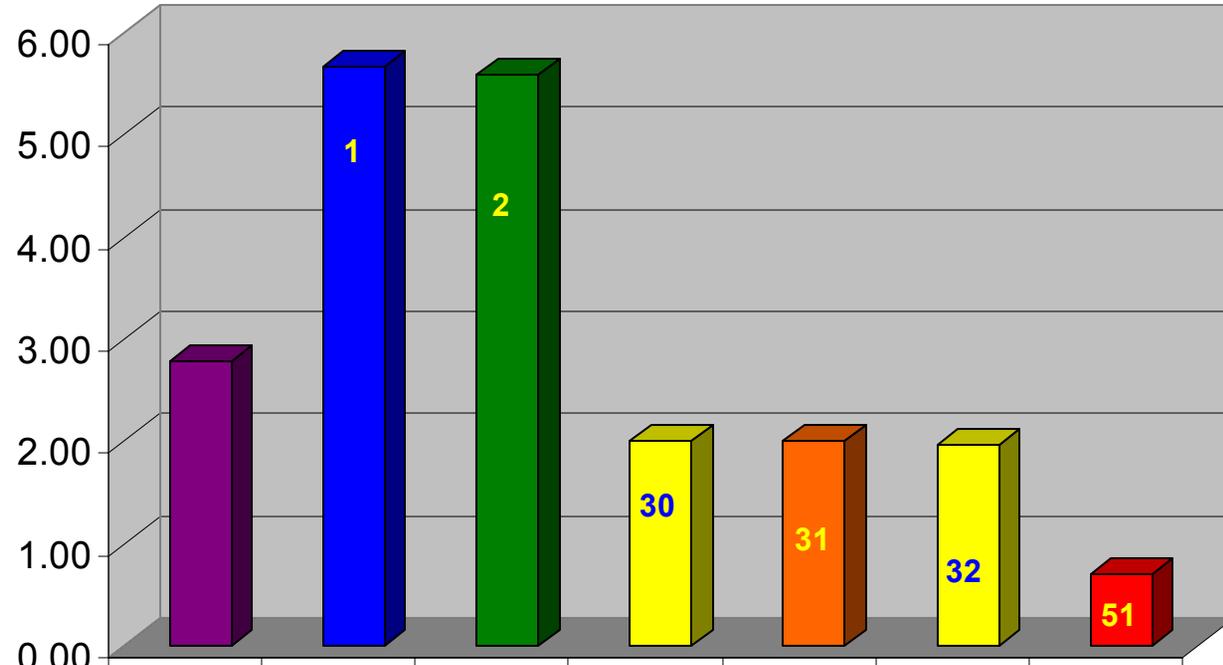
Source: National Center for Education Statistics
 Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data
Public Libraries in the United States: Fiscal Year 2000
 National Comparisons - Appendix E – Page 6

Total Expenditures per capita



Source: National Center for Education Statistics
 Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data
Public Libraries in the United States: Fiscal Year 2000
 National Comparisons - Appendix E – Page 7

