

**STANDARDS FOR
LOUISIANA PUBLIC
LIBRARIES
2010**

**LOUISIANA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
PUBLIC LIBRARY SECTION**

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INTRODUCTION

Because of the ever increasing change of pace in technology, media format, cost of materials, and the way users approach libraries, this current revision of the Standards for Public Louisiana was undertaken to address new challenges facing public libraries. Over the course of two years, a committee of librarians representing institutions of various sizes and populations gathered to discuss, evaluate and prepare the standards presented in this document. The process began with a complete review of the 2003 standards, included consultation of current standards from other states and finally drew upon the experience and knowledge of the members of the committee. Careful consideration was given to the issues involved in each aspect of the standards and with regard to their impact across the spectrum of libraries in the state. A preview of the standards was given at the 2009 Fall Administrative Librarians Conference where input from the gathered directors and staff was sought and collected. The participants responded positively to the document offering observations and suggestions for improving the usefulness of various aspects of the document and giving the committee thoughtful input for consideration.

The standards now include the following sections: Planning, Administration and Finance, Access to Library Services, Services, Collections, Technology, and Facilities. While the philosophy behind the framework of the standards is not new, it is the aim of the committee to put a stronger emphasis on individual systems and to give librarians and library board members tools to use for measuring their library in a scale appropriate rather than applying the same factors across the whole spectrum of libraries. The goal of the committee is to provide measures that will provide the basis for developing, funding, and maintaining services and facilities, as well as, for eliminating activities, services, and non-functioning facilities. We all realize that this is not a perfect document. It is impossible to produce standards that will please everyone or indeed address every changing issue and aspect of the work environment; but we have endeavored to address the conditions as they are today. Our recommendation is that the process of review of standards becomes an ongoing and developing process and that the committee for this work be a standing committee rather than an ad hoc committee.

The users of this document will find that levels of service are in all the sections. The levels are designated Essential, Enhanced and Comprehensive. Essential is the term set for the basic standard that any library, regardless of size, should meet. Enhanced and Comprehensive levels indicate that the library has gone beyond the basic standard, striving to provide a higher level of service. For the standards at the Comprehensive level, the committee feels that even the smallest library can attain this level for some of the standards. On the other hand, some standards at the Comprehensive level will challenge any library to provide innovative library service. It is the intent of the committee that these levels will allow directors and board members to better set goals and objectives, justify funding, garner support, and fortify public relations. Rather than state the status quo, or present the lowest common denominator, these standards represent expected levels for the provision of good service and performance and prompt those involved at each institution to aim high and to use experience, imagination, and

innovation to improve the collections and services, staff and facilities that are Louisiana's public libraries.

Throughout the ensuing years, the committee will ask directors to evaluate the effectiveness and ease of use of the standards. Through this process, the standards will continue to evolve as a benchmark for library excellence.

Standards Revision Committee Members

Mary Cospers LeBoeuf, Terrebonne Parish Library, Co-Chair
Randy DeSoto, St. John Parish Library, Co-Chair

Jackie Choate, Vermilion Parish Library
Lon Dickerson, Jefferson Parish Library
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Adopted July 2010, by the Public Library Section of the Louisiana Library Association

PLANNING, ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

Planning

A public library must engage in regular planning if it is to offer its constituency effective service. The library board and director share responsibility for ensuring that a regular and comprehensive planning cycle is maintained and that the community is represented in the planning process.

_____ The library completes a formal study to determine community needs for services at least once every five years (5 year strategic plan).

_____ The library prepares a long range plan using information gained from the community study.

_____ The long range plan is reviewed and updated annually.

_____ The library prepares and maintains a master plan for library facilities.

_____ The library prepares a program for facility management and maintenance.

Administration

The library director provides leadership and clear communication to the staff, the library board, and to the local governing authority. As chief executive officer, the library director administers policies approved by the library board.

_____ The library administrator is a graduate of a program of library and information studies accredited by the American Library Association.

_____ The library administrator has obtained and maintains state certification as required by LA R.S. 25:215.

_____ The library director has full responsibility for administering library policy, budget, personnel selection and management, administration of programs and services, selection of materials, and compliance with the laws that govern library services.

_____ The library director provides orientation sessions for new board members.

_____ The library director provides a climate that encourages development of innovative programs and projects.

_____ The library director encourages staff participation in continuing education activities.

_____ The library director is a member of the Louisiana Library Association and participates in LLA, as well as in local, regional, and national library association activities.

