

Continuing Education and Certification Overview

March 26, 2025

Montana State Library
Commission Meeting



MONTANA
STATE LIBRARY
A GREATER STATE OF KNOWLEDGE

Review 2025 MSL Commission Goals

Review the accreditation, certification, and award of continuing education credits for library directors, staff, and board members

- Define the balance for credit needs. Consider what continuing education is truly helping the libraries deliver great service to patrons. Are the current categories too broad? How could they be modified or changed?
- What topics should be covered? What topics are objective? What are subjective?
- Consider whether credits will only be awarded for items that fall within defined categories and whether MSL will list or award credits for items outside of that definition.
- Create a study framework for the Commission to review and give feedback.

MCA & ARM

Montana Code Annotated (MCA)

- [22-1-103](#) - State Library Commission Authority
- [22-1-330](#) - Commission Rulemaking Authority

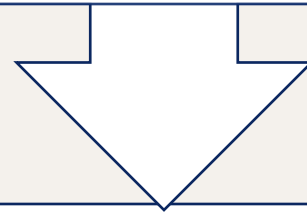
Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM)

- [10.102.1160](#) - Personnel – Public Library Standards
- [10.102.4002](#) - Definitions

What's the Difference?

Accreditation of Libraries

Formal review of an institution to make sure that it meets the public library standards set by an accrediting body



Certification of Librarians

Formal process for individuals to ensure the person has the right credentials, knowledge, and experience to effectively provide a service

Accreditation & Certification Example

Board/Commission	Accreditation Duty	Certification Duty	MCA	Institutional Accrediting Body
MT State Library Commission	Maybe*	Yes	22-1-103. State library commission -- authority.	none
MT Board of Public Education (BPE)	Yes	Yes	20-2-121. Board of public education -- powers and duties.	BPE (required, state) Cognia (voluntary, national)
MT Board of Pharmacy	Yes	Yes	37-7-201. Organization -- powers and duties.	National Association of Boards of Pharmacy
MT Behavioral Health	No	Yes	37-39-103. Duties of board.	Joint Commission
MT Board of Barbers and Cosmetologists	Yes	Yes	37-31-203. Rulemaking powers.	none

Accreditation & Certification

Board/Commission	Accreditation Duty	Certification Duty	MCA	Institutional Accrediting Body
MT State Library Commission	Maybe*	Yes	22-1-103. State library commission -- authority.	none

* Maybe

- Adoption of standards into ARM defines the minimum program attributes of public libraries that are eligible for state aid.
 - Libraries report annually on attainment of the public library standards.
 - If a library faces a hardship that impacts their ability to meet one or more standards, the library may request a deferral from the State Librarian.
 - The consequence of not meeting standards without a deferral is loss of state aid.

National Overview

2022 State Library Administrative Agency (SLAA) Survey

- Purpose: SLAA survey provides descriptive information about state library agencies.
- Coverage: The data are collected from 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Role	# of SLAA
Certification of Librarians	24/51
Accreditation of Libraries	15/51