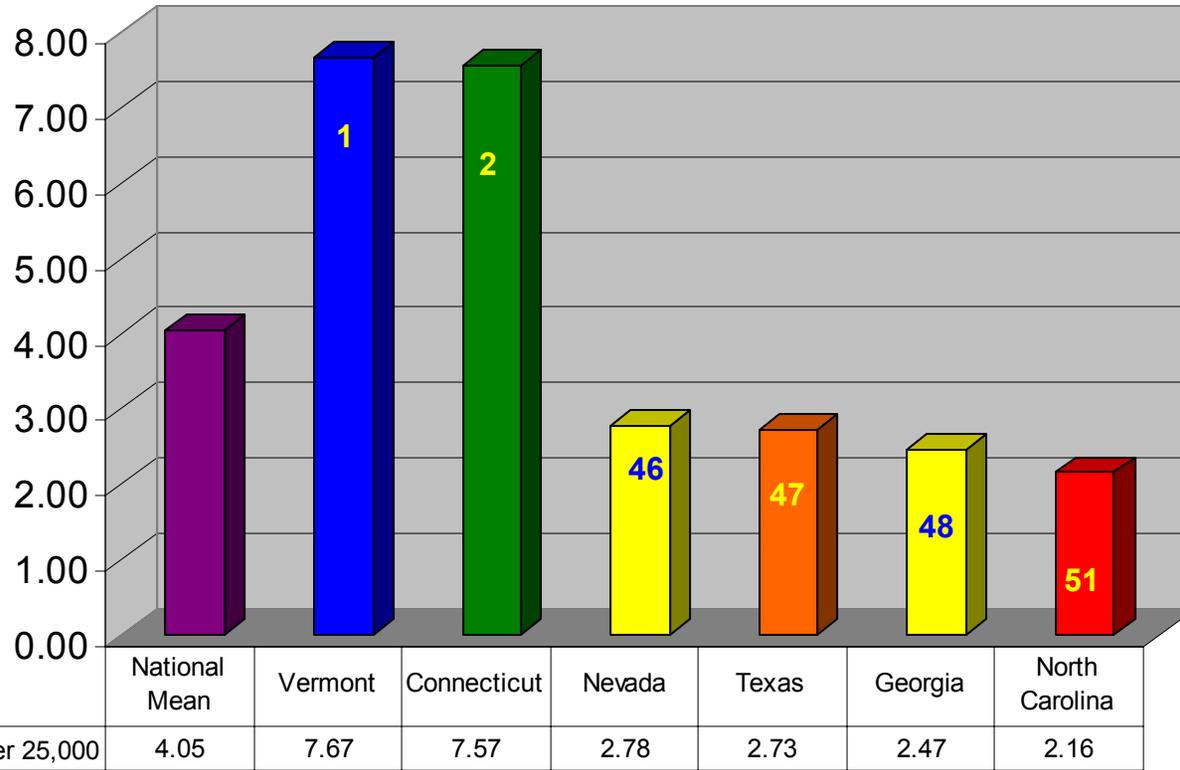
Librarians with ALA MLS per 25,000



	National Mean	Connecticut	District of Columbia	Georgia	Texas	Missouri	Montana
MLs per 25,000	2.78	5.67	5.59	2.01	2.00	1.96	0.70

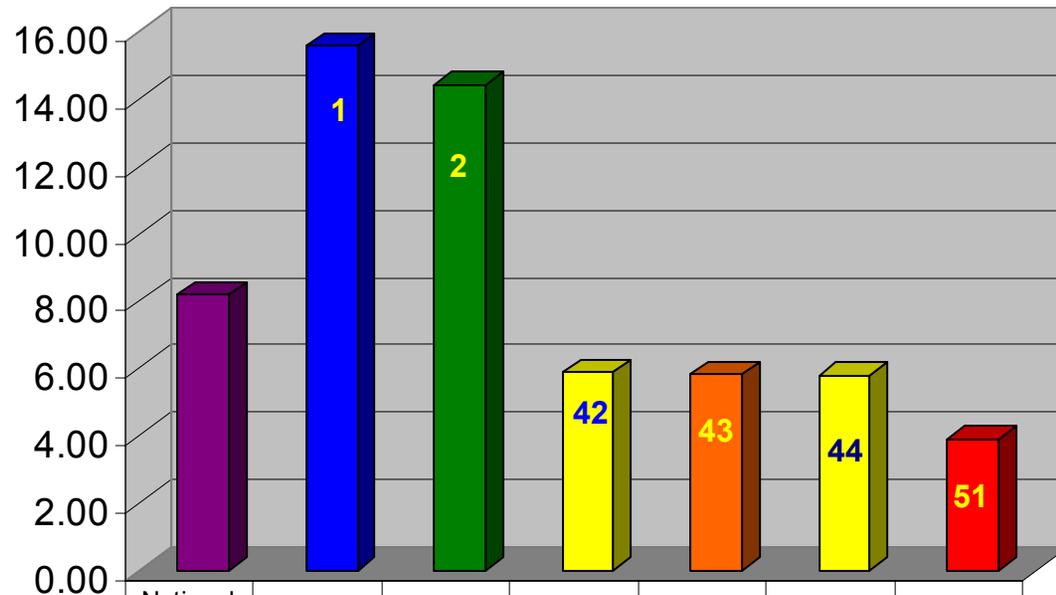
Source: National Center for Education Statistics
 Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data
Public Libraries in the United States: Fiscal Year 2000
 National Comparisons - Appendix E – Page 8

Paid Librarians per 25,000 Population



Source: National Center for Education Statistics
 Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data
Public Libraries in the United States: Fiscal Year 2000
 National Comparisons - Appendix E – Page 9