_____ The library director submits reports mandated by the State Library of Louisiana in a timely manner.

Finance

Financing of the library must be provided on an ongoing and reliable basis. Funds are from locally determined tax sources and must be adequate to operate the library.

_____ The library receives funds on an ongoing basis as the basic funding structure of the library.

_____ The library develops ongoing financial resources to supplement local support, which might include grants, donations, endowments and various other funding methods.

_____ The library submits an annual library budget that addresses the needs of the community as reflected in the long-range plan.

_____ Procedures and financial management practices include audits consistent with local government practices and in compliance with state law.

Materials

The collection budget line item should make up the following percentages of the library's total operating budget.

Essential	Enhanced	Comprehensive
10%	15%	20%

Personnel

Each library system will employ at least one (1) full time librarian* and adhere to the following staffing levels (full time equivalent staff -FTE- on a per capita basis):

	Essential	Enhanced	Comprehensive
Total staff**	1 per 2,000	1 per 1,500	1 per 1,000
Librarian**	1 per 10,000	1 per 8,000	1 per 5,000

*For the purpose of the standards, a librarian is defined as having at least an MLIS degree from an ALA accredited graduate program.

**Based on 40 hour work week.

Continuing Education and Staff Development

It is understood that any library system will provide the funds to ensure that the library director is able to take enough continuing education credits to make him/her eligible for Executive Certification renewal.

_____ The library allocates funds for staff continuing education direct costs.

Essential	Enhanced	Comprehensive
Library staff at all levels should be provided with appropriate in-service training opportunities. Libraries should design and implement programs to develop personnel resources and enhance service provision.	Library administration should budget for staff to attend appropriate professional development seminars and workshops.	Library administration should provide incentives for staff to further their formal education.

Budget

Essential	Enhanced	Comprehensive
Designate one percent (1%) of the total budget to support staff development.	Designate one and one half percent (1.5%) of the total budget to support staff development	Designate two percent (2%) of the total budget to support staff development.

ACCESS TO LIBRARY SERVICES

The term “access” includes the freedom or ability of an individual to make use of a service. It refers not only to a library’s location and to the number of hours it is open, but also to the efforts made by the library to extend its services into the broader community through traditional (e.g., mobile library) and electronic methods.

_____ The library provides interlibrary loan.

_____ The library provides access to library services and materials in various formats.

Essential	Enhanced	Comprehensive
Library service is offered at a geographic location requiring no more than 30 minutes travel time.	Library service is offered at a geographic location requiring no more than 20 minutes travel time.	Library service is offered at a geographic location within a 3 ½ mile radius of 90% of the population.
Essential	Enhanced/Comprehensive	
Provide technology and resources at one location.	Provide technology and resources at a minimum of two locations.	

The library board adopts policies which comply with the ideals of the profession, the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

_____ The library provides access to resources and services for patrons with disabilities in alternative formats and with assistive technology.

Service Hours

Levels of Accessibility

Library hours are fixed and posted and include morning, afternoon, evening, and weekend hours. Hours open are based on an assessment of users and potential users most convenient times to visit the library, rather than on staff convenience.

Size Defined by Population

Small	25,000 and under
Medium	25,001-75,000
Large	75,001-200,000
Metropolitan	200,001 and above

Main (System) Library Service Hours Per Week

Size	Essential	Enhanced	Comprehensive
Small	40 hours	44 hours	48 hours
Medium	48 hours	52 hours	56 hours
Large	56 hours	60 hours	64 hours
Metropolitan	64 hours	68 hours	72 hours

Branches Service Hours Per Week

Population	Essential	Enhanced	Comprehensive
1-4,999	15-20 hours	30 hours	35 hours
5,000-9,999	35 hours	40 hours	45 hours
10,000-24,999	40 hours	45 hours	50 hours
25,000-49,999	45 hours	50 hours	55 hours
50,000-99,999	50 hours	60 hours	65 hours

This measure is based on a typical week, one in which the library is open regular hours and there are no holidays. (A typical week does not include summer hours.)

SERVICES

Circulation

Essential	Enhanced	Comprehensive
Maintain online circulation system.	Provide self-service stations.	Provide capability to pay fines and fees with credit/debit cards.
Provide capability to reserve and renew circulating materials in person.	Provide capability to reserve and renew circulating materials online.	Provide online management of patron accounts.

Information Services

Essential	Enhanced	Comprehensive
Reference service is available to patrons at each location in person or by telephone.	Reference service by various electronic means is available all hours the library is open.	Reference service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
Provide instruction in the use of library resources and services.	Offer formal classes in the use of electronic resources and technology.	Provide instructional services in a dedicated computer learning lab.
Maintain an up-to-date web page.	Provide links to other organizations, services and information.	Provide enhanced content, such as instructional materials, social networking sites and live interaction.

