



2023-25 BIENNIAL REPORT

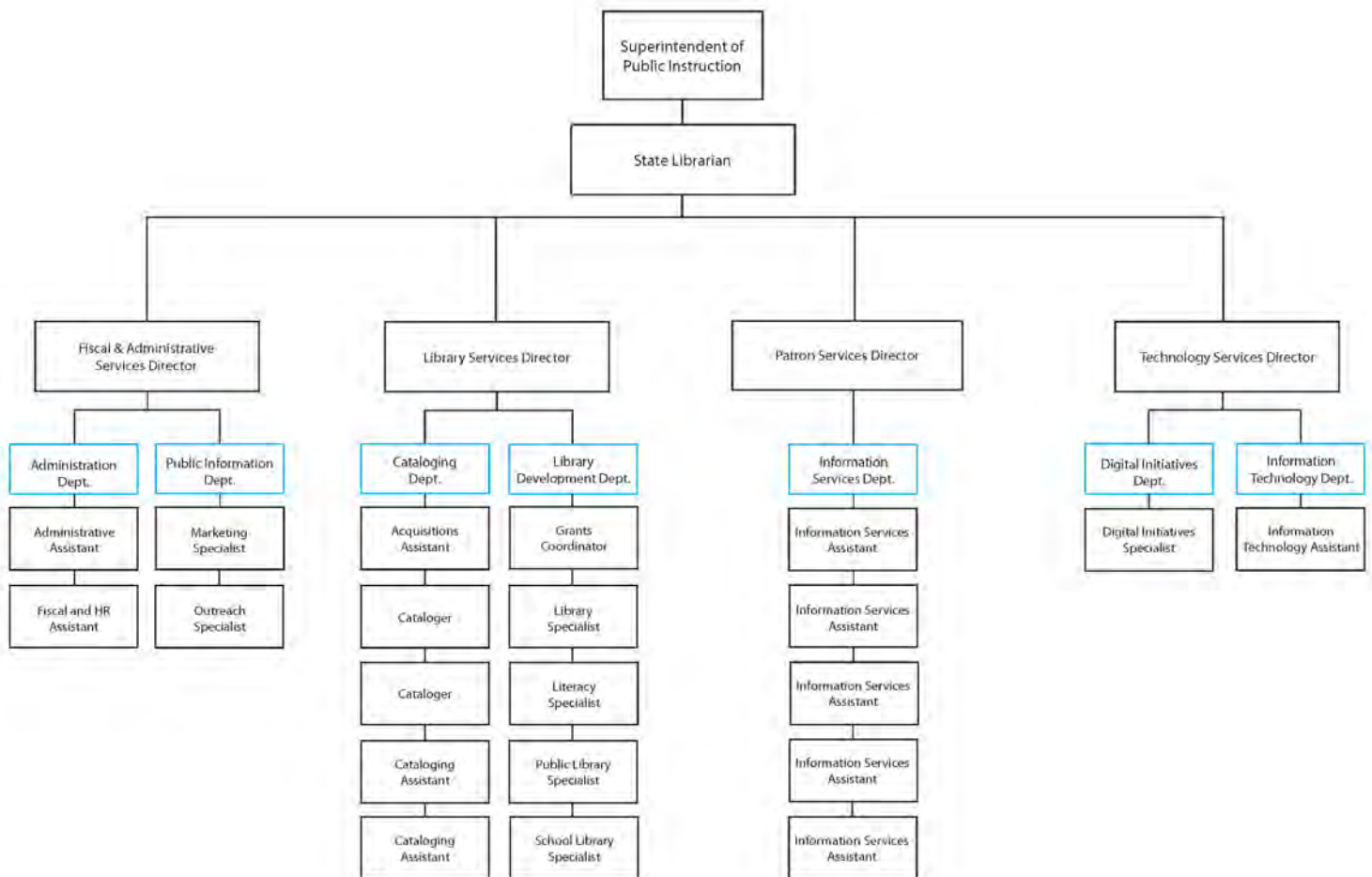
FOR THE BIENNIAL PERIOD OF
JULY 1, 2023 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2025

MARY SOUCIE, STATE LIBRARIAN

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ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



NDSL STAFF (JUNE 30, 2025)

26 FTE

STATE LIBRARIAN MARY J. SOUCIE

Fiscal & Administrative Services

Division Director

Kathy Smith

Administration Dept.

Cheryl Pollert

Allie Suko

Public Information Dept.

BreAnne Meier

Al Peterson

Library Services

Division Director

Dani Kappel

Cataloging Dept.

Stacey Goldade

Jessica Robinson

Lauren Schluter

Aaron Severson

Pam Young

Library Development Dept.

Kathy Jo Cline

Tammy Kruger

James Murphy

Bethany Rants

Monica Struck

Patron Services

Division Director

Steve Hammel

Information Services Dept.

Austen Beck

Paul Ebach

Beth Hoffert

Evan Laib

Katie Kosse

Technology Services

Division Director

Ryan Kroh

Digital Initiatives Dept.

Trevor Martinson

Information Technology Dept.

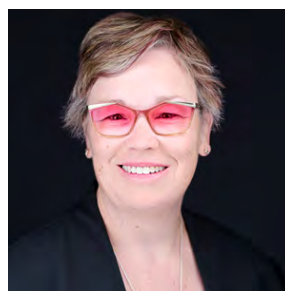
Cindy Olson

JULY 1, 2023 - JUNE 30, 2025

GREETINGS FROM THE STATE LIBRARIAN

Fellow North Dakotans,

Libraries are the center of the community, connecting people to resources, services, and materials to support lifelong learning, improved daily experiences, and information needs. Libraries focus on introducing new services, programs and resources to meet the ever-evolving needs of North Dakota. It is my privilege to present the Biennial Report of the State Library, highlighting our collective achievements, challenges, and ongoing commitment to serving the people of our state through equitable access to information, resources, and lifelong learning opportunities.