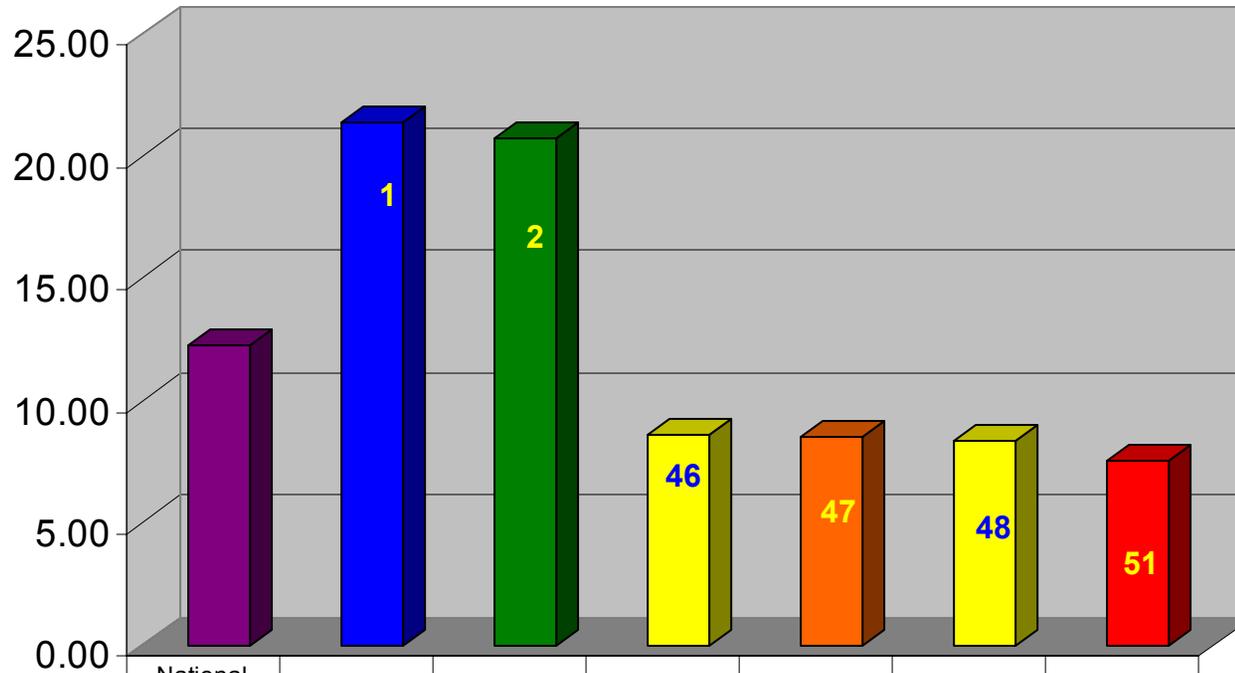
Other Paid Staff per 25,000 Population



	National Mean	Ohio	Indiana	California	Texas	Vermont	Montana
Other Staff per 25,000 Population	8.18	15.56	14.40	5.87	5.82	5.78	3.88

Source: National Center for Education Statistics
 Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data
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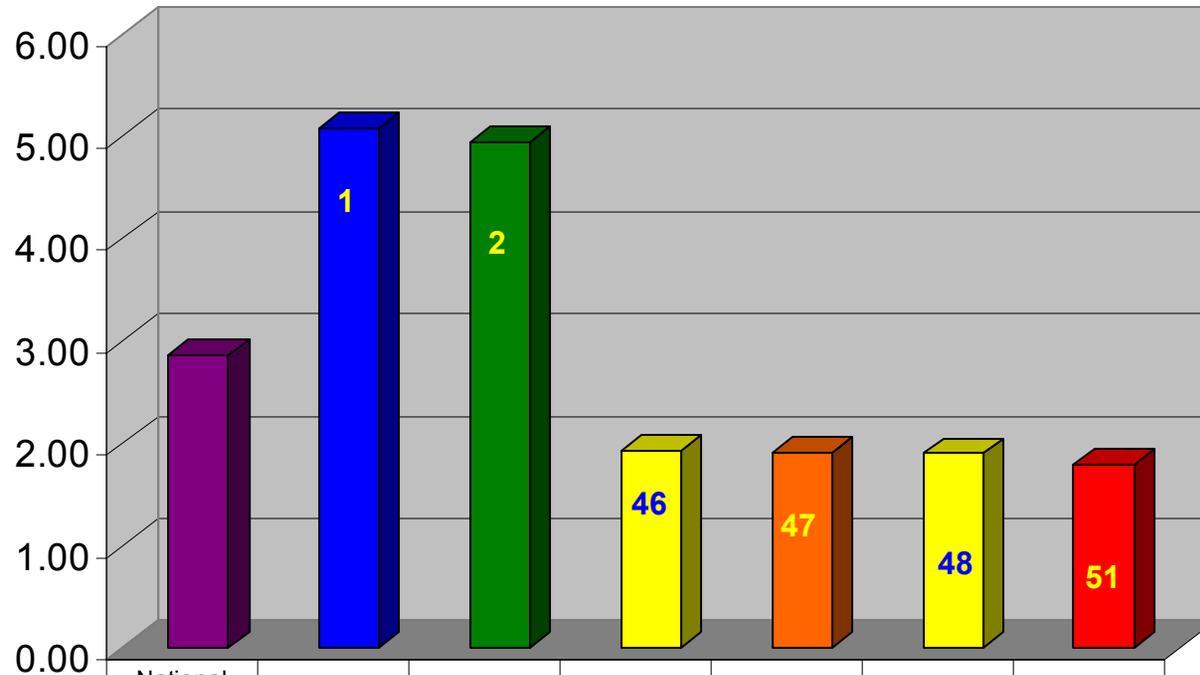
Paid FTE Staff per 25,000 Population