Maintain an online catalog.	Provide enhanced content, such as book jackets and multiple language options.	Provide access for patron interaction, such as book reviews and tagging.
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Programming

Essential	Enhanced	Comprehensive
Provide monthly programs for children, teens and adults.	Provide weekly programs for children, teens and adults.	Provide weekly programs for children, teens and adults at each location.

The following are considered basic levels of service and are provided by all public libraries.

_____ The library provides year round programming for children, teens, and adults.

_____ The library participates in Louisiana summer reading programs for children, teens, and adults.

_____ The library provides outreach programs to targeted populations who cannot visit the library.

COLLECTION

The materials budget includes databases, books, microforms, magazines, CDs, video/DVDs, books-on-tape, books-on-CD, and other electronic resources.

The library must stay current with advances and changes in electronic delivery and format (e.g., downloadable material.)

Materials per Capita

Essential	Enhanced	Comprehensive
2.5 per capita	3.5 per capita	4.5 per capita

Weeding the Collection

Every item in the collection is evaluated for retention, replacement, or withdrawal at least every 5 years to determine its usefulness and accuracy according to the library collection development policy. Outdated, unnecessary, or damaged materials are removed from the

collection. The library establishes and attains a measurable annual weeding plan based on local conditions and the library mission. Each library should consider local needs and long term use of the materials, including genealogy, local history, and other special collections.

Essential	Enhanced	Comprehensive
15% of collection is less than 5 years old.	20% of collection is less than 5 years old.	25% of collection is less than 5 years old.
Entire collection is weeded every 5 years.	Entire collection is weeded every 4 years.	Entire collection is weeded every 3 years.

Collection Use

Turnover

Turnover rate (number of circulations divided by the number of items in the collection) is a good indicator of how well the collection is meeting the needs of the community. Turnover is especially helpful in evaluating usage of specific collection areas, and can help determine which areas are most in need of weeding and/or purchasing.

Essential	Enhanced	Comprehensive
1.5	3	4.5

Circulation Per Capita

Circulation per capita is computed by dividing total circulation by service area population.

Essential	Enhanced	Comprehensive
6 per capita annually	8 per capita annually	10 per capita annually

TECHNOLOGY

Planning is the key to managing technology in the library. Plans should cover budgets, use policies, replacement cycles, security, staffing, training, facilities, collections, access to services, and marketing. For these plans to work, the library board and staff need to recognize the impact of technology on library services. Successful implementation of technology requires informed staff participation.

_____ The library has a written technology plan that covers a 3-year period and is revised annually.

Staffing

Essential	Enhanced	Comprehensive
At least one staff member is designated to perform basic maintenance and troubleshooting of hardware, software and repairing.	At least one staff member is trained to support hardware and software, to train other staff on software applications and to maintain the library's web page.	One staff member is dedicated to hardware and software maintenance, upgrading, troubleshooting and training.

Training

Essential	Enhanced/Comprehensive
Library staff must be trained on circulation, OPAC, applications, e-mail, Internet skills, and basic troubleshooting.	Staff members are assigned to provide in-house training.
The library has regular ongoing training for staff.	Appropriate staff attend technology related workshops and training as needed to stay abreast.

Number of Workstations – Public & Staff

Essential	Enhanced	Comprehensive
One computer per 2,000 population served or a minimum of two (2), whichever is greater.	One computer per 1,500 population served or a minimum of two (2), whichever is greater.	One computer per 1,000 population served or a minimum of two (2), whichever is greater.
Provide wireless Internet at main library.	Provide wireless Internet at branches.	Provide wireless Internet at all library service points.*

*Includes recreational centers, bookmobiles, kiosks and other non-traditional service points.

Resources

Essential	Enhanced	Comprehensive
Provide access to Louisiana state funded online databases.	Provide access to locally funded online databases.	Provide access to all databases 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including specialized local resources (e.g., digitization of local history or other unique resources.)

Services

Essential	Enhanced	Comprehensive
Provide access to a web browser and productivity software (i.e., word processing and spreadsheets) and educational programs for children.	Provide access to communication tools and online learning tools.	Provide access to social networking tools.

FACILITIES

Essential	Enhanced/Comprehensive
The minimum standard for facility size is one (1) square foot per capita.	The enhanced standard for facility size is one and one-quarter (1.25) square feet per capita.

Guidelines for library facility designs are provided in the *Handbook for Public Library Directors*.