



Office of Commonwealth Libraries

How Pennsylvania’s Libraries Benefit from LSTA Programs

The [Institute of Museum and Library Services \(IMLS\)](#) provides federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funding to states through its [Grants to the States](#) program. The Pennsylvania Department of Education’s Office of Commonwealth Libraries (PDE/OCL) administers these funds to support local and statewide library programs that are aligned with its IMLS-approved five-year plan. An overview of Pennsylvania’s LSTA program (including program examples and five-year plan highlights) is available at [Pennsylvania’s IMLS’ state profile page](#).

In 2016-17, the Office of Commonwealth Libraries received \$5,467,151 in LSTA funding.

Library Service Area	Statewide Library Programs Supported with LSTA Funds
Technology Services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. POWER Library: Authentication service 2. POWER Library: Chat with a Librarian (formerly Ask A Librarian) 3. POWER Library: CyberSmarts 4. Spark (Pennsylvania Integrated Library System) 5. Data reporting and analysis tools for libraries (LibPas service for public library annual reports, summer learning statistics, plans for the use of state aid, etc.) 6. KINBER partnership
Early Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Cruise into Kindergarten: Play K 8. Cruise into Kindergarten: Wee Build and Block Party 9. One Book, Every Young Child
School-Age Services and Summer Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Summer Learning Program 11. Family Engagement through STEM 12. Teen Reading Lounge
Training for Educators, Librarians and Boards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Training for academic, public, and school library staff 14. Training for public library board members and friends’ boards 15. PA Forward literacy training 16. WebJunction training platform
Online Access to Rare PA Collections	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Digitization of rare State Library materials 18. Online access to rare PA library materials in Digital Public Library of America

Background Information

Technology Services

1. **POWER Library** – POWER Library funds are used for:

- **Authentication service** – Authentication services verify that users have a valid library card or are using POWER resources from a Pennsylvania school or public library.
 - **Chat with a Librarian** – A chat 24/7 reference service for the public.
 - **CyberSmarts** -- Online instruction on safe internet use, including online bullying prevention for young people.
2. **SPARK (Pennsylvania Integrated Library System)** – At the close of 2017, 118 library locations in Pennsylvania were using SPARK, an Evergreen open source software platform that manages their online public catalog as well as their library operations, including cataloging, circulation, acquisitions, and serials.

Early Learning:

3. **Cruise Into Kindergarten: Play K** -- Aligned with PA Learning Standards for Early Childhood, the Play K curriculum allows young children to 'play kindergarten' using materials from different "playscapes". Children practice activities using a theme that is aligned with the PA Learning Standards for Early Childhood and kindergarten readiness skills such as using scissors, going over a calendar and taking turns. Currently, more than 200 libraries offer the Play K program.
4. **Cruise Into Kindergarten: Block Party & Wee Build Programs** -- Aligned with PA Learning Standards for Early Childhood, Block Party and Wee Build programs allow young children to play with a set of universal blocks, people, vehicles, animals, scarves, etc. in order to learn how to manipulate objects, work with others, count and measure and build vocabulary. There are more than 255 libraries participating in the Block Party program and more than 140 libraries participating in the Wee Build program.
5. **One Book, Every Young Child:** The One Book, Every Young Child program promotes the value and benefits of reading early and often to preschoolers and their families. Program activities include visits by the author across the state; providing copies of the selected book to every public library in the state; and providing District Library Centers, county library systems and collaborating museums with a trunk of fun book-related activities, games, and manipulatives for young children. All of this is tied together by a customized activity guide that is aligned with Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood. Based on returned surveys from early childhood programs at least 456,000 young children had the book read to them. The author visits reached 5,887 children and adults and approximately 18,450 attended a program at a public library or early childhood outreach site.

School-Age Services and Summer Learning

6. **STREAM Kits** – STREAM (Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Art and Math) kit was assembled for each of the 29 District Library Centers to educate library staff and allow libraries to borrow materials and try things out before putting their scarce resources out to purchase items such as robots.
7. **Family Engagement through STEM** – LSTA funds were used to equip 50 Pennsylvania public libraries with the knowledge, skills and materials to provide inquiry based hands-

on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programs for families with elementary-aged children.

8. **STEM iPads for Rural Libraries** – In 2015, 200 STEM backpacks were distributed to 50 rural libraries. In 2016, iPads loaded with STEM apps (with most not needing an Internet connection) were added to the kits.
9. **Summer Learning Program** -- LSTA funds were used to purchase program manuals and to provide training for public libraries across Pennsylvania. In 2017, 345,278 children and teens attended summer learning programs at the library.
10. **Teen Reading Lounge** -- A partnership with the Pennsylvania Humanities Council, Teen Reading Lounge is an informal learning program that helps teens explore the humanities and build skills in five areas (communication, literacy, critical-thinking/creativity, collaboration and leadership/civic engagement) through reading, discussion, and activities. In 2016-17, 18 libraries were selected to be Teen Reading Lounge sites. The program is aimed especially at youth living in low-income areas and youth of color.

Training for Educators, Librarians and Boards:

11. **Professional Development** —LSTA funds were used to provide academic, public and school librarians and library staff with training. This included PA Forward literacy training and WebJunction's SkillSoft training. In addition, training was also provided to public library board members and friends' groups.

Online Access to Rare PA Collections

12. **Digitization of Rare State Library Materials** -- Digitization includes scanning and converting books, historic newspapers, photos, maps, genealogy records, etc. into digital records. Approximately 7700 items were digitized, with most items focusing on the State Library's World War I and World War II materials, and historic newspapers. Digitized items are cataloged using Metadata so that they can be found on the Internet. The materials are then uploaded to POWER Library and Digital Public Library of America, making them accessible to students and researchers from around the world.
13. **Online Access to Rare PA Library Materials** – Rare and unique materials in public and academic libraries, archives and related cultural heritage institutions across the state that have been digitized are cataloged and uploaded to the Digital Public Library of America, making them accessible to students and researchers from around the world.