Questions and Discussion

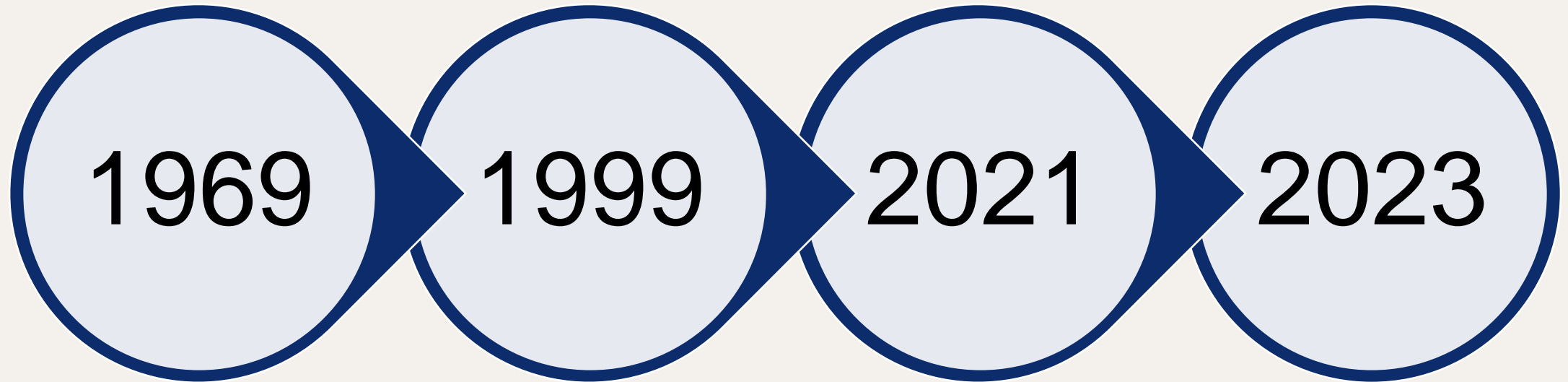
Accreditation and Certification

Public Library Standards

Defining the Minimum Required Program for All Public Libraries



Public Library Standards Adoption



