

Manitowoc Calumet Library System

Library Technology and Resource Sharing Plan 2025-2029

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan is to outline how the Manitowoc Calumet Library System and its member libraries seek to use technology and telecommunications to support library resource sharing and improve library services within the libraries, within their communities, and remotely. This plan will be used to evaluate goals, objectives, activities and budget expenditures annually, and to adjust those areas as needed, according to the needs of the member libraries. Due to the central importance of technology and resource sharing in determining the services the library system will provide, this plan is integral in the budgeting process for the system and the member libraries on a year-to-year basis.

PLANNING

The recommendations outlined in this *Plan* have evolved through the *Libraries Automated Resource Sharing (LARS) Consortium*, which is the integrated library software consortium that governs and implements resource sharing among all member libraries. The member libraries meet bimonthly to consider and discuss issues involving LARS and technology implementation and planning, a process, which will continue under the new plan covering the years 2025-2029. The key component in planning is the individual interviews conducted at each of the member libraries. A combination of the MCLS Director, the LARS Consultant, and the IT/ILS Specialist visited each library to gather feedback from the library directors and any staff members dedicated to IT services. The outlined summary of goals and activities is derived directly from the feedback gathered and provided during those interviews.

REVIEW OF THE POLICY

The final draft of the 2025-2029 Technology and Resource Sharing Plan was revised and reviewed by the members of the Manitowoc Calumet Library System Board and approved on November 20, 2024.

VISION

The Manitowoc Calumet Library System will take advantage of evolving opportunities in information technology and telecommunications to benefit libraries and library users in Manitowoc and Calumet Counties. Additional opportunities to collaborate with other libraries and library systems throughout Wisconsin have been implemented due to progress made according to the recommendations resulting from the Public Library System Redesign project. Furthermore, the Wisconsin Public Library Consortium (WPLC) serves as a conduit for statewide collaboration as evidenced by the shared e-content available through Wisconsin's Digital Library, as well as the work underway by the Delivery Workgroup and the Technology Collaboration Steering Committee - formed specifically to work on statewide solutions for public libraries and public library systems.

EVALUATION

Ongoing evaluation and refinement of the *Technology and Resource Sharing Plan* will be a regular agenda item for bimonthly MCLS LARS and library directors meetings. MCLS staff and member library directors will monitor progress towards meeting the goals of the plan by reviewing the targeted strategies to see if activities are being completed within the specified timeframes. Technology and the implementation of this plan and suggestions for changes will be discussed as part of any planning meetings involving both public and non-public libraries. Staff will review the *Plan* annually and the System Board, as needed, will adopt an updated plan. The prior *Plan* update was approved by the MCLS Board of Trustees on November 20, 2019.

While this system plan broadly identifies goals and strategies for member libraries, each library will be responsible for continuing to evaluate, plan, and budget for their own specific information technology needs.

BACKGROUND

The Manitowoc Calumet Library System is a two-county federated library system serving approximately 122,000 residents of east central Wisconsin through independent member public libraries located in Brillion, Chilton, Kiel, New Holstein, Two Rivers, and Manitowoc, which serves as the System Resource Library. Non-public libraries within the MCLS area includes the Lakeshore Technical College in addition to K-12 libraries within the system area.

TECHNOLOGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS ENVIRONMENT

The MCLS technology services program includes planning, consulting, grant writing, workshops and training for staff at member libraries, maintenance of the system website, Internet access for member libraries, access to online resources, assistance to the Manitowoc Calumet Libraries Automated Resource Sharing Consortium (LARS) and participation in that

consortium. The LARS shared automation system was launched in May 2000 with Manitowoc, New Holstein, and MCLS as initial participants. Additional member libraries joined LARS in 2001 and 2002, and in 2003 the sixth and final MCLS member library joined LARS.

