



MEMO

To: Montana State Library Commission
From: Jennie Stapp, State Librarian and Tracy Cook, Lead Consulting Librarian
Subject: Continuing Education and Certification Recommendations
Date: June 5, 2023

At the recommendation of the continuing education and certification task force and the Network Advisory Council (NAC), staff request the Commission adopt the following recommendations:

Program Goals

- Promote continuing education and demonstrate its impact for quality library services.
- Promote recognition for librarians who participate and libraries that encourage staff to continue learning.
- Provide continuing education opportunities that benefit library directors, staff, and trustees.

Library Administration

- Adopt modified requirements for initial certification in the library administration track.
 - Initial Certification Requirements
 - Total Required Credits: 60 continuing education credits earned in a 4-year period
 - Library Administration Category
 - 30 credits
 - Electives
 - 30 credits in any category
- Adopt requirements for renewal of library administration certification.
 - Renewal Certification Requirements
 - Total Required Credits
 - 60 elective continuing education credits earned in a 4-year period

Library Staff Track

- Adopt modified requirements for the voluntary staff track.
 - Total Required Credits: 60 continuing education credits earned in a 4-year period
 - Library Administration Category
 - 5 credits
 - Library Services to the Public
 - 5 credits
 - Collection Management and Technical Services
 - 5 credits
 - Technology
 - 5 credits
 - Electives
 - 40 credits in any category



Background:

[22-1-103, Montana Code Annotated](#) (8) states, in part, that the Commission may adopt rules for the certification of librarians.

A review of the history of the program is summarized in this [short video presentation](#).

Beginning in September 2022, the Montana State Library and a task force of librarians, a library board member, and Commissioner Scribner, studied the current certification requirements to consider whether changes could be made to increase flexibility, participation, and value for the program. In addition to review by the NAC, staff shared the recommendations with the library community through feedback surveys and newsletters. People have been supportive of the recommendations. There are no additional costs anticipated to implement new requirements.

Summary of general recommendations:

1. Adopt fewer, clearer, measurable, and actionable program goals;
2. Adjust the Library Administration Track to increase flexibility;
3. Maintain the Voluntary Trustee Track Requirements as is;
4. Adjust the Voluntary Staff Track requirements to increase flexibility and encourage participation;
5. Address user experience with ASPeN to eliminate barriers to tracking and finding continuing education credits;
6. Provide lists of recommended courses for each certification track;
7. Develop an accessible and consistent plan to promote Continuing Education and Certification Program and,
8. Plan implementation for an effective date of July 1, 2024 or sooner if possible.