This report reflects the dedication of library staff, trustees, partners, and stakeholders who work tirelessly to ensure that libraries remain vital, responsive, and future-ready. It also underscores the importance of sustained investment in library services as essential infrastructure for education, civic engagement, and economic growth.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to strengthening our library ecosystem, advocating for robust support, and embracing new opportunities to empower every resident of our state.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership.



Mary J. Soucie
State Librarian

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The North Dakota State Library is committed to:

- Providing leadership and expertise to the North Dakota Library Community
- Delivering access to and assistance with credible information sources
- Fostering a welcoming environment to all
- Collaborating with state government to meet the needs of North Dakota

VISION STATEMENT

Providing pathways to knowledge and opportunities

MISSION STATEMENT

Strengthen • Connect • Ignite

The mission of the North Dakota State Library is to strengthen and enhance ND libraries, connect people to reliable resources, and ignite lifelong learning

AGENCY HISTORY

The North Dakota State Library was established in 1890. In 1907, the Public Library Commission was established, pursuant to 1907 Session Laws Chapter 243. The Commission consisted of three members - the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the president of the North Dakota Library Association, and a member appointed by the Governor. The Commission was authorized to hire a librarian to control and to be in charge of the library work of the Commission. The duties of the Public Library Commission included:

1. Administer and enhance the educational reference library.
2. Administer and enhance the system of traveling libraries and, as funds permit, increase the number and usefulness of the libraries.
3. Develop a system to allow any city, town, village, school district, or community within North Dakota to borrow books under the rules and regulations of the Public Library Commission.
4. Establish a legislative reference bureau for the information and assistance of the members of the Legislative Assembly.
5. Assist legislators in obtaining information and in preparing bills.
6. Provide advice and instruction to any public library or village, town, or community entitled to borrow books from traveling libraries upon any matter pertaining to the organization, maintenance, or administration of the libraries.
7. Promote and assist by counsel and encouragement the formation of libraries where none exist, and assist in organizing new libraries or improving those already established.

Session Laws Chapter 156 (1909) changed the name of the Public Library Commission to the State Library Commission and expanded the membership to also include the Secretary of the State Historical Society and one additional member appointed by the Governor. The bill further provided that adequate office room be provided in the Capitol for the State Library Commission.

Session Laws Chapter 237 and Chapter 238 (1915) established a Board of Regents to control all state education institutions, including the State Library. As a result, the original State Library Commission was abolished and the Board of Regents assumed all the duties of the previous State Library Commission. The Board of Regents consisted of five members appointed by the Governor.

Session Laws Chapter 261 (1927) provided that the State Board of Administration will constitute the State Library Commission. Therefore, the State Library was removed from the control of the Board of Regents.

Session Laws Chapter 352 (1965) provided that all state agencies deposit with the State Library Commission ten copies (now eight) of publications issued by them which are not issued solely for use within the issuing office. The State Library Commission shall transmit these copies to depository libraries distributed geographically across the state. This chapter expanded the duties of the State Library Commission to include the current statutory responsibilities.

Session Laws Chapter 440 (1969) replaced the Board of Administration with the Director of Institutions office and, therefore, the Director of Institutions office assumed the duties of the State Library Commission.

Session Laws Chapter 550 (1979) removed reference to the State Library Commission and the secretary and director of the library commission and provided for a State Librarian position to be appointed by the Director of Institutions office, which would direct the State Library.

Session Laws Chapter 239 (1989) transferred administrative responsibility for the State Library from the Director of Institutions office to the Department of Public Instruction. The chapter provides that the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall appoint the State Librarian position and provides that the State Library be an autonomous agency which retains its budget and staff separate from that of the Department of Public Instruction.

STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES

North Dakota Century Code Chapter 54-24 provides the authority, duties, and responsibilities of the State Library and the State Librarian. Statutory provisions of this chapter are:

54-24-01. State library - State librarian appointed by the superintendent of public instruction.

The superintendent of public instruction shall appoint an executive officer to be known as the state librarian, who shall report to the superintendent and must receive a salary within the amount appropriated for salaries by the legislative assembly. The state librarian shall control the work and is the director of the state library. The position of state librarian is included in the classified service, as provided in section 54-44.3-20. The state library is an autonomous agency and retains a budget and staff separate from that of the superintendent of public instruction.

54-24-02. Library offices.

The state library must be furnished with adequate office room, with such suitable quarters as may be necessary for the proper shelving of its library materials.

54-24-03. Powers and duties of state librarian.

The state librarian shall:

1. Make rules for the operation of the state library.
2. Provide and care for all books and library materials in all collections of the state library and work to focus the collections.
3. Employ qualified library personnel to care for all library procedures.
4. Make library materials available to libraries throughout the state, to individuals connected with departments of state, and to citizens of North Dakota who do not have adequate library facilities, under the rules of the state library.
5. Work to improve library services to citizens by providing assistance to librarians and library trustees and staff and by encouraging the extension of networking and regional and statewide cooperation among libraries.
6. Coordinate the efforts of librarianship throughout the state, advising and assisting the extension of qualified public libraries into centers of county or multicounty libraries.