	National Mean	Ohio	Indiana	Montana	Texas	Georgia	Tennessee
FTEs per 25,000	12.23	21.35	20.75	8.61	8.54	8.37	7.50

Source: National Center for Education Statistics
 Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data
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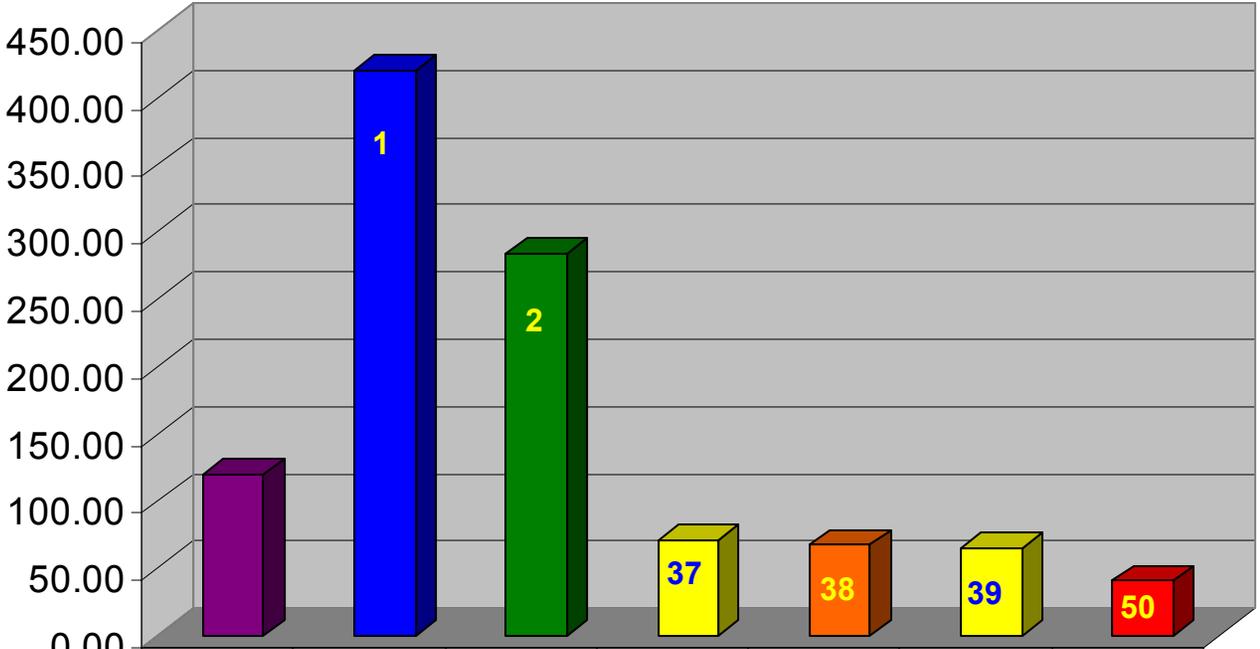
Book and Serial Volumes per capita



	National Mean	Vermont	Wyoming	California	Texas	Georgia	Tennessee
Volumes per capita	2.86	5.09	4.95	1.93	1.91	1.90	1.80

Source: National Center for Education Statistics
 Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data
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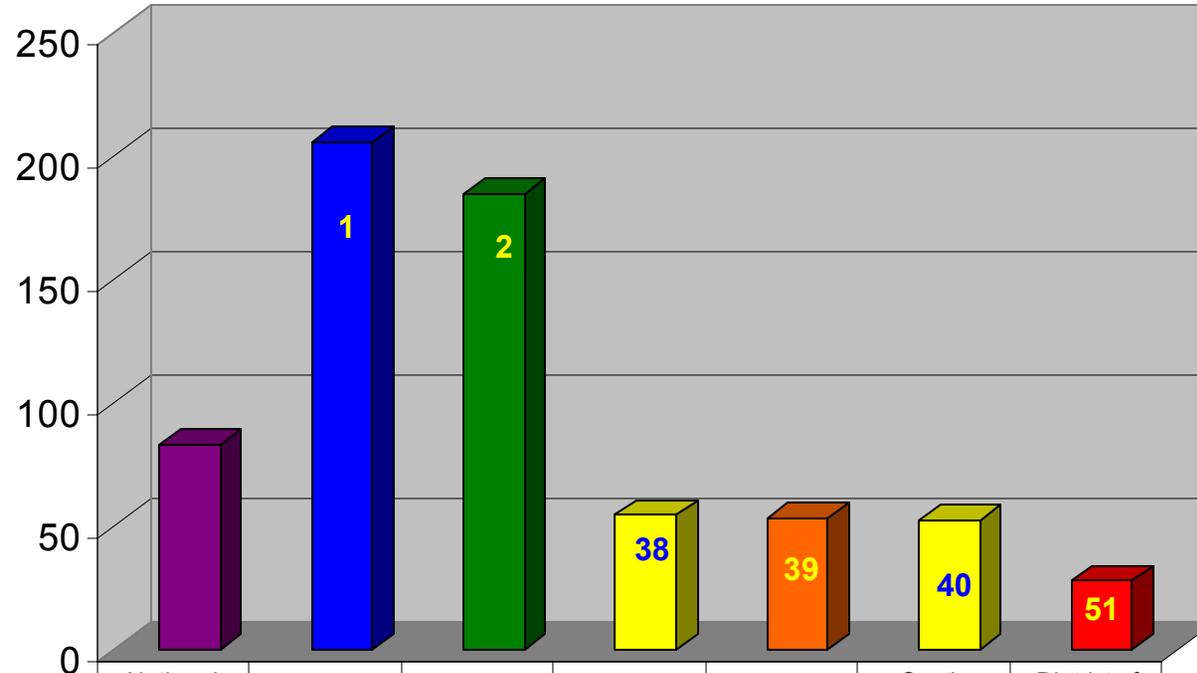
Audio Materials per 1,000