- First Public Library Standards Adopted

- Revised Public Library Standards Adopted

- Current Public Library Standards Adopted

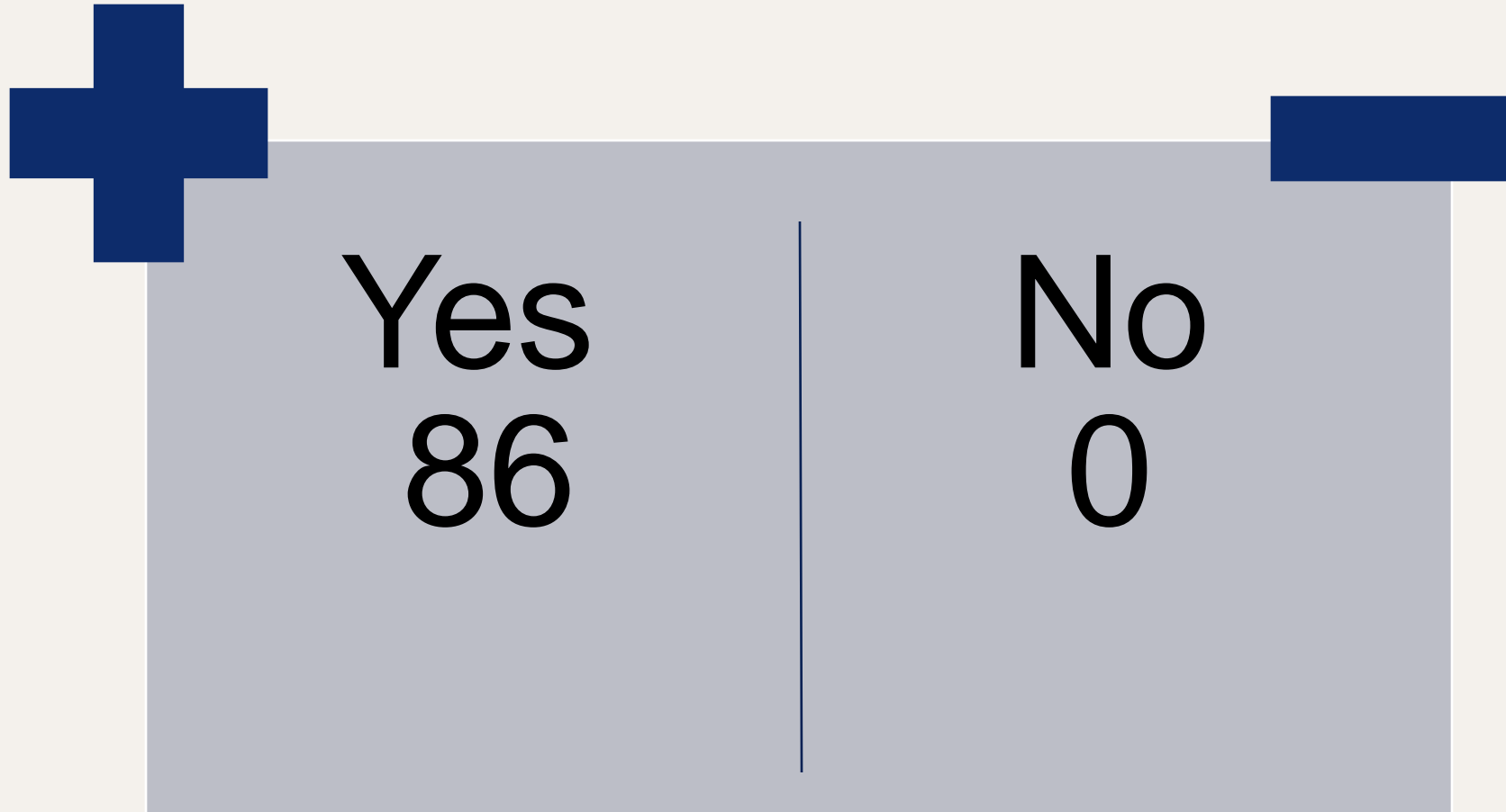
- Public Library Standards Amended to Remove MLS Degree Requirement for Largest Libraries

