Director's Toolkit

Resources for New Directors 2026

Objectives

Connect with CO public library standards and library law

Engage in the Colorado collaborative library culture

Learn more about Colorado resources, structures, and people that can help

Made possible through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) administered by the Colorado State Library

What is a Library Director?



Library Standards and Leadership Resources

Colorado Definition of Public Library:

http://ColoradoStateLibrary.org/standards/definition-public-library

Colorado Public Library Standards

The newly released 2024 to 2030 Colorado Public Library Standards offer checklists for management decisions, strategic planning, and communicating successes and needs.

https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdelib/standards/index

The associated data maps, charts, and graphs also support library leadership in decision-making, change management, and advocacy.

https://www.lrs.org/library-standards-visualizations/
https://www.lrs.org/data-tools/public-libraries/annual-statistics/

Library Policies

The Colorado State Library offers examples of library policies. The language in these sample policies may or may not be appropriate for your library and are not endorsed by the State Library. They are simply a reference resource as you develop and/or review your own policies.

http://www.coloradostatelibrary.org/librarydevelopment/publiclibraries/Policies

To submit your policies and best practices, please contact the *Public Library Development Team*.

Library Leadership Support

The Colorado State Library provides:

- Hot topics monthly discussions
- Trustee training
- Library consulting for library managerial and organizational leaders
- Strategic planning resources & facilitation
- Connections to build the Colorado colleague network
- Staff Day Presentations (additional topics can be developed based on your need)

http://ColoradoStateLibrary.org/librarydevelopment/publiclibraries/index

Library District Legal Documents

The CSL archives all library district bylaws, establishment documents, and legal service area maps. If you create or modify these documents, please send your revisions to the Colorado State Library.

http://ColoradoStateLibrary.org/librarydevelopment/publiclibraries/legaldocuments

Who Does What? Statewide Agencies

CSL

- **Public Library Standards**
- Consulting
- Trustee Support
- librarieslearn.org
- **Library Research & Data**
- Hosted websites
- Virtual Library
- Legal Resources
- District Records
- Policy Samples
- Statewide Initiatives
- SWIFT (interlibrary loan)
- **State Grants & Grant Support**
- State Pubs Library
- Talking Book Library

CLiC

- Aspen Cat ILS
- Statewide Courier
- Cooperative Purchasing
- Colleagues on Call
- Talent Development
- Fiscal Management
- Special Projects & Services

SIPA

- Technology Procurement
- Contracting
- Grants
- Conference

Marmot

- Sierra ILS, Pika or VuFind Discovery
- Marmot Digital Achive
- Computer Equipment
- Network Management
- Marmot Overdrive Collection
- EnvisionWare Contracting & Support
- Hosted File Servers, Websites, & Specialized Software
- CAL Institutional Membership

CAL

- Legislation - Lobbyist
- Advocacy
- Intellectual Freedom
- Conferences & Workshops
- Committees & Interest Groups
- Awards

Alphabet Soup

CSL: Colorado State Library

CLiC: Colorado Library Consortium

Marmot: Marmot Library Network

CAL: Colorado Association of Libraries

SIPA: Statewide Internet Portal Authority

LAWS & LIBRARIES

Colorado Library Law (Colorado Revised Statutes, Title 24, Article 90)

Colorado Library Law provides a legal framework for library operations and responsibilities. Staff, governing boards, and agency attorneys who work with libraries should be familiar with the information.

http://ColoradoStateLibrary.org/librarylaw/Contents

Other State Laws Impacting Libraries

The Colorado State Library collects guides and provides fact sheets on other state laws impacting libraries.
http://ColoradoStateLibrary.org/librarydevelopment/publiclibraries/otherlegalresources

- Colorado Open Records Act (CORA)
- Fair Campaign Practices Act
- Local Government Budget Calendar (https://dlg.colorado.gov/budget-calendar
- Financial Management Manual for Colorado Local Governments
- Open Meetings/Sunshine Laws
- Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR)
- Consumer Data Protection/Protecting Personal Information of Library Users
- Child Sexual Abuse Accountability Act
- Digital Accessibility Law for Colorado State and Local Government
- Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI)
- Protect Civil Rights Immigration Status

Colorado Elections 101

The **Taxpayers Bill of Rights (TABOR)** is a Colorado constitutional law that requires a public election for any tax increases or the incurrence of debt. (Mail ballot or coordinate with county.

November elections* (municipal libraries elections also may occur during local municipal election schedule)
July* prior to Nov. election - Written notification to County Clerk of library's intent to participate in November election
Early September* prior to Nov. election - Formal notification to County Clerk of ballot content (detailed ballot language, order of content, etc.).
***Day varies based on the year.**

Fair Campaign Practices Act

Among other things, restricts use of public funds in campaigns (including staff paid time) for election advocacy. See C.R.S. 1-45-117 and Colorado Constitution Amendment 28.

