

Wyoming Library Data Services

The Wyoming State Library is involved in many data collection projects where we ask public, school and academic libraries to provide us information.

Why do we do this? We want to provide Wyoming libraries with valuable tools for:

- Management
- Comparison
- Advocacy

This summary outlines what data we collect and why. It is not all-inclusive – from time to time, we may conduct special, one-time data collections. Links to state and national data on library services and demographics may be found on our website at <http://library.wyo.gov/services/ldo/stats>.

Data Projects

Public Libraries: state-level surveys

All these state level surveys are requested from all 23 county library systems.

- **Annual reports:** The annual report collects information on budgets, collections, visits, circulation and other basic measures. Most of the information collected is standardized nationally and reported to the Public Library Statistics Cooperative (PLSC). The end result is a national database with numbers for more than 9,000 libraries. This allows us to see state and national trends, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) uses this data to perform more detailed analysis on library issues. Because this is a national project, you can use IMLS data tools (www.ims.gov/research/library_services.aspx) to find comparable libraries across the country. County libraries are required by Wyoming Statute to provide an annual report.
- **Budget survey:** After library budgets are approved for the fiscal year, the State Library requests current and prior year approved budget figures, mills (where applicable) and local funding. On this survey, we also ask for comments on how budget changes may be affecting personnel or services, and if there are any local issues that are affecting the budget.
- **Salary survey:** Conducted every two years, this covers educational requirements and salary/wages for library positions from director to library page. Position descriptions are standardized as much as possible to allow for comparisons between libraries. This survey can provide valuable information as boards budget for employee compensation, particularly when paired with cost of living data from the Wyoming Economic Analysis Division

(eadiv.state.wy.us/WCLI/Cost.html). Because detailed wage data can be personally identifiable, the State Library only releases the full data to library directors.

- **Benefits survey:** Every four years the State Library collects information on what level of benefits are offered to library employees. Fringe benefits are an important part of a compensation package that will attract and retain good employees. This survey allows you to determine if your benefit package is comparable to other libraries in the state.

Public libraries: national projects

From time to time, the Wyoming State Library will work with researchers to promote national data collection efforts but not collect data directly. Often, these use samples, so not every Wyoming library is surveyed. National surveys are voluntary, but they can often benefit your library and the wider library community. Some recent projects have included:

- **Edge Assessment:** This evaluates the library's public technology services through a set of technology benchmarks in the areas of Community Value, Engaging the Community & Decision Makers, and Organizational Management. Through the Edge Assessment, you may gain understanding of best practices in technology-related services and determine what steps may be taken to improve public technology programming. Initially offered at no cost to libraries, the full Edge Assessment is now a for-fee product. The benchmarks are freely available on the website at www.libraryedge.org/.
- **Impact Survey:** This is a ready-made tool that allows you to survey your computer users. It contains detailed questions about the benefits and outcomes of using technology services. The Impact Survey will give you tools for internal planning, benchmarking in comparison with other libraries, advocacy and community support. Initially offered at no cost to libraries, the Impact Survey is now a for-fee product. impactsurvey.org/
- **Digital Inclusion:** This focused on the value of public libraries in their communities as key providers of public access technologies, digital literacy, and services to support employment/workforce development, education, civic engagement, and health and wellness. digitalinclusion.pnmi.com/

Wyoming School Library Survey

The Wyoming School Library Survey is conducted every year to gather basic measures of school library service. It is based on factors that research has correlated with higher test scores: the size of the school library staff; full-time/certified school librarians; frequency of library-centered instruction and collaborative instruction between school librarians and teachers; size or currency of library collections; licensed databases through a school library network; flexible scheduling; and school library spending.

The survey is paired with staffing and enrollment data from the Wyoming Department of Education. There are currently no national efforts to collect this type of data at the school level, so this survey is critical to assessing the state of Wyoming school libraries. This is especially pertinent, given that school libraries across the country have faced budget and staffing cuts in recent years.

Teacher-librarians have reported using this data to advocate for larger collection budgets. The data is also valuable to public library boards and other organizations when assessing their community needs. will.state.wy.us/statistics/Schools/WYschoolsurvey.html

Academic Libraries – the Academic Library Survey and IPEDS

Every two years the Academic Libraries Survey (ALS) collected data on about 3,900 academic libraries and produced descriptive statistics on budgets, collections, student services and other measures. The State Library does not collect this data, but it does post Wyoming Data to the website. Collection of these data over time will enable the nation to plan effectively for the development and use of postsecondary education library resources. Data up to 2012 may be found at nces.ed.gov/surveys/libraries/Academic.asp. Beginning with the 2014-15 survey, data collection has been rolled into the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/>.

Data information services and consulting

We also offer consulting and information services on surveys and data.

- **Local surveys:** Wyoming State Library staff can review and offer consulting on any local surveys you might be developing. We have a paid subscription to SurveyMonkey (www.surveymonkey.com) and can set up your survey in this useful online tool. Also see our LiveBinder of helpful survey resources at www.livebinders.com/play/play?id=1051691.
- **Data information services:** Need community or other data to set your strategic direction or make a case for your library? There are many data sources available – not just library data – that may be of value when planning for your library’s future. If you have questions about where you might find a particular number, please contact us.

Contact us

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact Thomas Ivie in the Library Development Office at thomas.ivie@wyo.gov or 307-777-6330.