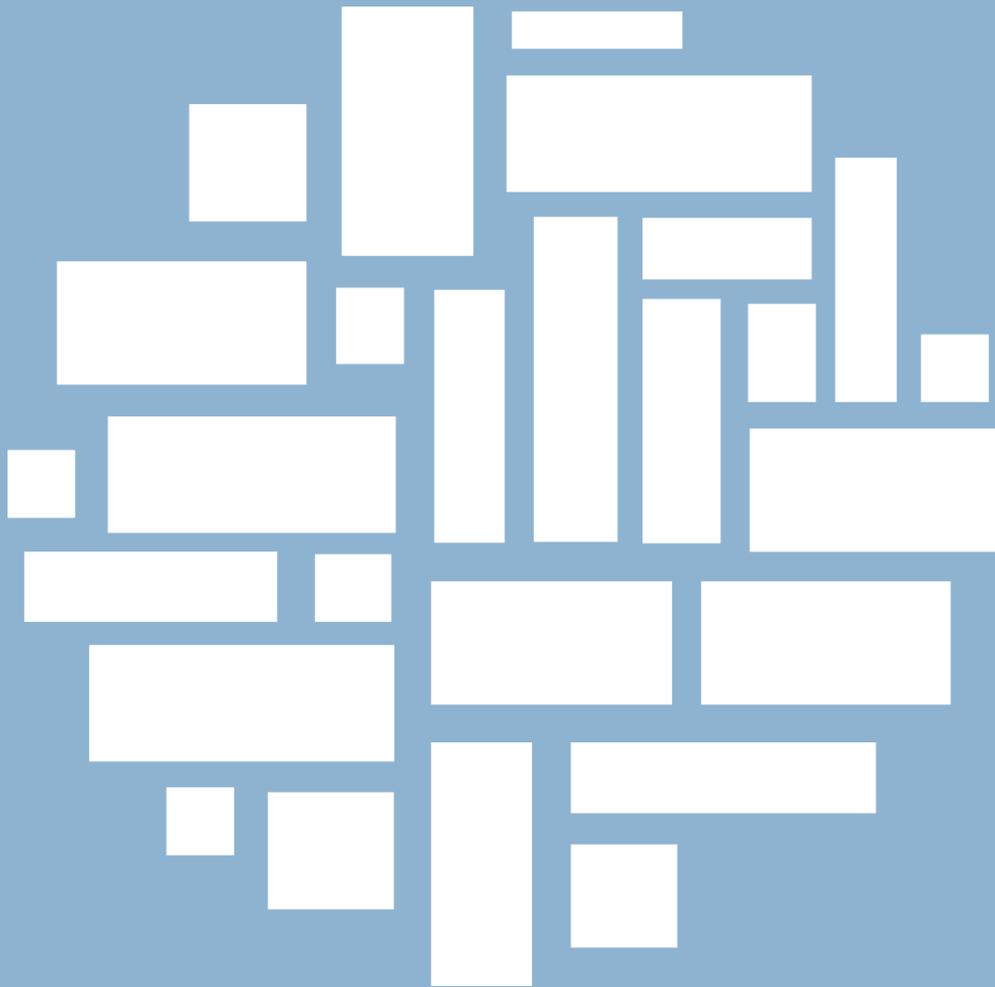


**Annual
Report**

2021



Stronger Together

Massachusetts Library System

The Massachusetts Library System, a state-supported collaborative, fosters cooperation, communication, innovation, and sharing among member libraries of all types. The Massachusetts Library System promotes equitable access to excellent library services and resources for all who live, work, or study in Massachusetts.

Our mission has always embraced social justice and the MLS Team is committed to providing services that benefit and contribute to the library profession's core values: diversity, inclusion, equity, access to information, free expression, privacy, and social justice.

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Hello MLS Members, Partners, Supporters, and Friends,

I am pleased to share our FY 2021 Annual Report. It was a new decade for MLS and we started with a new strategic plan. Our aim was to continue to offer the critical services our members needed, while shifting to address the topics and formats addressed in our planning process.

- FY21 gave us a new action plan, providing us with a roadmap for our work aligning with our strategic plan.
- We continued to serve our members from afar. While the pandemic kept most of our events online, we saw and engaged with a record number of you over the past year, through classes, community chats, visits, and informal conversations.
- We spent some time aligning resources around our action plan goals, to ensure that this work remained at the forefront of our minds when considering services, methods of delivery, and financial implications. Please see our action plan at the end of this report for a selection of accomplishments.