7. Compile statistics on all North Dakota public libraries and their services and their larger counterparts of county and multicounty libraries, regional library cooperatives, and multitype library authorities. Make a full biennial report to the superintendent of public instruction and the governor of the work done at the state library. The state librarian may not require a private sector library to submit information relating to the provisions of this subsection.
8. Collect, maintain, and make available informational materials that supplement and support the needs of all libraries in the state, either by direct loan or by consultation, and that form a reference source for the officers of the state in performing their duties.
9. Assist libraries in developing local standards and guidelines defining the basic level of service that they will provide.
10. Conduct, or have conducted, research into the conditions of library service in the state and produce written plans for the development and betterment of that service.
11. Promote and assist in the development of regional library cooperatives, including multitype library authorities.
12. Establish levels of certification for libraries of the state that meet the standards recommended by the American library association and the North Dakota library association.
13. Promote and assist libraries in this state in developing and maintaining a computerized, comprehensive, bibliographic statewide database for storing bibliographic records of libraries which allows residents unmediated, seamless, direct access to library catalogs with a common interface and a common set of commands and the ability to search the library collections of the entire state at one time or only the collections of the local library, regional libraries, or select group of libraries.
14. Coordinate interlibrary loan activities throughout this state.
15. Arrange for continuing education and training programs for library personnel.
16. Provide technical assistance and counsel to library personnel.
17. Distribute grants to libraries within the limits of legislative appropriations for the purpose of developing or improving library services or programs.
18. Provide staff services to the North Dakota library coordinating council.

54-24-03.1. Acceptance of federal aid.

The state library is hereby authorized to accept and to expend in accordance with the terms thereof any grant of federal funds which may become available to the state for library purposes. For the purpose of qualifying to receive such grants, the state library is authorized to make such applications and reports as may be required by the federal government as a condition thereto.

54-24-03.2. State library operating fund.

The state library's operating fund is a special fund in the state treasury. All moneys received for book replacement, cataloging services, and other miscellaneous library services must be deposited in this fund. Moneys in the fund are to be used pursuant to legislative appropriation for provision of services under this chapter.

54-24-04. Who may borrow books from state library.

Repealed by S.L. 1965, ch. 352, § 10.

54-24-05. Commission to give advice and aid.

Repealed by S.L. 1965, ch. 352, § 10.

54-24-06. Records kept by commission - Report to the governor and secretary of state.

Repealed by S.L. 1965, ch. 352, § 10.

54-24-07. Printing of state library - How paid.

Repealed by S.L. 1997, ch. 453, § 20.

54-24-08. Library contracts for library services.

The state library is hereby authorized and empowered to cooperate with, and to contract with, cities, governmental subdivisions, and agencies of the state of North Dakota and other states of the United States, in the extension of library services

54-24-09. Distribution of certain state publications for certain libraries required.

The office of management and budget shall arrange to deposit with the state library eight copies of all publications issued by all executive, legislative, and judicial agencies of state government intended for general public distribution. These publications must be provided to the state library without charge. If expense and limited supply of state publications, particularly audiovisual items, make compliance with the depository requirement impossible, the state library shall accept as many copies as an agency can afford to provide. However, each agency shall provide no less than two copies to the state library. State publications refer to any informational materials regardless of format, method of reproduction, or source, originating in or produced with the imprint of, by the authority of, or at the total or partial expense of, any state agency. The definition incorporates those publications that may or may not be financed by state funds but are released by private bodies such as research and consultant firms under contract with or supervision of any state agency. In circumstances not directly involving the office of management and budget, a state agency shall comply with the depository requirement by arranging with the necessary parties for the printing and deposit of eight copies of any state publication issued. State publications are specifically defined as public documents but not those administrative or training materials used only within the issuing agency. As the document acquisition and distribution agency, the state library shall retain for its document collection two copies of every state document received and transmit the remaining copies to the depository libraries. These are the libraries of the state historical society, the university of North Dakota, North Dakota state university, library of Congress, and two others to be designated by the state library. The state library shall catalog state publications and arrange for their conversion to a digital format as prescribed by the state records administrator and shall make available for distribution of the same upon request to the designated depository libraries.

2025 SESSION CHANGES

The Legislative session adjourned on May 3, 2025. There were 1,020 bills and 69 resolutions filed. The State Library and the library community tracked several bills.

The bills that were most pertinent to the State Library were:

HB1013 was the State Library's budget, which includes the Department of Public Instruction and other agencies. Our budget included monies to create an "InterLibrary Loan (ILL) Bridge". The InterLibrary Loan bridge will improve resource sharing across the state by connecting over 350 libraries, saving subscription costs at the local level, and decreasing the time needed to borrow materials from other libraries for patrons. The libraries will be able to access the collections of libraries across the state which will result in an increase in in-state borrowing versus out-of-state borrowing. The ILL bridge will be a partnership with ODIN, which is part of NDUS CTC, who will be adding the FTE. The house supported this funding request. The budget included \$237,500 for general Library Vision grants plus an additional \$50,000 for Tribal Library Vision grants. State Aid for Public Libraries was funded at the same levels as the previous biennium. Additionally, equity for nine positions classified at the 102 level was included to assist with employee retention. NDSL also carried forward \$145,000 of monies allocated last biennium for a renovation project on ground floor.

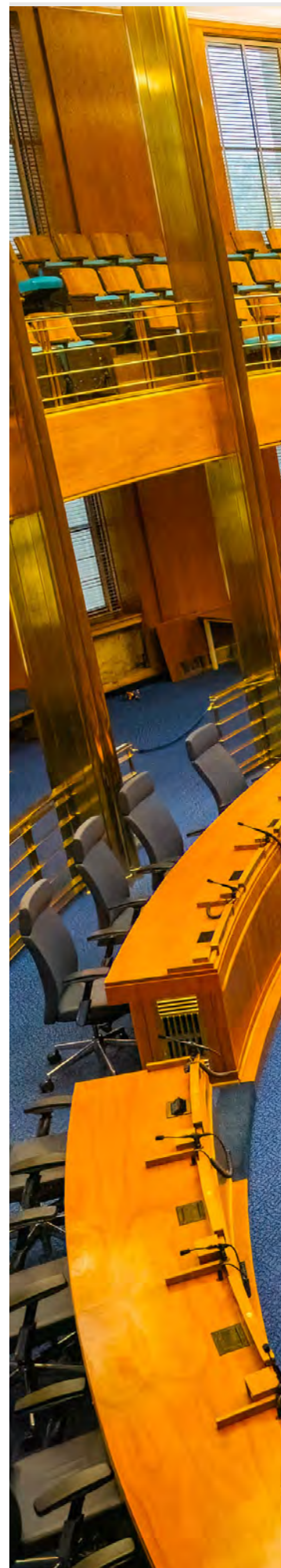
HB1254 updated language in §54-24-03(4) that would allow any North Dakota citizen to have a NDSL library card

HB 1420 amended §54-24.4-05(2) to clarify that the Library Coordinating Council approves the distribution of state funded grants excepting the State Aid to Public Libraries grant.