In 2013, LARS migrated to SaaS - the cloud version of our ILS from SirsiDynix. Further, MCLS is in contract with SirsiDynix for ILS services through May 31, 2029. The current system is running Symphony 4.0.0.0.1260, which provides an online public access catalog, circulation, and cataloging and online authority control, with optional functions such as acquisitions, cash management, and serials control available to participants at an additional cost. The central site, the MCLS office, is located in Manitowoc, within the Manitowoc Public Library. The system no longer houses any servers, with the remaining automation software hosted in a software-as-a-service environment at SirsiDynix. Currently, MCLS provides Internet service for all six member libraries and the system office by contracting with local cable providers for Internet and Wi-Fi services. Since the last version of this plan, the patron notification system has been switched over to Unique Management's MessageBee, product, which utilizes VOIP, as well as the addition of a mobile catalog app supported by SOLUS.

MCLS administration and interlibrary loan delivery also operates out of the MCLS office within the Manitowoc Public Library. Four MCLS staff workstations are part of a building-wide local area network that provides access to the Internet, email, various electronic information products, a digital photocopier, and MCLS's SirsiDynix system, which supports the LARS shared automation system. MCLS handles finances and accounting with Quickbooks software. Two laptop labs consisting of ten laptops each, are available for staff and patron training and programming purposes.

All MCLS member libraries are members of the LARS shared automated system. All but one of the MCLS libraries have fiber Internet access for staff and patrons. All have access to electronic information resources for patrons, public access computers, and a variety of staff workstations. Workstations at all libraries are routinely replaced as they become obsolete. Member library computers are configured as local area networks. Altogether, MCLS libraries currently offer 84 public computers/terminals, of which 72 have Internet access. The MCLS ILS/IT Specialist configures, services, and maintains all PCs at the member libraries, with the exception of the Manitowoc Public Library, which employs its own dedicated IT staff member. Lastly, while MCLS provides web hosting services for 3 member libraries, each library is responsible for providing and maintaining their own websites.

RESOURCE SHARING

According to the LARS Consortium and Bylaws, all MCLS member libraries have formally agreed to share materials within the system through interlibrary loan. Governance and cost sharing are apportioned according to the rule of 13. The LARS Agreement states:

Participating libraries and agencies agree to abide by the decisions of the Council. Council voting follows the Rule of Thirteen, whereby of a 13-piece pie –

- Manitowoc Public Library holds 6 shares
- Lester Public Library holds 3 shares
- Brillion Public Library holds 1 share
- Chilton Public Library holds 1 share
- Kiel Public Library holds 1 share
- New Holstein Public Library holds 1 share

MCLS also maintains resource-sharing agreements with the major non-public libraries in the area. In practice, all of the libraries go beyond this to participate fully in the Wisconsin interlibrary loan network.

Much of the resource sharing that takes place within MCLS is done over the LARS automation system. Lending traffic among the participating libraries has remained at a steady level over the years. MCLS provides interlibrary loan delivery services to its member libraries. MCLS and all member libraries use WISCAT ILL software to transmit requests for materials requested outside of the six libraries' collections. MCLS has historically covered the cost of WISCAT ILL and other necessary ILL software and licenses for member libraries. However, LSTA funds covered these costs for the last 2 years. Non-public libraries currently submit and receive ILL requests by email, WISCAT ILL, telephone, fax, or paper forms. To support interlibrary loan, MCLS provides van delivery five days a week to all member public libraries, and two times per week to Lakeshore Technical College Library in addition to weekly book drop pickups at central locations in Hilbert, Mishicot, and Valders. MCLS also contracts with the South Central Library System for van delivery five days per week to other library systems, correctional facilities, and University of Wisconsin libraries throughout the state. MCLS promotes the use of WISCAT, BadgerLink, Wisconsin's Digital Library (OverDrive/Libby), and other online information resources.

The implementation of the LARS shared system and the inclusion of all member libraries on LARS has permitted modification of Interloan patterns and procedures to allow for direct placement of holds by patrons and other efficiencies. LARS, along with WISCAT ILL, is fostering far more direct borrowing between libraries.