Much like last year, the pandemic challenged us to find new and adaptive methods of sharing information. To that end, this year's annual report provides a more collated method to reflect the changes implemented in our response to member needs.

Please read the following report to learn more about MLS and the work we've accomplished and will continue to do.

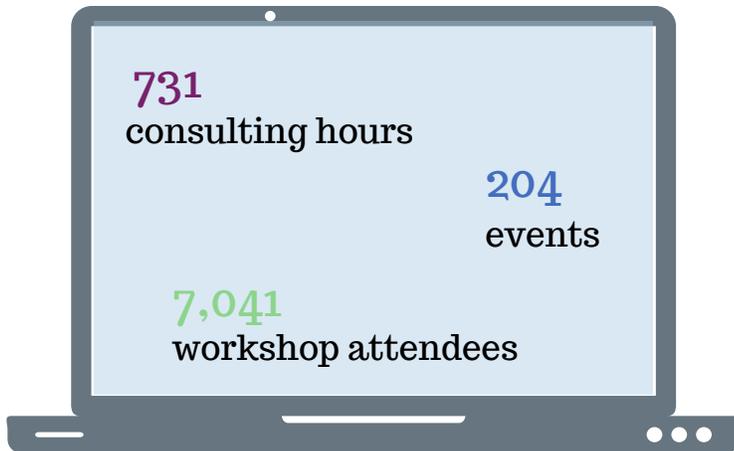
I encourage you to continue to share your ideas with us. Our successes would not be possible without the dedicated work of our board of directors, members, partners, and supporters and especially our talented staff, who, though a year filled with uncertainty, worked hard to ensure sustained and stabilized services to our membership. I thank you for your continued support.



Sarah Sogigian
Executive Director

Consulting and Training

MLS is committed to offering outstanding learning opportunities to library staff across the Commonwealth. Our goal is to help Massachusetts libraries achieve their organizational objectives through our consulting and training services. This year, MLS offered trainings on a range of subjects including collections, library instruction, reference, strategic planning, and youth services, along with our popular online community chats on various topics.



Training Highlights

- Basic Library Techniques
- Career Resources Week
- Climate Prep Week
- Communication tools video series
- Project Ready learning cohorts
- Small Library Forum
- Teen Summit
- Tri-State Summer Summit

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) & Leadership Development Training

In support of our strategic plan, the Consulting & Training Services team offered a DEI and Leadership Development training series. These series took place over the summer of 2021, spanning FY21 and FY22 and were popular among members.

DEI Training Series: In order to help library staff deepen their knowledge of fundamental DEI concepts and strategies, we offered 16 workshops in the DEI training series, including 11 in FY21 and over 430 staff attended. We worked with a number of outstanding DEI trainers to help library staff reach their DEI learning goals, regardless of where they are on their DEI journey.

Leadership Development Training Series: Leadership is an activity, not a title or position. In order to support leaders to grow from any level, we offered 12 workshops in the leadership development series, including 5 in FY21 and over 110 staff attended. These workshops provided the knowledge and skills that will help library staff become the leaders they want to be.

“I just wanted to thank you and MLS for offering this training! It is truly the best professional development session I have ever done and I hope MLS keeps going in this vein of offerings since we don’t get any management or leadership training in our MLS programs.” Public Library

Summer Library Program

In an effort to support public libraries with their summer reading and learning initiatives, the MLS provides training, promotional materials, a program manual and guidance, as well as membership in the Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP). The statewide summer library program is funded by your local library, MLS, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC), and the Boston Bruins.

“The Summer Library Program became a great way for people to stay connected with the library while our doors were closed, we used so many different types of formats for programming that we reached a diverse and wide population in our town.”
- Public Library

Imagine Your Story

Despite significant challenges posed by the pandemic, libraries across the Commonwealth held an astonishing 13,000 number of events hosting over 438,000 attendees of all ages! Nearly every library provided virtual programming from storytime to book groups to LEGO™ clubs to escape rooms. Taking advantage of the warm summer weather, libraries also held events outdoors and created Storywalks™ or scavenger hunts that could be done at a safe distance from others. Drive-thru and pop-up libraries provided community members with materials to browse and the chance to say “hello” to library staff in-person. Libraries also handed out hundreds of “make and take” crafts and activity kits. Massachusetts libraries provided imaginative and inspiring summer programs to their communities.