SB2219 added language to §54-24.2-01 to require libraries to submit the annual Public Library Survey to be eligible to receive State Aid and created a new section in §54-24-03 that allows the State Library to send surplus library materials from the collection directly to North Dakota libraries without having to inform state surplus. It restores an exemption that the State Library used to have when we were part of a different parent agency and is similar to an exemption that the State Archives has.

SB2278 provided for a study on the retention of library materials for state agency libraries, including the State Library. The bill passed but the study was not selected.

There were several bills that the State Library and the North Dakota Library Association (NDLA) tracked as they were pertinent to libraries. The most pertinent was SB2307. This bill would have amended Century Code relating to the definition of a public library, required safety policies and technology protection measures, and the attorney general's review of public libraries, school districts, and state agencies for compliance with statutes protecting minors from explicit sexual material. The bill generated testimony from librarians, library staff, and library supporters across the state. The bill passed both chambers but was vetoed by Governor Armstrong and the veto was sustained.



Today's Skills for Tomorrow's Libraries

The State Library introduced a new continuing education series, Today's Skills for Tomorrow's Libraries, for all libraries. A total of 245 librarians and library staff attended the conferences in 2023 and 2024. We were the first state agency to use Teams Webinar to hold a virtual conference and other state agencies have been reaching out to us with questions and for assistance. The conference will be in-person during odd years and virtual during even years. The virtual events are open to anyone working in North Dakota libraries, but topics are geared toward different library types (public, academic and special, school) for each instance.

Library Vision Grants

The State Library awarded 42 Library Vision grants totaling \$236,928. Projects included security, spaces, makerspaces, programming and collections. In addition, 3 academic tribal libraries received grants totaling \$34,285 for collection development, technology, and exploring native traditions. The State Library's Advisory Board, the North Dakota Library Coordinating Council (NDLCC), awards the grants. The NDSL adopted a new Library Vision Strategic Plan that will eliminate barriers, improve the application process and quality of grant applications and hopefully, increase the number of libraries applying for grants. There will be two additional grant rounds prior to the end of the biennium.

State Aid to Public Libraries

The State Library awarded \$1,737,582 in State Aid to Public Libraries in the 2023-25 biennium. 71 libraries were awarded grants in the first year of the biennium. State Aid is used by the local libraries to expand programming, increase technology, and develop their collections.

IT Support

The IT Department provides outreach services to public libraries throughout the state. Through support, hands-on training, and technical assistance, our IT department assists library directors, staff, and boards in meeting the technology needs of the library and community. During the 2023-25 biennium, the IT team traveled over 6,600 miles and visited 45 public libraries.

STATS

245

Conference Attendees

\$236,928

Library Vision Grants Awarded

\$34,285

Grants for Academic Tribal Libraries

\$1,737,582

State Aid To Public Libraries

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Digitization

The Digitization Department hosted 3 Scan Days at libraries. State Library staff digitized 156 individual items, which resulted in a total of 262 images for 16 participants. NDSL will add the images collected to Digital Horizons, which is a statewide digital repository of North Dakota related images and documents.

Policies

NDSL coordinated the gathering of collection development and reconsideration policies from public libraries and provided a report to the Juvenile Justice Committee in accordance with Chapter §12.1-27.1-01. We provided support to the libraries in the development of policies and answered questions related to compliance with HB1205.

Partnerships

NDSL has focused on increasing our partnerships with state agencies and organizations. The agency directors of the sister agencies (Center for Distance Ed, School for the Deaf, Vision Services/School for the Blind) meet monthly to network and strategize. Our diligent work of building a stronger relationship with NDIT resulted in the West Fargo Public Library being included in a recommended federal grant to provide technology support to the community. We have partnered with HRMS to offer leadership book discussions for state employees. We continue to partner with the Bank of North Dakota which provides college savings to North Dakota students that complete a local summer reading program.

Podcast

The State Library has launched a podcast entitled Pathways Through the Prairie. The idea of the podcast is to showcase the value of libraries and to share the innovative and engaging services and programs that libraries across the state offer to their community. The podcast can be accessed on the State Library's YouTube page.

STATS

45

Public Libraries
Assisted by the
IT Department

262

Images Digitized
At ScanDay
Events

23

Episodes of
Pathways
Through the
Prairie Podcast

TRENDS

During the 2023-25 biennium, libraries were focusing on increasing partnerships, programs, and services. There was a focus on literacy with an increase in author visits and reading challenges, including initiatives such as 1,000 Books before Kindergarten. A number of libraries offered access to a social worker, through partnerships with a variety of organizations and agencies. Libraries also offered programs about eclipses to coincide with the partial solar eclipse in April 2024.

Libraries of all types faced funding challenges during the biennium. This led to an increase in grant applications, both NDSL Library Vision grants and other funding partners. Several libraries held fundraisers for specific projects. The State Library faced an elimination of federal funds due to an Executive Order by the President to eliminate the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the only federal agency that provides funds for libraries and museums. Librarians across the state contacted North Dakota's federal legislators to share the importance and impact of federal funding at the local level. As of the writing of this report, the funding situation remains unclear but there is hope that federal funding will continue.

