



2009-2011 Legislative Advocacy Agenda

To improve student achievement...

- WEMTA supports the statutory use of the Common School Fund. *The Common School Fund Library Aid is an annual entitlement program distributing the interest earned on loans made from the Common School Fund, one of the trust funds managed by the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands. The funds are restricted by law to be used for public school library resources. Many public school libraries rely on the Common School Fund allocations as their sole funding source for information resources. (State)*
- WEMTA supports adequate funding for educational technology in all K-12 public schools with a goal of \$250 per student per year. *A 2002 UW-Wisconsin study, "Funding Our Future: An Adequacy Model for Wisconsin School Finance," underscored the importance of adequate funding to produce students who are economically competitive within a 21st Century global workforce. (State)*
- WEMTA supports state and national efforts to augment and further develop the University of Wisconsin System Digital Library Collections. *The resources within the collections are free and publicly available online. Currently, the digital resources include text-based materials such as books, journal series, and manuscript collections; photographic images; slides; maps; prints; posters; audio and video.*
- WEMTA supports the expansion of the U.S. Department of Education Loan Deferment/Forgiveness Program to include Library Media Specialists and Technology Directors. *The expansion of this program will further support those educators who have Perkins, Stafford, or Federal Supplemental Loans, or who are qualified under the Paul Douglas program. Expansion of this program will further support those areas of the state identified as high needs.*
- WEMTA supports the employment of a full-time certified school library media specialist and appropriate library support staff in every school library, with additional professional staff and support staff in schools of 650 students or more. *While research from Wisconsin's study "Student Learning Through Wisconsin Library Media Centers," shows a statistically significant link between professional library media staffing and student achievement, annual reports from school districts reveal continuing declines in the staffing levels of library media specialists. (State)*



- WEMTA supports school reform proposals that are research-driven and effective, and opposes legislative actions that limit local decision making or restrict funding options for local school districts. *WEMTA supports research based solutions, including but not limited to, decreasing elementary class size, increasing parental and community involvement in schools, and expanding professional development opportunities. WEMTA believes that a strong public educational system is an essential component of our American democracy. (State)*
- WEMTA supports the removal of revenue controls so that school districts have the financial flexibility to provide an advanced, rigorous, technically sound curriculum. *Preparing students for the increasingly competitive global marketplace of the 21st century is critical. Skills like problem-solving, collaboration, communication and innovation must be integrated into K-12 schools if our students are to be successful in a globally competitive environment. Today, every student requires advanced skills and a rigorous curriculum to succeed. (State)*
- WEMTA supports BadgerLink funding to provide, and expand, universal access to online newspapers, periodicals, encyclopedias and other specialized information resources. *BadgerLink provides equal access to a core of online information resources for all students, no matter where their school is located - inner city, small town, or affluent suburb. This guarantees equity of resource delivery for all the state's people. (State)*
- WEMTA supports the use of general purpose revenue to fund library media and instructional technology consultants in the DPI Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning. *These positions are an invaluable resource to school library media specialists and technology directors throughout the State. WEMTA supports funding these positions in a stable and consistent manner. (State)*
- WEMTA supports intellectual and academic freedom for all students and staff and opposes infringements on personal privacy. WEMTA also recognizes the importance of providing safe online learning experiences for students and teaching them to use digital tools and content in a safe and ethical manner. (State and National)
- WEMTA supports sufficient funding to meet the Library needs of the UW System and the Wisconsin Technical College System as part of the continuum of life-long learning for Wisconsin children and families. (State)



- WEMTA supports full funding for the four statewide service contracts: Wisconsin Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Wisconsin Library Services (WiLS), Milwaukee Public Library/Interlibrary Loan (MPL), and the Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC). *These contracts provide specialized library materials and information to a unique customer base that cannot be served through the public libraries or the Reference and Loan Library. The specialties represented save monies throughout the state and network the states' libraries, including all types of libraries - public, academic, school, and special. (State)*
- WEMTA supports increasing funding for public libraries. *Wisconsin Law requires a request for funding for public library systems at a level equal to 13% of local library operating expenditures for the previous year. (Federal and State)*
- WEMTA supports adequate funding to strengthen the preparation of higher education library media programs to help address the shortage of new librarians entering the field. *According to the national American Library Association, 47% of all librarians will reach retirement age by 2008. New librarians entering the field are insufficient to meet this need. (Federal and State)*
- WEMTA supports the continued access to the Internet as an open forum for the free exchange and dissemination of information and opposes any legislation that would limit or control access. *Owners of telecommunications networks should not control the content transmitted over the network, nor set the prices for network traffic according to type of content, speed, and message size, nor the ownership of the content's originator. Common carriage is the fundamental principle that supports the Internet as an open, unbiased medium, and it should not be abandoned. (Federal: Net Neutrality)*
- WEMTA supports legislative efforts that expand the availability of electronic manuscripts of peer-reviewed journal articles that stem from research that is publicly available on the Internet. *The U.S. government funds an estimated 50% of university research, making this particularly important cause for the higher education community. (Federal)*
- WEMTA supports the reauthorization of ESEA to include the Improving Literacy Through School Libraries with sufficient funding. *Improving Literacy Through School Libraries provides funds for school libraries for up-to-date materials, a well-equipped technically advanced school library media center, and well-trained professional library media staff. (Federal)*



- WEMTA supports the reauthorization of ESEA to include the Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) program with sufficient funding. *EETT funds are used to assure that all students are technologically literate by the end of 8th grade, working to minimize the digital divide, and to lower the achievement gap for all students. (Federal)*
- WEMTA supports the reauthorization of ESEA to include the Strengthening Kids Interest in Learning and Libraries (SKILLS). *SKILLS establishes as a state goal that there be one highly qualified K-12 public school library media specialist in each school. (Federal)*
- WEMTA supports increased funding for E-rate to fully fund Priority1 requests, and the program provide for a State of Wisconsin E-rate Administrator. *E-rate was authorized by Congress in the Telecommunications Act of 1996, providing discounts to public libraries and to public and private K-12 schools on telecommunications services, Internet access, and some closely related costs, such as inside wiring. Discounts range from 20% to 90%, with the deepest discounts provided to those communities with the greatest need based on the National School Lunch Program. (Federal)*