13,000
programs

438,000
program
participants

250
participating
libraries

Electronic Resources

MLS administers the Commonwealth eBook Collections program, which provides the ability for non-network public libraries to join the SAILS Network OverDrive collection and directly manages the OverDrive K-12 Shared Sora Collection for school libraries. In addition, MLS provides training and support for the statewide database program that is funded jointly by MLS and MBLC.

Commonwealth eBook Collections

This year was the single most active and successful year to date for the OverDrive K-12 Shared Sora Collection side of the program. A record 235 schools joined the program, bringing the total to 552 participating schools, which, in addition to being the highest number of participating schools to date, also accounts for over 60% of the entire MLS school membership. Monthly circulation records were continuously broken throughout the year. This program received \$300,000 in CARES Act funding to keep up with increased demand and to meet the expected increase in demand for summer reading ahead of the 2021-2022 school year.

Library participation in the SAILS Network OverDrive collection remained steady while circulation increased. Due to a change with the program vendor (OverDrive), academic libraries are no longer able to join the SAILS Network OverDrive collection as a part of this program, but academic libraries that have already joined may continue their participation going forward.

864,731

circulations for school collections (record high)

49,454

items in school collection

552

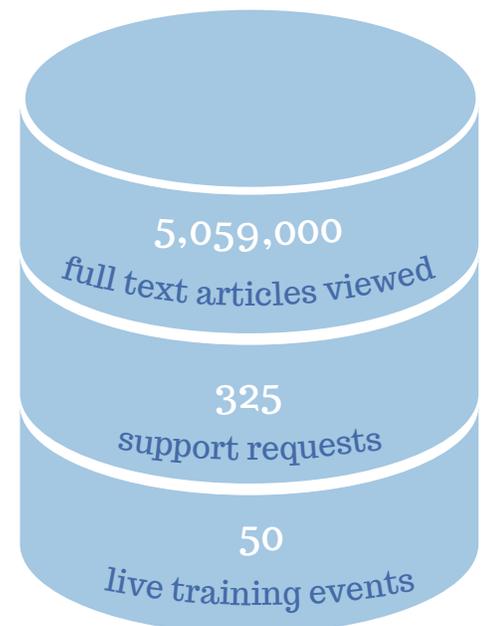
participating libraries (record high for schools)

1,183

support requests (record high)

Statewide Databases

We continued support of the current suite of statewide databases and continued to offer virtual training sessions available from the databases vendors. MLS helped libraries transition from Gale's Career Transitions database to its replacement resource, Gale Presents: Peterson's Career Prep. To prepare for the upcoming FY23 databases procurement, the MBLC and MLS held 13 feedback sessions for MLS members that included members from all library types, and followed up with a survey for members in the spring. Procurement preparation activities will continue into FY 2022.



Resource Sharing

MLS provides statewide delivery, document delivery, and interlibrary loan services that foster equity of access to library resources to everyone in Massachusetts. In addition, MassCat offers a low-cost solution for small libraries of all types that enables resource sharing for their library users.



Delivery - Document Delivery - Interlibrary Loan - MassCat

Interlibrary loan borrowing requests slowly rose over the course of FY2021. The majority of ILL requests are placed by public libraries, and as these libraries started offering services to their patrons like curbside pickup, requests started to increase. In July 2020, 57 member libraries submitted approximately 160 ILL requests. Just two months later, in September, 100 member libraries had placed 635 requests. The Resource Sharing team worked to create lists of libraries across the country who were still supplying their physical collection in order to fill requests more efficiently.

Delivery resumed in the beginning of July 2020, after being shut down for a little over 4 months. Starting delivery for over 550 libraries was a challenge, but MLS and Optima worked together with libraries to resume in phases. As more and more libraries returned to delivery the material volume increased 2.7 million from the previous year.

The Resource Sharing team also began hosting webinars and virtual Community Chats, in order to check in with librarians who handle ILL for their libraries, answer questions, and offer some remote training for new staff.

Resource Guides

Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Massachusetts Libraries

As the COVID-19 pandemic persisted, the Consulting & Training Services Team worked collaboratively with MBLC to provide resources about the virus and how libraries could continue to meet the needs of their communities. The Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Massachusetts Libraries Guide was updated with information on a variety of topics, including pandemic planning, reopening the library, things libraries can do remotely, remote library resources, and occupational safety. The guide also included pages devoted to youth and school services, and academic libraries.

"I think it's remarkable what MLS has achieved during the pandemic. Thank you for creating updated and accurate information for the Massachusetts library community in this time of crisis."