Many libraries were able to focus on updates to their public space due to a Library Vision grant opportunity. Changes included painting, new furniture, updated art, new bookshelves, carpeting, and displays. Libraries created or expanded on their Libraries of Things collections and Makerspaces. Libraries of Things refers to non-traditional items circulated by a library. Puzzles and game collections grew in popularity both in the number of libraries offering them and the usage by patrons. There was also an increase in the types of kits libraries offer, including the introduction of memory and sensory kits at multiple libraries.

Libraries focused on increasing access to technology. Libraries of all types focused on increasing STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) and STEAM (STEM plus Art) materials and programs. There was an increase in Makerspaces in academic and school libraries. Academic libraries increased their focus on lifelong learning by introducing programs such as therapy dogs during finals weeks, weekly donut with a librarian, and similar programs. Staffing was a challenge for several academic libraries including professional and student positions. Academic libraries incorporated more synchronous and asynchronous programming within their libraries in order to increase engagement.

Book challenges continued in school libraries at a rate similar to the previous biennium. Book challenges did not increase significantly in public libraries. Most public libraries have adopted collection development policies which were reviewed and updated after the conclusion of the 2023 biennium.

FISCAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION

The State Library's guiding principles are that we strive to provide leadership and expertise to the library community; deliver access to and assistance with credible information sources; foster a welcoming environment to all; and collaborate with state government to meet the needs of North Dakota. These principles guide the libraries financial decisions and strategic priorities.

The State Library's goals include expanding statewide outreach opportunities; promoting the value of North Dakota's libraries; maintaining and promoting awareness of technology for libraries and patrons; curating a well-developed collection that advances the State Library's mission, consistent with our guiding principles and legislative intent; advocating for and administering grant opportunities; and serving as one of the primary information resources for state government. The Fiscal and Administrative Services Division provides the financial framework to achieve these goals.

The State Library is committed to enhancing library services statewide through the development, coordination, and funding of grants for libraries in the state. The Library Vision Strategic plan guides the awarding of Library Vision grants. The grants are awarded by the North Dakota Library Coordinating Council and the State Library through a competitive basis to publicly funded North Dakota libraries. The grants are funded with general fund dollars. Beginning in 2023, tribal libraries also became eligible for Library Vision grants. Grants are awarded for various projects that differ each year. All grant recipients are required to provide final reports and evaluations of the increased services, and to share their resources with citizens and libraries statewide.

State Aid to Public Libraries continues to be a critical program for North Dakota public libraries and an important part of the State Library's budget. State Aid provides funding for staffing, materials for approximately 90 public libraries, and it contributes between 5-30% to public library annual budgets statewide. State Aid funds are distributed through an application process based on the formula in statute, which is currently \$1 per capita for a city and \$1 per capita/\$5 per square mile for a county.

The State Library provides leadership, direction, and coordination in connecting public libraries to the state's Internet network. Thirty-two public libraries are members of the North Dakota Statewide Technology Access for Government and Education Network (STAGEnet). Funding for broadband connectivity is paid for by the State Library and federal E-Rate funds. The State Library works with public libraries to assist them with E-Rate forms and CIPA filtering guidelines. The Public Library E-rate Coordinator is available to advise libraries through the E-rate process for any services outside the STAGEnet consortium application.

The Fiscal and Administrative Services Division also includes the Outreach and Marketing Specialists. The Outreach Specialist coordinates E-Rate, professional development, and provides a conduit between the State Library, state agencies, and the library community. The Marketing Specialist focuses on promoting the services of the North Dakota State Library and other libraries throughout North Dakota. The Marketing Specialist's services are available to all North Dakota libraries who request assistance in promoting library services, and with their WordPress websites. This position produces three e-newsletters and manages the social media communications for the State Library.

LIBRARY SERVICES DIVISION

The Library Services Division includes the Library Development and Cataloging departments. The Library Development Department offers technical support and development services to libraries of all types in North Dakota. We have a Public Library Specialist; a School Library Specialist; an Academic, Special, and Tribal Library Specialist; a Literacy Specialist, and a Grants Coordinator. The Cataloging Department offers cataloging services for the State Library's collection, 35 school and public libraries, and seven State Agencies. The department also maintains the collection, cataloging, and distribution of any documents created by state agencies that are intended for the public.

LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT

The Library Development team provides comprehensive support to all North Dakota library types, including technical assistance, trustee training, policy development, grant coordination, and statewide library programming. Specialists within the division work closely with their assigned library types to strengthen services and resources across the state.

During the 2023–25 biennium, a new Academic, Special, and Tribal (AST) Library Specialist was hired, continuing the State Library's investment in direct service to academic, special, and Tribal libraries. The AST Specialist attended the North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission's Government-to-Government Conference to strengthen partnerships with Tribal communities and collaborated with partners to create multilingual bookmarks for statewide distribution.

The School Library Specialist expanded outreach and professional engagement by presenting at the IgniteND Conference and the Bis-Man Earth Day Festival. They also began a statewide study on the condition of school libraries in North Dakota, which will help guide future programming, training, and policy development.

The Public Library Specialist conducted 20 New Director Orientations and worked with public libraries to update or adopt Collection Development policies and Reconsideration procedures. The Trustee Training webinar series was revised during this biennium, and the Public Library Specialist was invited to conduct in-person board training five times. In November 2024, the city of Halliday voted to establish library service, and the Public Library Specialist has been working with the board and the director to prepare for the library's opening.

The Literacy Specialist continued to coordinate statewide Summer Reading Programs using the Collaborative Summer Library Program themes: All Together Now in 2023, Adventure Begins at Your Library in 2024, and Color Our World in 2025. The train-the-trainer workshop model was maintained each year, with five locations hosting training sessions—Minot, Williston, Valley City, Grand Forks, and Mandan in 2024, and Minot, Williston, Valley City, Grand Forks, and Bismarck in 2025. The State Library again partnered with the Bank of North Dakota to provide College SAVE incentives, awarding \$10 or \$25 to the 529 plans of all birth–high school students who completed their library's Summer Reading Program. Ten regional prize drawings awarded an additional \$529 to one participant in each area.