	National Mean	District of Columbia	Ohio	Arizona	Texas	South Carolina	Arkansas
Audios per 1,000	119.89	420.49	283.98	71.61	67.50	64.82	40.80

Source: National Center for Education Statistics
 Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data
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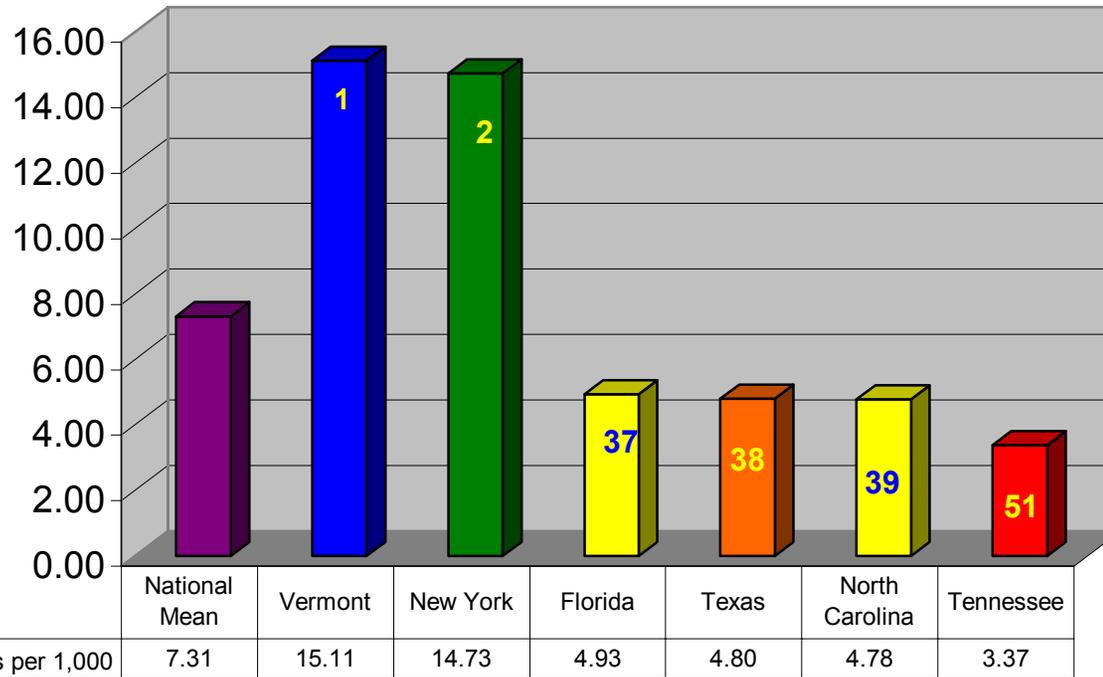
Video Materials per 1,000 Population



	National Mean	Ohio	Indiana	California	Texas	South Carolina	District of Columbia
Videos per 1,000	83.21	205.46	184.82	54.52	53.38	52.65	27.88

