

Some 2009 stats:

The six Massachusetts regional library systems strengthen library services in all types of libraries across the state, allowing them to function more economically and efficiently.

WMRLS serves 316 libraries – school, public, academic, & special in the 4 western counties – and provides a network for cooperation and sharing of resources among all of them, from the smallest, such as Monterey, to the largest, UMass-Amherst.

WMRLS delivered more than 1.8 million books and other materials between libraries in 2009, filling patrons' requests.

Electronic reference databases were used by the public and librarians almost 2 million times in 2009.

Libraries are saved thousands of dollars each year by using the cooperative purchasing discounts arranged by the regional library systems.

Over 19,000 children participated in summer reading programs, which WMRLS helped prepare.

WMRLS loaned over 70,000 books and materials to small libraries on a long-term basis.

81% of towns in Mass. in the 0-1999 pop. group are in the Western Region;

24% of towns in the 2000-4999 pop. group are also in the Western Region.

Almost half the Western Mass. libraries in towns under 5000 have per capita expenditures of less than \$20 per year.

Only 9% of the small libraries have directors with a professional library degree. The many remaining libraries are more likely, therefore, to have need of advisory services, technical support and professional development workshops from WMRLS.

For every \$1 of state funding for WMRLS, \$8.07 of service and savings is realized at the local level.

Library programs take up only 1/10 of 1% of the state's budget.