The Literacy Specialist also oversaw the second year of Battle of the Books for middle school students, introducing virtual regional competitions for the first time. Preparations for year three, including book selection and question writing, were completed during the biennium. The third year will also introduce an elementary division for fourth and fifth graders. In addition, Climate Literacy and Financial Literacy Kits were developed for library card holders, homeschoolers, club leaders, and teachers. Each kit, tailored to four different age groups—kindergarten through second grade, third through fifth grade, teens, and adults—contains lessons, activities, and materials to support teaching and learning on the selected topic.

The Grants Coordinator continued to support libraries throughout the state, providing assistance with grant applications and managing the State Library’s OLR statistics. During the biennium, the State library launched a new tribal library grant program. The Governor-appointed advisory board, the North Dakota Library Coordinating Council (NDLCC), awarded three tribal library grants totaling \$34,285.22. In addition, another 41 grants were awarded by the NDLCC to libraries statewide, resulting in a total of \$236,928.31 awarded during the biennium.

CATALOGING

The Cataloging Department acquires and processes materials for the State Library collection, which are loaned to other libraries and residents of North Dakota. The collection continues to focus on several priority areas, including North Dakota materials, support for state agencies, library science resources, and large print materials to support the Talking Books program.

During the 2023–25 biennium, the State Library added a total of 8,547 items, including physical materials and electronic state and federal documents. In addition, there were 55 kits added—book club kits, NASA@ My Library kits, climate literacy kits, giant board games, and Yoto kits—as well as new Whazoodles and DVDs for the lending machines. The Juvenile Nonfiction collection was eliminated, and the Large Print collection was weeded, with items in good condition distributed to other North Dakota libraries through a public lottery.

The Cataloging Department provides cataloging services to 30 school and public libraries across North Dakota. Of these, 25 libraries are members of ODIN (Online Dakota Information Network) using the Polaris system, while five use other circulation systems. In 2024, catalogers implemented a separate Polaris portal for statewide ODIN libraries, which allowed these libraries to discontinue their OCLC subscriptions, saving them significant costs.

Number of titles cataloged for school and public libraries:

07/01/2023 - 06/30/2024
13,257

07/01/2024 – 06/30/2025
11,445

Total Cataloged During Biennium
24,702

The department also catalogs for four state agencies: Game and Fish, Geological Survey (including the Paleontology Department library), Legislative Council, and the Pembina County Historical Museum. Cataloging services for the Securities Department ended after the agency transitioned its data to a national database designed for its specialized documents.



During this biennium, OCLC retired the CatExpress interface, and the Cataloging Department transitioned to the new WorldShare Record Manager interface for record management.

The Cataloging Department also administers the State Document Depository Program, which collects, archives, and disseminates state agency publications intended for public use. Each state agency is required to deposit eight copies of all publications intended for public distribution. Two copies are retained by



the State Library—one in the permanent (non-circulating) collection and one available for loan—while the remaining six copies are distributed to designated depository libraries. The State Library remains the only state depository that lends state documents to patrons.

Collection Holdings (as of June 2025)

North Dakota State Library

- General Collection: 41,858
- County Atlases: 876
- Reference Collection: 401
- Large Print Collection: 8,095
- Kits: 619
- North Dakota Resource Files: 6,215
- Lending Machine Collection: 10,997

State Document Holdings

- Print Documents: 188,887
- Electronic Documents: 6,044
- Maps: 3,504
- Microfiche: 23,713

State Agency Libraries

- Game and Fish: 9,066
- Geological Survey: 13,394
- Legislative Council: 8,669
- Pembina County Historical Museum: 3,416

PATRON SERVICES DIVISION

The Patron Services Division is the public facing part of the state library. Staff are responsible for circulation, research assistance, interlibrary loan, library lending machines, and the Talking Books program.

All patron services staff are cross trained to answer general questions in all division areas by phone, email, and in person. Each patron services team member also has specialized areas of responsibility within the division to provide more in-depth answers and customer service.

CIRCULATION

Circulation is still an integral part of library services. The State Library does have a core of regular in-person patrons who utilize the large print collection and interlibrary loan services. A great majority of items circulated from the State Library's collection are mailed directly to patrons or to support other libraries. Circulation staff regularly assist patrons with searching our catalog, accessing our online resources and providing support for Libby, the e-materials application. We updated our catalog interface this biennium with the specific goal of helping patrons search for and find our popular book club kits and activity kits.

The State Library circulated 26,319 physical items in the biennium. It was discovered halfway through the biennium the reporting instrument being utilized included digital items borrowed through Libby which greatly skewed the overall totals since NDSL circulates about three times as many electronic items as physical items. Additionally, how items are shared between ODIN libraries was restructured during the biennium. Before the workflow update, all items were checked out. After the update, items are transferred, which reduced the number of checkouts counted as well.

29,216

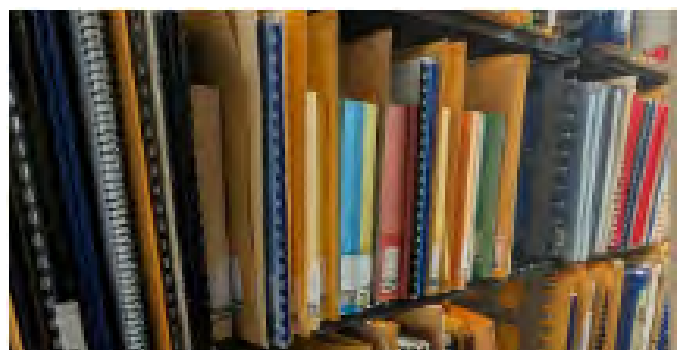
**NDSL Items
Circulated**

2,241

Walk Ins

4,226

**Patrons
Added**



RESEARCH ASSISTANCE

Traditional library reference services have changed due to it being easier to search for answers online. Current information-finding interactions with patrons take a minimum of 15 minutes; research can take quite a bit of time depending on the breadth and depth of information being sought. NDSL has changed from calling the service “Reference” to “Research Assistance” to acknowledge this shift in patrons’ information-seeking behavior. The shift also accounts for a declining number of reference transactions. While there are less questions being asked, the questions often require more staff time to find the desired information.