Boards Meeting Public Library Standards

Fiscal Year (FY)	Met Standard	Deferrals Requested
FY23	58	24
FY24	70	15

Libraries will report their FY25 Public Library Standards beginning in May.

Directors Meeting Certification Standard

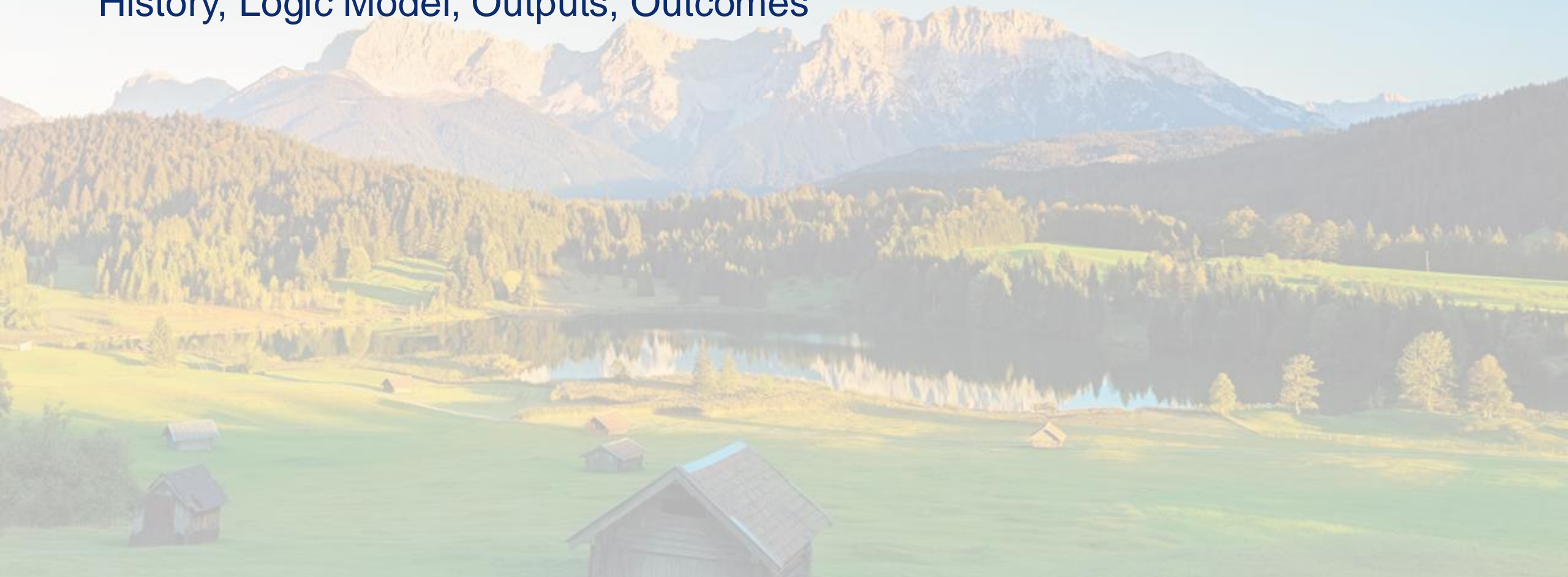


Questions and Discussion

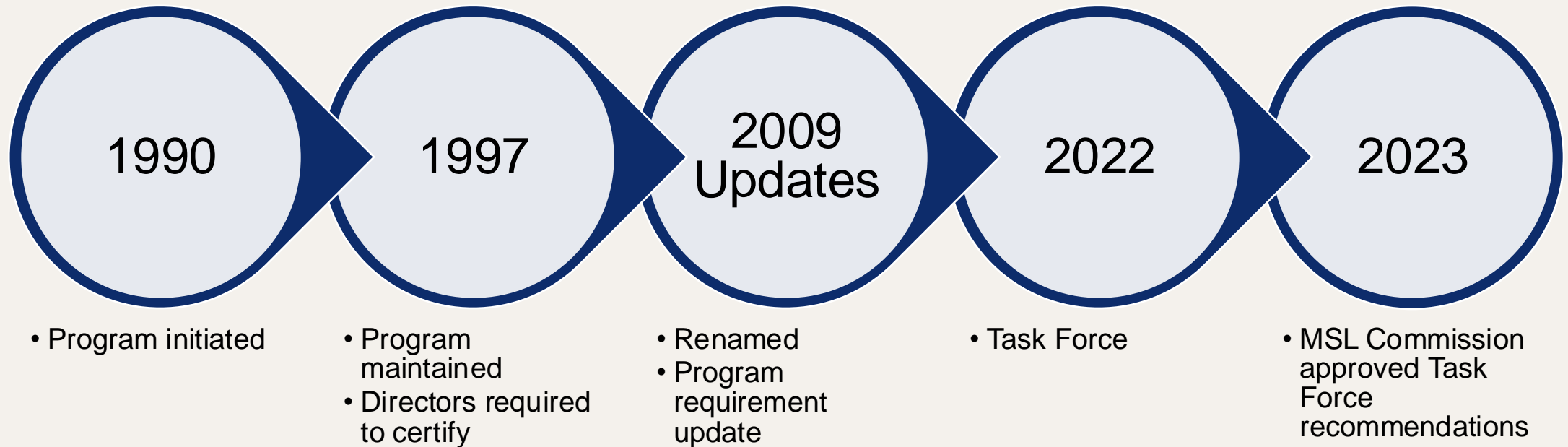
Public Library Standards – Board Continuing Education

Certification and CE Program

History, Logic Model, Outputs, Outcomes



CE Program Timeline/History



Overview of Current Certification Program



MSL Certification Program Overview



**MONTANA
STATE LIBRARY**
A GREATER STATE OF KNOWLEDGE



Colet Bartow
Continuing Education Coordinator

March 2025

The slide features a background image of a forest with mountains in the distance. The title 'MSL Certification Program Overview' is centered in a white box with a blue border. The Montana State Library logo is positioned in the center, and a portrait of Colet Bartow is in the lower-left corner. The date 'March 2025' is in the lower-right corner.