Approved by the Manitowoc Calumet Library System Board on November 20, 2024

Summary of Goals:

1. Resource Sharing (ILS) Standardization Among Participating Libraries
2. Hardware & Software – Maintenance & Guidance with New Purchases
3. Improve ILS Functionality
4. Explore New Resources for Patrons & Staff

Goals and Activities:

Goal 1: Resource Sharing (LARS) Standardization among Participating Libraries

- Enforce adherence to LARS Guidelines, Procedures, & Policies
- Investigate best practices for ordering & cataloging new materials
- Set standardized tech solutions among member libraries / Create a list of recommended hardware for future purchases (inventory & end of life solutions)
- Provide Cataloging Refresher – the BASICS training for member library cataloging staff

Goal 2: Hardware & Software – Maintenance & Guidance with New Purchases

- Develop a hardware map (inventory) and troubleshooting guide/tips for listed components at each library
- Investigate cost/process of a system-funded circulating hotspot collection
- Investigate alternative security software solutions
- Investigate Microsoft 365 licensing costs
- Research and determine viability of replacing web hosting services

Goal 3: Improve ILS Functionality

- Research and determine viability of implementing online patron registration and/or privilege renewal
- Research and determine viability of implementing online card only accounts
- Improve MCLS Mobile app search features
- Improve Enterprise Search results

Goal 4: Explore New Resources for Patrons & Staff

- Research and determine viability of adding a streaming service for patron access
- Support staff tech competency skills – provide training & competency testing
- Create Diversity Audit documentation for collection development & maintenance
- Incentivize Infosec training participation & completion

Objectives and Activities – Goal 1

Goal 1: Resource Sharing (LARS) Standardization among Participating Libraries

Goal 1: Resource Sharing (LARS) Standardization among Participating Libraries							Use to track goal progress	
Objectives and Activities	Person(s) Responsible for Ensuring Activities are Completed	Timeline for Completing the Objective and Activities	Resources Needed to Achieve Objective	Cost	Evaluation Method	Progress Toward Achieving Objective	Comments	
Objective 1.1 Enforce adherence to LARS Guidelines, Procedures, & Policies	MCLS Staff – Director, LARS Consultant, and ILS/IT Specialist	Ongoing	Current in-house documents	N/A	Measurable drop or increase in recidivism			
Objective 1.2 Investigate best practices for ordering & cataloging new materials	LARS/ILS Consortium	2025	Designate a LARS Cataloging Workday in fall of 2025	N/A	Creation of a checklist			
Objective 1.3 Set standardized tech solutions among member libraries / Create a list of recommended hardware for future purchases (inventory & end of life solutions)	ILS/IT Specialist & Heartland Business Solutions	2025/2026	Current list of existing technology	N/A	Create a list of recommended hardware for future purchases (inventory & end of life solutions)			
Objective 1.4 Provide Cataloging Refresher – the BASICS training for member library cataloging staff	LARS Consultant	2025	Designate a LARS Cataloging Workday in fall of 2025 & one-on-one training at the member libraries, when requested	N/A	Create a training checklist			

Objectives and Activities – Goal 2

Goal 2: Hardware & Software – Maintenance & Guidance with New Purchases							Use to track goal progress	
Objectives and Activities	Person(s) Responsible for Ensuring Activities are Completed	Timeline for Completing the Objective and Activities	Resources Needed to Achieve Objective	Cost	Evaluation Method	Progress Toward Achieving Objective	Comments	
Objective 2.1 Develop a hardware map (inventory) and troubleshooting guide/tips for listed components at each library	ILS/IT Specialist	Summer of 2025	Current list of all libraries inventory	N/A	Creation of the hardware map & checklist			
Objective 2.2 Investigate cost/process of a system-funded circulating hotspot collection	MCLS Director	2025/2026	N/A	Undetermined	Creation of cost per unit analysis			
Objective 2.3 Investigate alternative security software solutions	ILS/IT Specialist	2025-2027	N/A	Undetermined	Creation of a checklist			
Objective 2.4 Investigate Microsoft 365 licensing costs	ILS/IT Specialist	2025/2026	Determination of the total number of licenses needed at the member libraries	Undetermined	Creation of cost per unit analysis			
Objective 2.5 Research and determine viability of replacing web hosting services	ILS/IT Specialist	2025	N/A	Undetermined	Creation of a checklist			