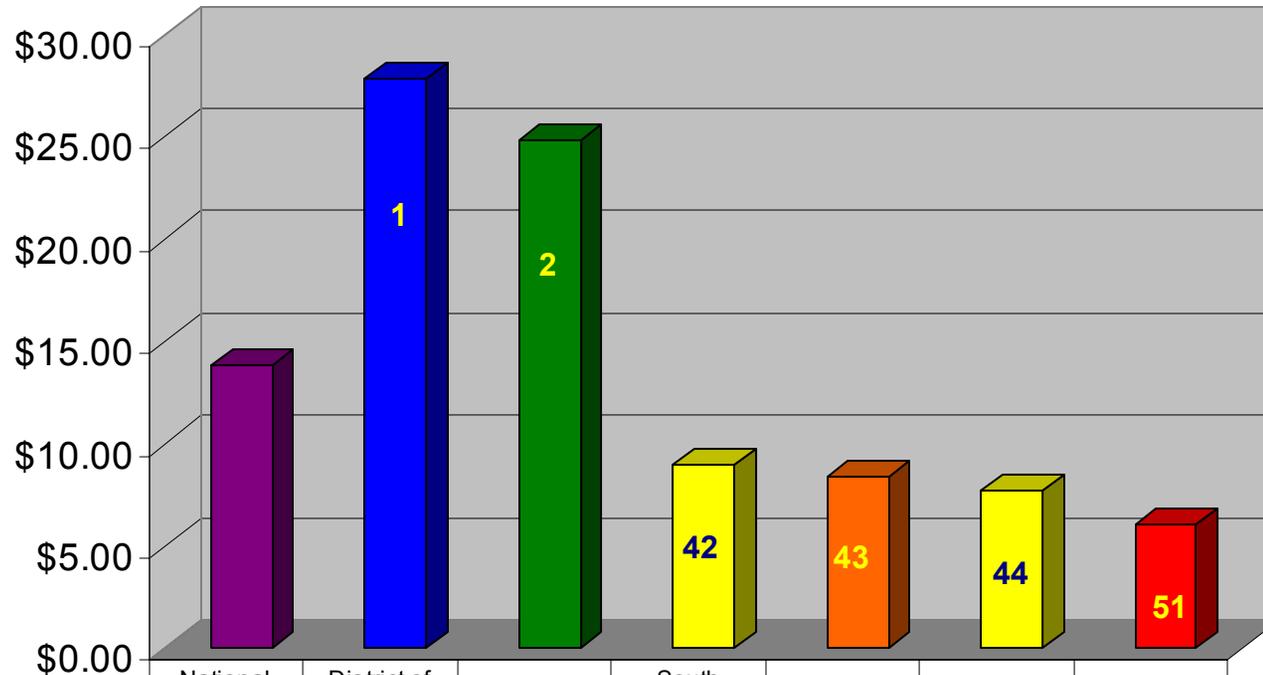
Source: National Center for Education Statistics
 Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data
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Current Serial Subscriptions per 1,000 Population



Source: National Center for Education Statistics
 Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data
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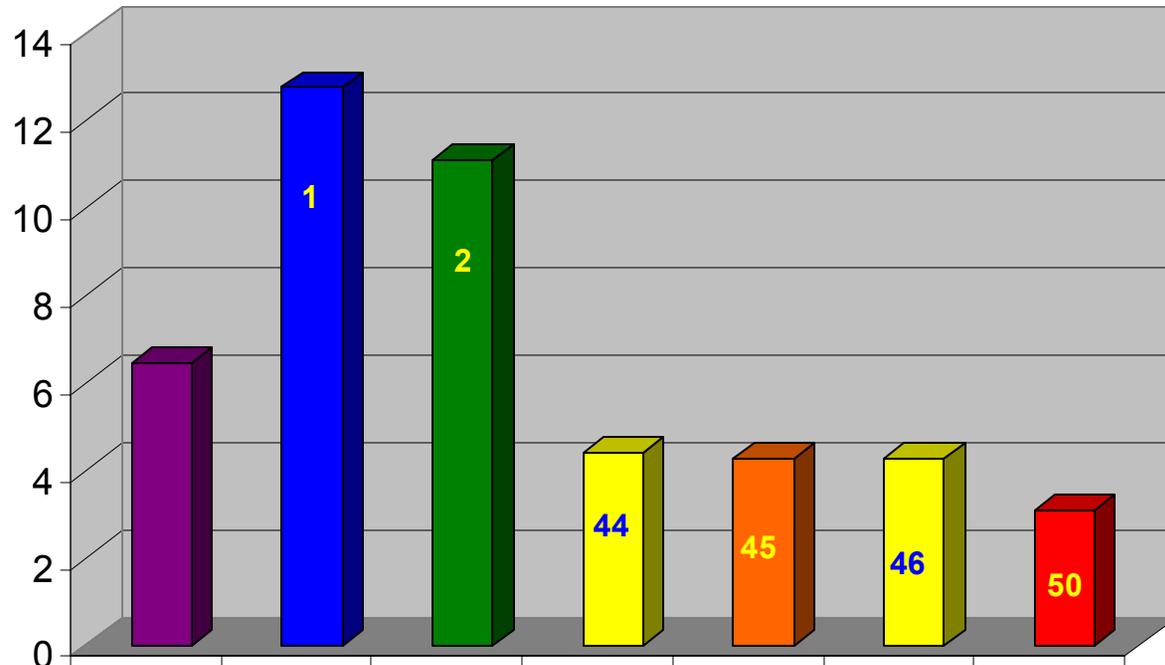
Wages per capita