History of the Certification Program



Montana's
Continuing Education and
Certification Program

A Short History
1990 to 2022

2022 Continuing Education and Certification Task Force

[Continuing Education and Certification Recommendations MEMO – June 2023](#)

Task Force Members

- Jennifer Ball, Stillwater County Library Director
- Carmen Clark, Bozeman Public Library Staff
- Miranda Evenson, Sidney-Richland County Library Staff
- Pam Henley, Statewide Consulting Librarian, Montana State Library
- David Ingram, ImagineIF Libraries Trustee
- Tina Peterson, Harlowton Public Library Director
- Robyn Scribner, Montana State Library Commission Member

Charge to the Task Force

- Participate fully in the activities of the task force as a representative of library sizes, types, geographic location, and staff roles
- Review and consider continuing education needs and priorities as identified by MSL Core Services Committees and the Network Advisory Council
- Review and consider continuing education needs and priorities as identified by public library trustees, directors, and staff
- Understand the 2022 Public Library Standards and changes to CE requirements
- Evaluate the 2009 Goals for the CE Program and make recommendations for changes to the MSL Commission
- Evaluate the 2009 Continuing Education (CE) program requirements and make recommendations for changes to the MSL Commission

Meeting Recordings

- [Meeting 1](#)
- [Meeting 2](#)
- [Meeting 3](#)
- [Meeting 4](#)
- [Meeting 5](#)
- [Meeting 6](#)

Continuing Education Program Logic Model

Inputs/Resources/Activities

What will we create, do or offer?

Current Staffing Status: 1 FTE, Modified

Supervised by: Lead Statewide Consulting Librarian

Primary Stakeholders: Public Library Directors, Trustees, and Staff

Program Reporting to: State Library Commission

Program Tools: in person CE, newsletters, online learning, website, ASPeN

Funding: Library Services and Technology Act (Federal)

