



March 8, 2021



# "Need to Know" Legislative Newsletter for Library Leaders

...from Wisconsin Library Association

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## Biennial Budget Update

### WLA promotes 2021-2023 State Library Funding Priorities



Governor Tony Evers delivered his Executive Budget proposal to a joint session of the legislature on February 16 where it became [AB68/SB111](#) and moved immediately to the legislature's [Joint Finance Committee \(JFC\)](#). The 16 JFC members' primary responsibility is to serve as the principal legislative committee charged with the review of all state appropriations and revenues. This [map](#) shows the home of each of its members. It's now the JFC's turn to craft their budget version.

As anticipated, the Executive Budget proposed an additional \$2.5 million in FY22 and \$4 million in FY23 for **public library system aid** to help local libraries innovate and increase their ability to respond to emerging community needs. The **state resource contracts** line item for the Cooperative Children's Book Center, Wisconsin Talking Book and Braille Library, and inter-library loan access to Milwaukee Public Library and UW-Madison collections reflects a modest cost-to-continue increase. **Recollection Wisconsin** received its own line item in the budget reflecting an additional \$100,000 in FY23 over and above the recommendation to reallocate \$150,000 in FY22 and \$200,000 in FY23 from

WISELearn to support public library digital archiving efforts. ([See DPI Section](#): doc pp. 506-07, Items 38, 40 and 41)

**What happens next in the state budget process?** Legislative Fiscal Bureau prepares a comprehensive analysis of the Governor's budget bill for JFC. In mid to late March, JFC schedules committee hearings where agency heads appear for testimony and Q&A. Beginning in early April, JFC usually holds three to five **public hearings** in locations around the state, which usually drew large crowds. On February 18 [a news release from 105 Wisconsin organizations](#) requested safer alternatives to in-person attendance at these hearings; WLA will apprise members of JFC's decision.

Once agency and public hearings are concluded, the committee will meet through the end of May to debate and vote on various pieces of the budget bill. At the end of JFC deliberations, their changes to the current budget will be introduced as a substitute amendment to AB68/SB111 and sent to the full legislature for floor votes in each house. The legislature usually delivers its final product to the governor by the end of June. The governor completes his veto review within 30 days of receiving the bill, and then signs it into law.

## **ACTION ITEM! – Contacting JFC members**



At this time, it is anticipated that the JFC will likely work from the current budget rather than the Governor's budget as its base document for preparing its version of the 2021-2023 state budget. WLA's Library Development & Legislation (LD&L) budget team has been meeting individually with JFC members since early this year to acquaint them with our [2021-2023 State Budget Priorities](#). **If you live or work in the district of one of the [16 Joint Finance Committee members on this list](#)**, and you did not attend Library Legislative Day, please send a short letter following talking points #3-5 from the [Legislative Day Instructions](#). Additional handouts from Legislative Day are found [HERE](#).

## **2021 Library Legislative Day Goes Virtual!**



WLA's [2021 Library Legislative Day](#) was entirely virtual this year with a videoconference program on February 16, followed by three days of Zoom and Go-to-Meeting appointments with legislators. **Thank you** to our speakers State Superintendent of Public Instruction Carolyn Stanford

Taylor, Senator Mary Felzkowski, Representative Amy Loudenberg and Steve Conway. **Special shout out** to Vicki Teal Lovely, Thomas Lovely and George Sande for producing the three **Strong Libraries = Strong Communities: Library Patron Stories** videos [LINKED HERE](#). **Appreciation** to LLD Committee Pete

Loeffel, Jim Ramsey, Nick Dimassis, and Bruce Gay, ably assisted by WLA staff Plumer Lovelace, Hannah Bunting and Tom Klement, with volunteer virtual platform shepherds Aaron Davis, John DeBacher, Mark Jochem, Liz Kauth, Emily Kornak, Rachel Muchin-Young, Rob Nunez, Bradley Shipps, and Kimberly Young.

**\*\*VOTE\*\* Spring Election Day is April 6 \*\*VOTE\*\***

### **State Superintendent of Public Instruction Race Special elections in 13<sup>th</sup> SD and 89<sup>th</sup> AD**

The only statewide race on April 6 is for a non-partisan office that is very important to libraries: State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSOPI). Current SSOPI Carolyn Stanford Taylor, appointed by Gov. Tony Evers after he left the position to become governor, is not seeking another term. The February 16 primary winnowed a field of seven down to two candidates: Pecatonica Area School District Superintendent [Jill Underly](#) and former Brown Deer superintendent [Deborah Kerr](#).

Special elections to fill the vacant 13<sup>th</sup> Senate District and 89<sup>th</sup> Assembly District seats are also on April 6. In the 13<sup>th</sup> SD, Republican 37<sup>th</sup> Assembly District Representative [John Jagler](#) will face Democrat [Melissa Winker](#) and independents [Ben Schmitz](#) of the American Solidarity Party and [Spencer Zimmerman](#), who is running as a "Trump Conservative." In the 89<sup>th</sup> AD, Democrat [Karl Jaeger](#) will face Republican [Elijah Behnke](#).

**For more information about voting on April 6:** <https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/>

## **Legislative and State Government Reference Resources**

The [State Senate](#) and [Assembly](#) web pages provide details on legislative leadership, as well as contact information and committee assignments for individual members.

- [WLA's 2021-2022 Legislative Guide](#) is sorted for public library system boundaries and includes libraries in each legislative district.
- [Wisconsin Legislative Map Library](#) Senate, Assembly, Congressional districts
- Information about Governor Evers, Lt. Governor Barnes and the executive branch is found [HERE](#).
- [State of Wisconsin Employee Telephone & Email Directory](#)
- [State Agency Staff with Responsibilities to the Legislature Directory](#) (updated December 8, 2020, watch for new one)

## **Concluding Thought**

*"Poetry is the shadow cast by our streetlight imaginations."*

From ["What is Poetry?"](#)

--Lawrence Ferlinghetti, American poet (March 24, 1919 – February 22, 2021)

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