-Special Library

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

The Consulting & Training Services Team also worked to build awareness of diversity, equity, and inclusion through a number of resource guides, including guides on Social Justice and Libraries, Inclusive Collections, Inclusive Programming, and Anti-Racism for School and Youth Services Librarians. The guides provided links to professional development, videos, books, websites, and more to help all types of libraries on their journey of integrating the core values of DEI into their work. We are grateful to library staff from across the Commonwealth who contributed content to these guides.

Top TEN Guides

Coronavirus (COVID-19) and
Massachusetts Libraries

Diversity, Equity, and
Inclusion Training Guides

Delivery

Interlibrary Loan

Strategic Planning for
Libraries

Summer Library Program

Commonwealth eBook
Collections

Statewide Databases

Consulting and Training
Services

Virtual School Librarian

57,683
COVID -19
Views

178,744
Total Guide
Views

13,088
DEI
Views

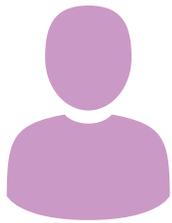
BiblioTemps®

BiblioTemps is a staffing service that focuses on connecting libraries with library workers. We specialize in the recruitment of skilled library workers for short-term and temporary to permanent placements in public, academic, and special libraries. For more information about BiblioTemps please visit our website bibliotemps.com

BiblioTemps and COVID -19

As a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic and subsequent library closures in mid-March of 2020, our BiblioTemps service suspended all new placements through the remainder of FY20. In the first half of FY21, several of our placements resumed positions that had ended prematurely due to the pandemic. In the fall we cautiously resumed placements with the knowledge that demand would be low while buildings were closed and libraries offered limited services.

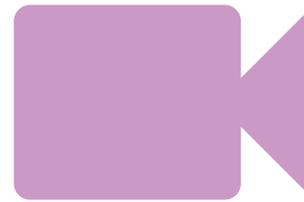
BiblioTemps did not see staffing demands recover until the end of FY21. During the pandemic this service saw a 73% decrease in placements from the previous year. So far in FY22 demand for staffing has been high and we expect to make a full recovery ending the year with strong numbers.



16
placements



378
webinar registrations



128
views of recordings

Webinar Series for Library Workers

With a grant of \$3,000 made possible by CARES Act funding to the Federal Institute of Museum and Library Services as administered by the MBLC.

BiblioTemps provided seven webinars on topics like Resumes, Salary Negotiation, Networking, and executing a successful job search.

“I thoroughly enjoyed the webinar series. What a great idea! It really got me into the swing of things after my graduation in 2020 and then the pandemic. Thank you so much!” - Library Job Seeker

Cooperative Purchasing

MLS collaborates with the Massachusetts Higher Education Consortium (MHEC) to provide consortium pricing for library supplies and materials. MHEC is a New England wide purchasing consortium that uses its larger member base and procurement expertise to negotiate high cost savings for members. We work closely with MHEC to ensure the products that libraries purchase are available at the best prices possible.



save  **MORE!**
member discounts
for october

savings over and above discounted contract pricing.
OFFERS ENDING SOON!

- **20% off** your next floor care rental from **Sunbelt Rentals**
- **55% off list** on all Triumph and Victory Workstations from **ESI Ergonomic Solutions**
- **Free AED Wall Cabinet** with the purchase of select AED devices from **School Health**
- **Save an Additional 10%** off your next S03 contract purchase from **VoDaVi Technologies**

[learn more!](#)

MHEC Contract News



We welcomed our new MHEC contract contact Ryan Kidder. Ryan is a Senior Strategic Sourcing Manager for the Massachusetts Higher Education Consortium (MHEC). Ryan works to bring MHEC members the best multi-vendor contracts in terms of cost-avoidance, product choice, and service depth. Questions about purchasing cooperative Ryan Kidder can be reached at rkidder@mhec.net

The contract MHEC MC15-L50 was put out to bid for library supplies and archival products. The new contract will go into effect April 1st 2022.



147
new MHEC members



868,764
dollars saved

January 2021 - June 2022: Strategic Plan Action Plan

The first part of our action plan year was spent realigning resources and funding around meeting the goals of our strategic initiatives. Our work will continue through the next eight months to met these goals. Here are some of the highlights that our team has accomplished to date.

Strategic Initiative 1

MLS ensures its services are sustainable, prioritize member needs, and equitably serve all member types.