For Stakeholders

In person workshops, conferences, and institutes

Online Courses

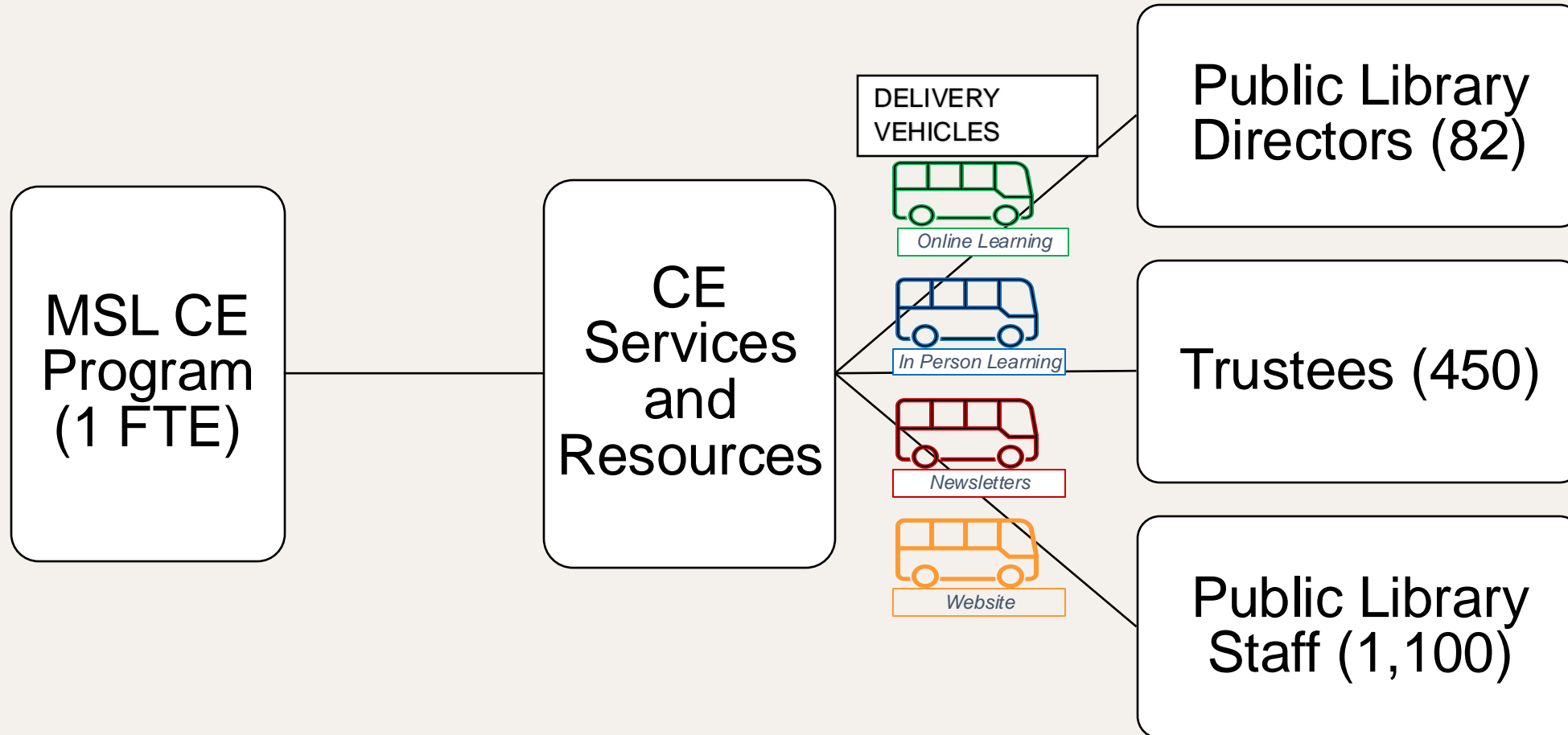
Webinars and Recordings

Newsletters

Continuing Education and Certification Webpages

Consultation

How We Reach Our Stakeholders



Outputs

What will we measure and report?

Description	Public Library Directors	Trustees	Staff	MSL Commission and Staff
# of offerings (events, videos, courses, resources)	X	X	X	X
# of attendees	X	X	X	X
# of newsletter subscribers	X	X	X	X
# of certified individuals	X	X	X	X
% of evaluation responses	X	X	X	X

Outcomes

What will the stakeholders have as a result of accessing Outputs?

Directors	Trustees	Staff	Commissioners
<p>Directors will have ready access to reliable, accurate, and up-to-date information to use for planning continuing education for themselves, their staff, and for trustees. Directors build their professional knowledge through learning opportunities across relevant continuing education categories.</p>	<p>Board members will have learned more about the laws, rules, roles, and responsibilities through ready access to reliable, accurate, and up-to-date CE and information resources.</p>	<p>Staff build their professional knowledge through learning opportunities across relevant continuing education categories.</p>	<p>Commissioners will have learned more about the laws, rules, roles, and responsibilities through ready access to reliable, accurate, and up-to-date CE and information resources.</p>