Reference training was provided by the Patron Services Director which has enabled the Information Services Assistants to more efficiently address patron questions. Questions that front-line staff are unable to answer or require in-depth research are forwarded to one of our professional librarians. Professional staff rotate as the librarian on call twice a month for a full day.

STATS

389

**Research
Questions**

INTERLIBRARY LOAN

InterLibrary Loan (ILL) provides access to materials not available in local libraries. The State Library provides ILL service to public, school, academic, and special libraries. The State Library also provides ILL services to state employees and North Dakota citizens. ILL requests are fulfilled by items from the State Library’s collection, in-state libraries, and out-of-state libraries across the country.

Patron Type	Requests Filled by NDSL and In-State Libraries
Academic Library	373
Out-Of-State	828
Patron	1,526
Public Library	9,961
Public/School Combo	575
School Library	576
Special Library	543
State Agency	19
State Employee	91
Tribal Library	1

4,152

**Items Filled
From
Out-of-State
Libraries**

TALKING BOOKS

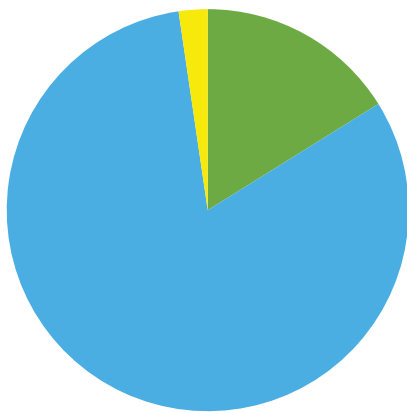
The Talking Books program provides library materials to patrons who are print disabled. Print disability refers to people who are unable to hold or read traditional library materials due to a visual, physical, or learning disability. The program is provided as a partnership

between the North Dakota State Library and the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS) which is a division of the Library of Congress. Patrons are provided with a machine that plays cartridges that books have been downloaded on. Patrons can also utilize BARD to checkout and download titles to their computer or device.

Talking Books Circulation

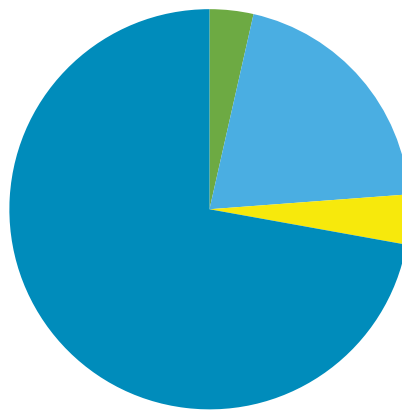
Biennium Total	Patrons	Titles	Cartridges
Audiobooks & Magazines	847	76,721	23,244
BARD Downloads	125	9,082	
E-Braille	16	90	
Physical Braille	4	74	

Talking Books Questions (2,367)



- By E-Mail (382)
- By Phone (1930)
- In-Person (55)

Question Types (2,461)



- BARD Support (87)
- Circulation Questions (499)
- Machine Support (99)
- Readers' Advisory (1776)



In the 2023 yearly report to NLS, NDSL recorded 1,136 active patrons and 226 inactive/suspended for a total of 1,362 patrons. To align with NLS recommendations, NDSL undertook a data cleanup in the fall of 2024 to update patron statuses and contact inactive patrons. After the data cleanup the number of active patrons in December was 682. About half of the inactive patrons resumed service between January and June 2025.

Patron Status as of June 30, 2025

Total Patrons	1,636
New Patrons Added in Biennium	439

TECHNOLOGY SERVICES DIVISION

The Technology Services Division includes the Information Technology (IT) and Digital Initiatives (DI) Departments. It provides technology support for NDSL, libraries, and their patrons. The Division also leads NDSL's digitization efforts and offers digitization services to libraries statewide.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT

The IT Department provides outreach services to public libraries across the state. Services include support, training, and technical assistance delivered via phone, email, and onsite visits. The department also remotely maintains numerous Public Library Network assets. Collaboration with library directors, staff, and boards is a priority, ensuring technology needs are met for both the library and its local community.

During the 2023–2025 biennium, 7,966 miles were traveled across the state to visit 55 libraries and provide in-person support. Along with responding to 1,285 support emails and phone calls, key activities included network support and installation, camera installation, and cable installation. These efforts enhanced library infrastructure, improved security systems, and ensured reliable connectivity for staff and patrons statewide.

Technology coordination across the agency is managed, including oversight of the State Library's website at www.library.nd.gov and the intranet. Technical support and training are provided to staff, volunteers, and patrons. Responsibilities also include managing computer systems, software, and security infrastructure; handling vendor relationships and consulting services; supporting software application development critical to operations; and maintaining remote assets such as lending machines.

Partnerships with the North Dakota Information Technology Department support networking, software updates, and internet access. Collaboration with the State Historical Society includes launching the migration to Preservica, which will become the long-term digital repository for the Electronic State Documents program.



DIGITAL INITIATIVES DEPARTMENT

The Digital Initiatives Department shares expertise in collecting, creating, and preserving digital copies of items relating to North Dakota's cultural heritage and government. The department administers the agency's digitization projects and digital collections; offers services, resources, and consultation to libraries, state government, and residents across the state; and facilitates many digital projects.