	National Mean	District of Columbia	New York	South Carolina	Texas	Alabama	Mississippi
Wages per capita	\$13.84	\$27.79	\$24.78	\$8.97	\$8.42	\$7.72	\$6.03

Source: National Center for Education Statistics
 Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data
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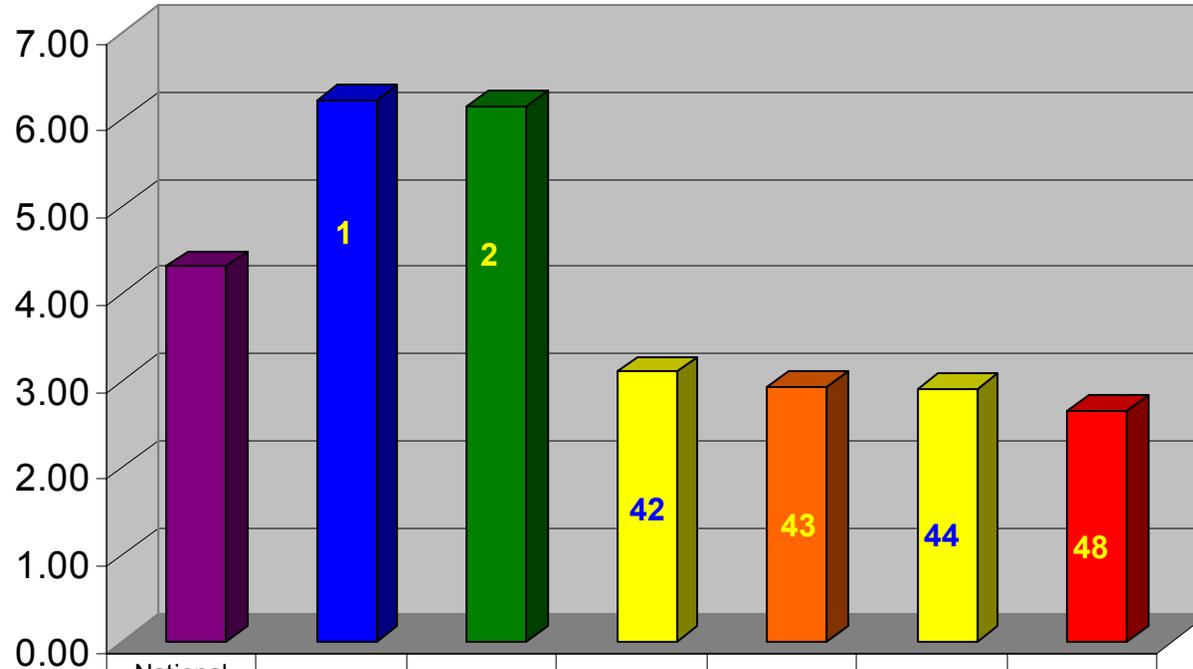
Circulation per capita



	National Mean	Ohio	Indiana	Georgia	Texas	Arkansas	Mississippi
Circ per capita	6.44	12.76	11.09	4.41	4.28	4.25	3.07

Source: National Center for Education Statistics
Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data
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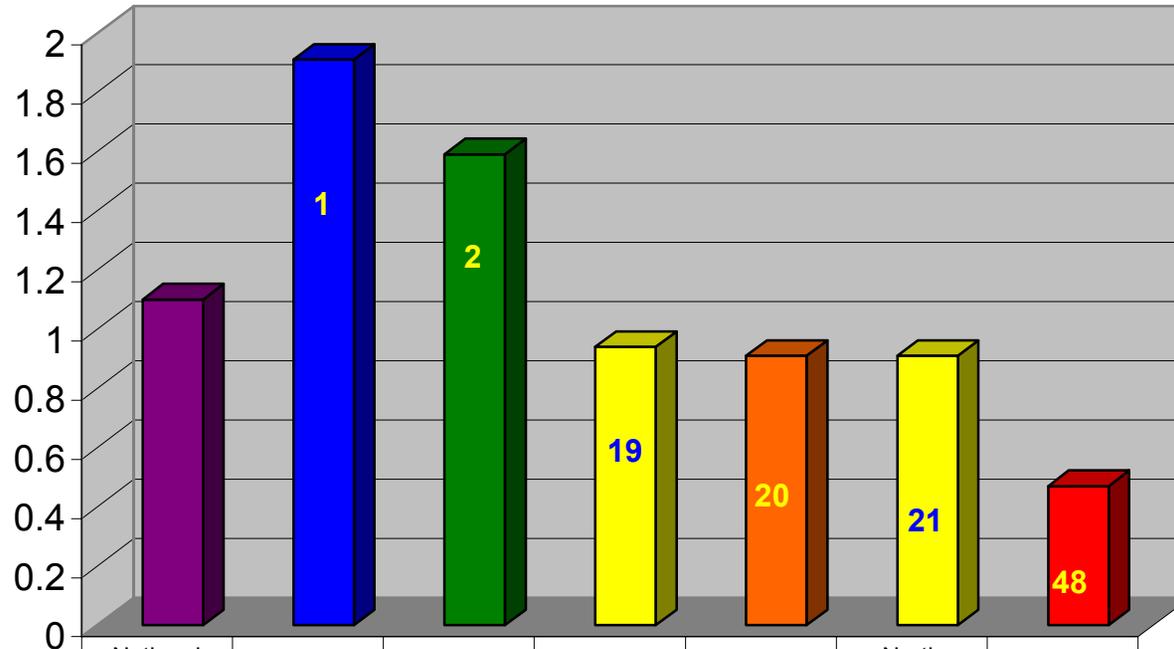
Library Visits per capita