Objectives and Activities – Goal 3

Goal 3: Improve ILS Functionality							Use to track goal progress	
Objectives and Activities	Person(s) Responsible for Ensuring Activities are Completed	Timeline for Completing the Objective and Activities	Resources Needed to Achieve Objective	Cost	Evaluation Method	Progress Toward Achieving Objective	Comments	
Objective 3.1 Research and determine viability of implementing online patron registration and/or privilege renewal	LARS ILS Consortium	2025	N/A	Undetermined	Creation of a checklist			
Objective 3.2 Research and determine viability of implementing online card only accounts	LARS ILS Consortium	2025/2026	N/A	N/A	Creation of a checklist			
Objective 3.3 Improve MCLS Mobile app search features	MCLS Staff – Director, LARS Consultant, and ILS/IT Specialist	Ongoing	Collect suggested changes from member libraries	N/A	Measure increase in usage / functionality			
Objective 3.4 Improve Enterprise Search results	MCLS Staff – Director, LARS Consultant, and ILS/IT Specialist	Ongoing	N/A	N/A	Measure increase in usage / functionality			

Objectives and Activities – Goal 4

Goal 4: Explore New Resources for Patrons & Staff							Use to track goal progress	
Objectives and Activities	Person(s) Responsible for Ensuring Activities are Completed	Timeline for Completing the Objective and Activities	Resources Needed to Achieve Objective	Cost	Evaluation Method	Progress Toward Achieving Objective	Comments	
Objective 4.1 Research and determine viability of adding a streaming service for patron access	LARS Online Resources Committee	Ongoing	N/A	Undetermined	Creation of cost per unit analysis			
Objective 4.2 Support staff tech competency skills – provide training & competency testing	ILS/IT Specialist	2025-2027	Input from member libraries determining expected levels of knowledge & skills	Undetermined	Creation of training & testing materials			
Objective 4.3 Create Diversity Audit documentation for collection development & maintenance	LARS Consultant	2025	N/A	N/A	Creation of auditing documentation			
Objective 4.4 Incentivize Infosec training participation & completion	MCLS Staff – Director, LARS Consultant, and ILS/IT Specialist	2025	N/A	Cost of rewards	Creation of a schedule for participation rewards			

Technology & Resource Sharing Budget	2025 Amount	2026 Amount	2027 Amount
Grants			
LSTA	12,269	Unknown	Unknown
Automation Annual Maintenance	51,465	52,443	53,439
Technology			
Salaries & Benefits	115,500	117,500	120,000
System & Staff Development	1,400	1,500	1,600
Facilities & Equipment	2,700	3,000	3,000
Network and Internet Services			
Contracted Services - Internet	13,000	13,000	13,000
Collection Development			
Resource Library Reimbursement	11,000	11,000	11,000
Backup Reference			
Salaries & Benefits	13,500	14,000	14,500
Resource Library Reimbursement	1,000	1,000	1,000
Interlibrary Loan			
Salaries & Benefits	7,800	8,250	8,500
WISCAT	1,400	1,400	1,400
Resource Library Reimbursement	1,000	1,000	1,000
Delivery			
Salaries & Benefits	30,000	32,000	34,000
Insurance	1,800	2,000	2,200
Van Operations & Maintenance	5,000	5,500	6,000
South Central Delivery Services	16,000	17,000	18,000
New Van Purchase	16,000	16,000	0
Facilities and Equipment	600	600	600
Totals	265,907	255,417	259,445