Digital storytelling, through exhibits and timelines, was a priority of the department during the biennium. Three exhibits relating to the early years of the Nonpartisan League were created, as well as an online exhibit commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Liberty Memorial Building. Additionally, two primary source sets were created to develop critical thinking skills and to promote lifelong learning by exploring topics relating to North Dakota's history and culture.

After a temporary hiatus, the ScanDay program resumed, with four events held, over 200 items digitized, and 1,200 miles traveled. ScanDay is an event hosted with libraries in which Digital Initiatives staff bring scanning equipment to a community and digitize content from the collections of residents and institutions. In October 2023, ScanDay was featured in a segment of a Bismarck television station.

As education and research increasingly moves online, the agency's digital collections continue to make an impact to the residents of the state and beyond. During the biennium, over 900 items, containing over 30,000 pages, were digitized – including 320 state documents, with 9,600 pages; 1,200 items were uploaded online; and the items in the agency's digital collections received over 2.3 million web hits.



EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES

23-25 Appropriation

	Appropriation	Actual Expenditures
Salaries and Wages	4,733,817.79	4,477,106.02
Operating Expenses	2,775,298.00	2,368,415.28
Grants	2,083,528.00	2,008,795.53
General Funds	7,081,183.00	6,488,656.76
Federal Funds	2,444,640.79	2,334,623.02
Special Funds	66,820.00	31,037.05

Library Vision Grants		
Fiscal Year 2024		
# of Grants	Grant Type	Total Amount
8	Collection Development Grants	19,441.96
10	Makerspace Grant	34,585.19
6	Programming Grant	18,668.35
		72,695.50
Library Vision Grants		
Fiscal Year 2025		
# of Grants	Grant Type	Total Amount
5	Security Grant	34,827.70
10	Public Spaces Grant	117,109.99
3	LV General Winter 2025 Grant	12,295.12
		164,232.81
Tribal Grants		
# of Grants	Grant Type	Total Amount
3	Tribal College Library General Grant	\$18,477.33
3	Tribal College Collection Development Grant	\$15,807.89
		34,285.22

ONLINE LIBRARY RESOURCES

Ancestry Library Edition: Family history research tool with records from around the world.

Beanstack: Track your reading and earn virtual badges based on your completed activities and reading accomplishments.

Britannica Academic: Online encyclopedia for high school and college students.

Britannica Fundamentals!: Online encyclopedia for K-12 students.

Britannica Library Edition: Online encyclopedia for students of all ages and for the general public.

Britannica School: Online encyclopedia for K-12 students.

Digital Horizons: Digital archive with thousands of images, documents, video, and oral histories depicting life on the Northern Plains from the late 1800s to today.

Digital Public Library of America: Digitized historic images, documents, videos, sounds, and virtual exhibits including North Dakota, Minnesota, The Smithsonian Institution, National Archives, and more.

EBSCO Host: A collection of databases that includes education, health, general research, and technology.

Explora Kids: General research tool that includes encyclopedia entries, articles, and images.

Explora Public Library: General research tool that includes encyclopedia entries, articles, and topic overviews.

Explora Teens: General research tool that includes encyclopedia entries, articles, and images.

First Search (WorldCat): An online library catalog that lets you look up materials in libraries around the world. Offers electronic access to dozens of online resources and more than 10 million full-text and full-image articles.

Gale Academic OneFile Select: Research-related journal articles selected for college students.

Gale In Context: College: General research tool that includes encyclopedia entries, articles, and images.

Gale In Context: Elementary: General research tool that includes encyclopedia entries, articles, and images.

Gale In Context: High School: General research tool that includes encyclopedia entries, articles, and images.

Gale In Context: Middle School: General research tool that includes encyclopedia entries, articles, and images.

Gale OneFile: Informe Académico: Full-text Spanish and Portuguese language journals and magazines from and about Latin America.

Gale OneFile: News: Full-text for U.S., international, and regional newspapers, as well as television and radio news transcripts.

Gale OneFile: Science: Research papers on science and technology updated daily.

Kanopy: Kanopy is a streaming service for movies, documentaries, classic cinema, independent films, and educational videos.

Library2Go: Downloadable e-books, e-audiobooks, and e-magazines; accessed through the Libby app.

Mango: Learn and practice over 70 languages, including ESL for 20 different native languages.

National Geographic Kids: Includes National Geographic Kids Magazine, books, videos, and pictures.

Niche Academy: Lifelong Learning and Discovery: These video tutorials cover a variety of topics, such as using the library catalog, exploring the online library resources, computer and social media skills, grant writing, health and safety, research help, and much more.

Niche Academy: North Dakota Library Academy: These tutorials cover a variety of topics for librarians, library workers, and library board members, such as book repair, cataloging, grant writing and management, library boards and Friends groups, exploring the online library resources, programming for adults, youth, and children, and much more.

NoveList: A tool to help readers find titles based on author, subject, genre, series, or read-alikes.

PebbleGo / PebbleGo Next: Robust interactive tool for primary students that includes videos, articles, and pictures with easy-to-use audio. Topics include animals, biographies, states, and American Indian History.

Points of View Reference Center: Presents reports and statistics behind both the pros and cons of current issues for persuasive papers, debates, letters to the editor, etc.

Universal Class: Over 600 online classes with both CEU and audit options, covering career training, hobbies, health, and more.

U.S. Newsstream: Search articles back to the 1980s from newspapers and trade journals around the United States, including the Bismarck Tribune (2003-present), Fargo Forum (1993-1997), and the Grand Forks Herald (1991-2015).



**604 E Boulevard Avenue - Dept. 250
Bismarck, ND 58505**

Administration..... 701-328-2492
Information Requests..... 701-328-4622
Toll Free 800-472-2104
Talking Books 701-328-1408

www.library.nd.gov

Open Monday - Friday
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Mary J. Soucie
State Librarian

The North Dakota State Library does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in employment or the provision of services