Goals	Actions	Measurement of Success	Work Toward Goal
MLS ensures service value to all member types.	MLS will develop a guide to its levels of services, clarifying what benefits are available to each member type; the guide will be shared broadly and in several formats.	Member library staff at a broad level will have a greater understanding of MLS services and resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Created MLS Live sessions to interactively engage members in discussing a different MLS related topic each month.Launched a monthly newsletter, which includes news, staff introductions, and useful information.
MLS will continue to strengthen its partnerships and collaborations to allow MLS to focus on what it does uniquely well.	MLS will establish a partnership process, including a rubric, liaisons, expectations, policy and evaluations of current and new partnerships for opportunities and overlap.	MLS will report out annually on the value of their partnerships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Established and strengthened new and current partners for our work.MBLC awarded CARES ACT funding to MLS' Commonwealth eBook Collections: the OverDrive K-12 Shared Sora CollectionMLS also received CARES Act funds from the MBLC to offer a series of workforce development training, presented by BiblioTemps
New services will be designed to deliver the greatest statewide impact, able to expand and contract due to available funding and need.	MLS will create guidelines and criteria for new and established services for value and impact.	As an element of service review or introduction, MLS will be able to detail the impact/impact of the service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Engaged Staff, Board members and members on our case for Support work. Interviews conducted with over 250 staff at member librariesContracted with Neon CRM to build a Customer Management System to allow us to track statistics and impact of services.

Strategic Initiative 2

MLS empowers leaders to emerge at every level of library service, connecting staff throughout the stages of their careers.

Goals	Actions	Measurement of Success	Work Toward Goal
MLS promotes excellence and continuity by providing professional development, conversation, and community around leadership.	MLS develops a process for reaching out to members/training participants, asking them to report on how MLS programs have helped them.	Member library staff recognize the transformative value of building and maintaining a professional network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MLS staff hosted a series of Community Chats to ensure consistent and engaging conversations among peers.
Leadership, professional development, and networking opportunities will have flexible offerings in order to include participants from various library types, library sizes, and resources.	Linked to Initiative 1, Goal 1: MLS will develop a guide to its levels of services, clarifying what benefits are available to each member type; the guide will be shared broadly and in several formats.	MLS will report to member libraries on an annual basis the number of professional development opportunities via type of opportunity, intended audience, training modality, and type of library.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MLS contracted with external Trainers to offer workshops on Leadership and Management classes• MLS ensured offerings were available to members in a variety of methods including synchronous, informal discussions, webinars, and onsite meetings.

Strategic Initiative 3

MLS will take the lead in facilitating important conversations, and support member-facing initiatives focused on DEI: diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility and social justice.

Goals	Actions	Measurement of Success	Work Toward Goal
MLS will integrate the core values of diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility and social justice into its policies, practices, procedures, and programs.	<p>In collaboration with partner organizations, MLS will explore hiring a Coordinator/Consultant to support the membership in this work.</p> <p>MLS will work to align internal policies and procedures to the tenets of DEI.</p>	MLS will demonstrate both increased resource allocation as well as substantive, visible progress in representation throughout MLS services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MLS conducted a thorough review of internal HR documents to ensure alignment with DEI core values.• MLS became members of several diverse local and national organizations. Through these memberships we are able to support the work they do and provide resources and opportunities to MLS and the Membership.
Following the lead of trusted experts, MLS will build awareness in using the DEI tenets with member library staff to identify and eliminate barriers to inclusive library services.	In partnership with member libraries, research and tailor a DEI evaluation framework for member libraries.	Member library staff are confident in using the core values of DEI with their communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MLS contracted with external Trainers to offer workshops on DEI topics with plans to offer the series again due to high demand.

People

MLS is people-powered! We couldn't do what we do without our dedicated Executive Board, talented staff, committed members and partners who tirelessly to provide great service. Thank you!



Executive Board Members

Matthew Berube
Jones Library, Amherst

Les Ball
Massachusetts Board of Library
Commissioners

Anne Bognolo
Eaglebrook School, Deerfield

Deborah Conrad
Massachusetts Board of Library
Commissioners

Stephanie Friree Ford
McLean Hospital

Catherine Halpin
Boston Public Library

Hope Houston
Bentley University, Waltham

James Lonergan
Massachusetts Board of Library
Commissioners

Emily Levine
Watertown Free Public Library

Melinda Webster Loof
Bowman Elementary School,
Lexington

Elizabeth McGovern
Westwood Public Library

Becky Plimpton
Joshua Hyde Public Library,
Sturbridge

Eric Poulin
Simmons University

Thomas Raffensperger
Westfield State University

Tim Rivard
Massachusetts Bay Community
College

Joseph Rodio
South Hadley Public Library

Sarah Sogigian
Massachusetts Library System

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