Collaboration & Connections

Colorado Public Library Directors

- Annual meeting
- Listserv
- Regional meetups

Regional Public Library Director Meetings

- Front Range Public Library Directors (FRPLD), quarterly meetings
- Southeast Area Directors (SEADS)
- Northeast Directors (NEDIRS)
- Western Region, semi-annual meetings

Colorado Public Library Specialists Groups

Self-organizing, online &/or front range meetings, listservs –discuss strategies and exchange resources; collaboration on shared initiatives, support for new peers/training:

- Regional Assistant Directors (RAD)– Nuts and Bolts of Library Operations
- Continuing Education Trainers
- Development Officers (fundraising, foundations, grant writing)
- Finance Directors
- HR Directors
- Marketing and Communications
- Security Officers
- Tech Directors
- Youth Services

Email Lists for Collaboration

See more collaborative groups and subscribe:
https://www.coloradovirtuallibrary.org/resource-sharing/listservs/

Notes on Colorado Organizations

Your Colorado Data Hub

1	**LRS Public Library Data & Tools** Your home base. Start here to find everything — statistics, dashboards, calculators, and templates. lrs.org/data-tools/public-libraries/
2	**Annual Statistics & Dashboards** Colorado public library statistics drawn from the annual PLAR survey. Explore statewide and per-library data. lrs.org/data-tools/public-libraries/annual-statistics/
3	**Public Library Annual Report Dashboards** Interactive visualizations of your library's data over time. Great for spotting trends and sharing with your board. lrs.org/public-library-annual-report-dashboards/
4	**Colorado Public Library Standards - Data Tools** Provides public library data as maps, charts, and graphs that supplement the Colorado Public Library Standards https://www.lrs.org/colorado-public-library-standards-data-tools/

Report to Your Board

5	**Monthly Board Report Template** A ready-made template for your regular board updates. No need to build one from scratch — download, customize, and use from day one. lrs.org/public-library-monthly-board-report-template/
6	**Annual Report Template** Turn a full year of data into a board-ready narrative. Also useful as a public-facing document that reflects your library's identity and impact. lrs.org/public-library-annual-report-template/

Notes:

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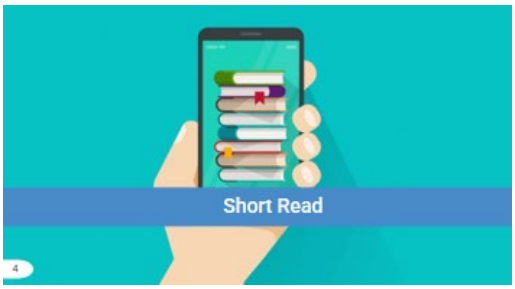
Buzz Words & Trends

	Defined	Impact to Libraries
	It is the responsibility of public service organizations to engage representatives from all demographics in the community.	
	Austerity has deepened with sustained underfunding of public services creating added pressure on public servants.	
	Formats that take advantage of short opportunities to read help encourage reading among those that are pressed for time, reluctant to read, or distracted by technology.	
	Utilizing AI requires more than being able to read what is generated. It incorporates Literacy + Media Literacy + Digital Literacy + AI Literacy + Information Literacy = AI Meta Literacy	
	Content is updated in real time and requires recurring payments to access products, services, or memberships.	









Defined	Impact to Libraries
The workforce is shifting due to artificial intelligence and economic uncertainty. Change from degree to skills, knowledge, and ability	
An aging workforce and population will change the United States and other developed nations.	
A transformative, trust-based approach to problem-solving that bypasses traditional hierarchies, connecting diverse stakeholders.	
Colorado faces risks that affect people, communities, and systems statewide. Infrastructure, water supplies, housing, public health, and local economies.	

Weak Signals: Emergent and potential trends shaping the future of libraries. International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions

Trends. Center for the Future of Libraries (ALA)

Revisiting the 21st Century Public Servant. University of Birmingham (United Kingdom)

Colorado Resiliency Framework 2025. Department of Local Affairs

Calendar of Colorado Events

This calendar highlights Colorado-specific library activities and events of interest to public library directors and staff. This list is a snapshot rather than a comprehensive list.

For information on monthly professional development offerings, check out the calendar on the Libraries Learn website: https://www.librarieslearn.org/calendar.

Jan-Mar | Public Library Annual Report (PLAR) Reporting Period; New Presidents Forum

Feb-Mar | E-rate application (dates change each year); Colorado Association of Libraries Leadership Institute Application

Feb | Check Out Colorado State Parks: new passes sent for next year; CLiC's Virtual Winter Workshop

Mar | CAL Legislative Day at State Capitol

Spring | CAL workshops

Apr-May | Conferences - Colorado Resource Sharing; Teen Lit Conference; REFORMA; CLiC & Connect Rural Meetups (Regional)

May | Colorado Public Library Directors' Retreat & New Directors Forum

Jul | State Grants reports due to State Library

Jul-June | E-rate forms receive reimbursement

Sept | State Grants to Libraries: current eligibility form due, previous year report due

Sept-Oct | Marmot User Group, Aspen Cat User Group, CAL Conference

Sept-Oct | Library Research Service (LRS): final public library data file released from previous year

Oct | Colorado Libraries for Early Literacy (CLEL) Conference

Oct-Dec | Budget season

Library Development

People are the heart of Colorado's library community. Our Library Development consultants are here to support you. We aim to strengthen Colorado's public, K-12, academic, and special library communities by delivering expertise grounded in data-driven and research-based practices, ensuring libraries can help all Coloradans thrive.

To fulfill this purpose, we partner with you through:

Professional Development: Reflective learning that honors your experience.

Expert Consultation: Collaborative problem-solving tailored to your specific needs.

Proven Resources: Easy-to-use tools built on best practices.

Establish Networks: Building lasting bonds between colleagues and partners across the state.

Clear Communication: Making sure you have a seat at the table for state and federal initiatives.

Tiah Frankish, Director

Kate Brunner, Youth & Family Services

Kate Compton, Early Literacy Consultant

Suzi Tonini, School Library Leadership Consultant

Tammy Langeberg, HESTL Coordinator

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