	National Mean	Connecticut	Indiana	Georgia	Texas	Arkansas	Mississippi
Visits per capita	4.31	6.21	6.15	3.10	2.92	2.91	2.65

Source: National Center for Education Statistics
 Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data
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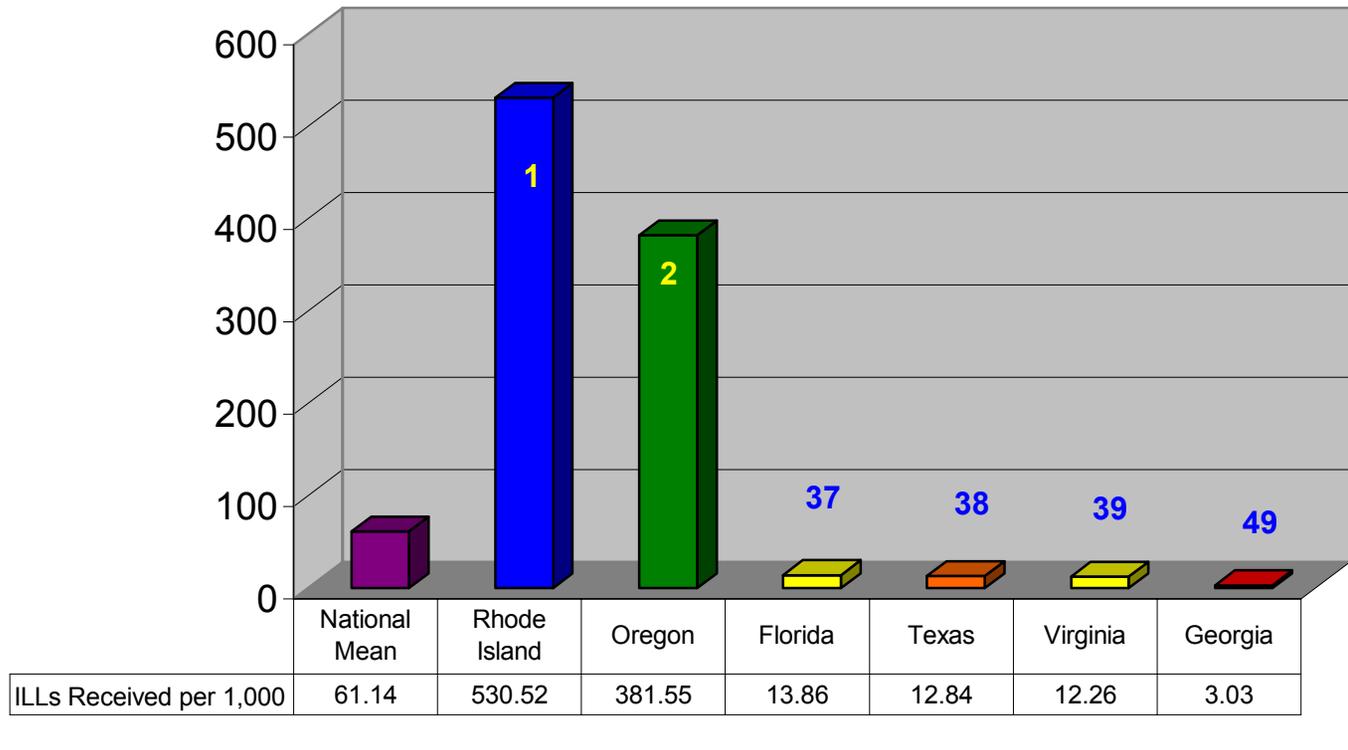
Reference Transactions per capita



	National Mean	New York	Ohio	Arizona	Texas	North Carolina	Kentucky
Transactions/capita	1.1	1.91	1.59	0.94	0.91	0.91	0.47

Source: National Center for Education Statistics
Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data
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Interlibrary Loans Received per 1,000 Population



Source: National Center for Education Statistics
 Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data
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