Questions, Discussion, Next Steps

Continuing Education Program

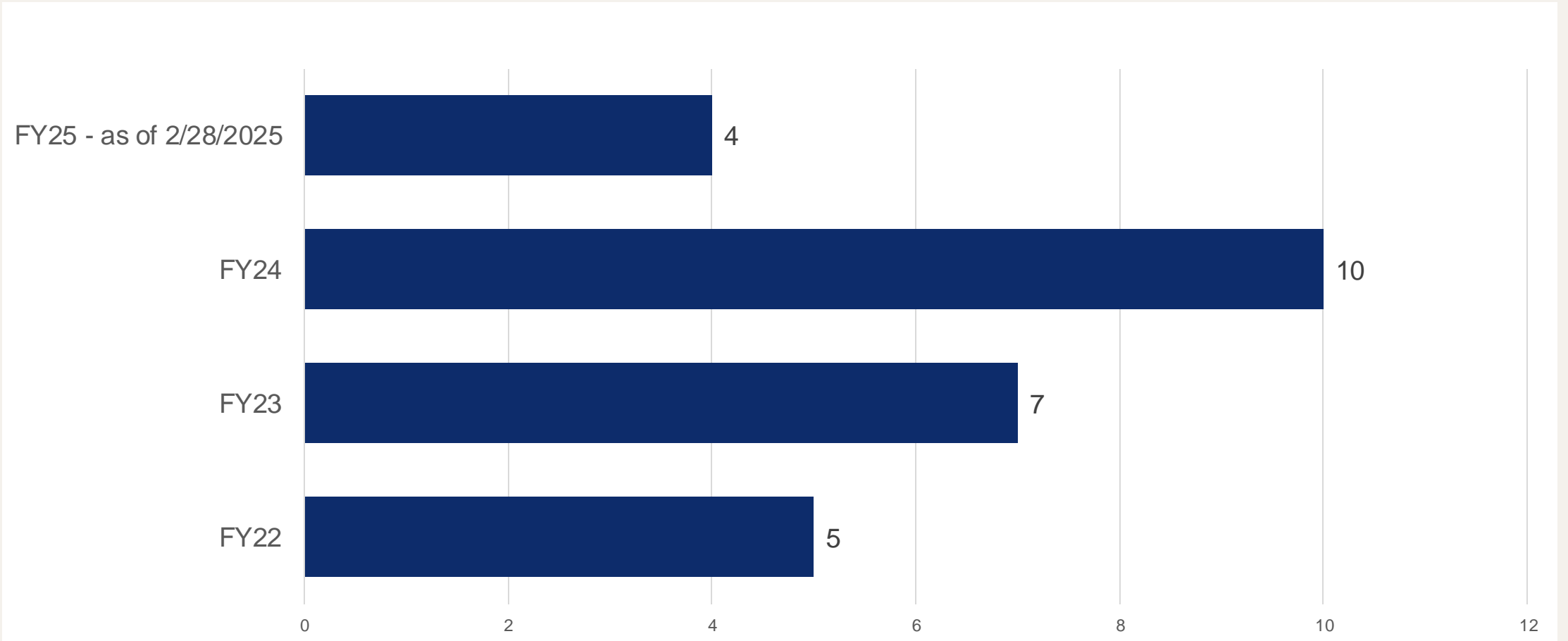
- Staff Draft Study Framework
- Continuing Education Credits
- Other Topics for June Meeting



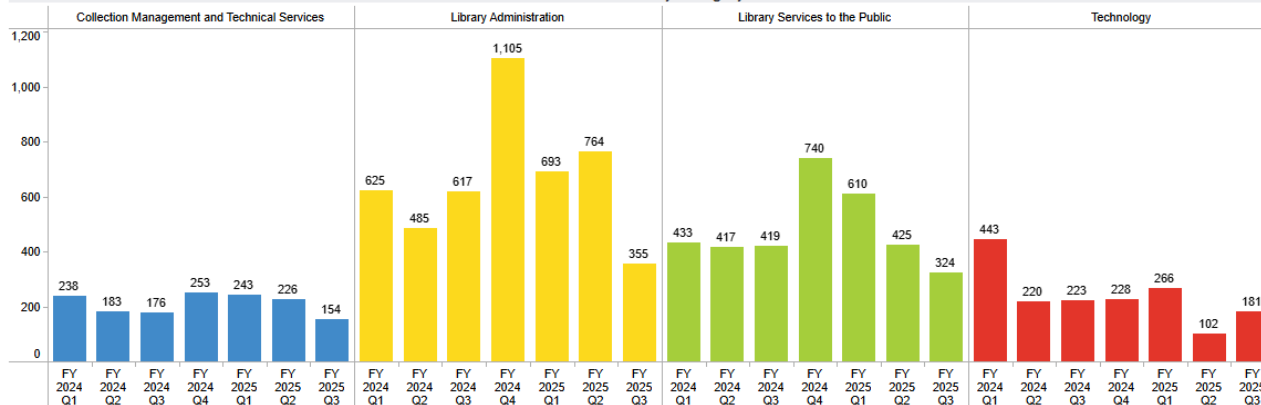
Trustee Certification

Overview and Data

Trustee Tracks Completed by FY – how many have earned certification?



Credits Claimed by Category

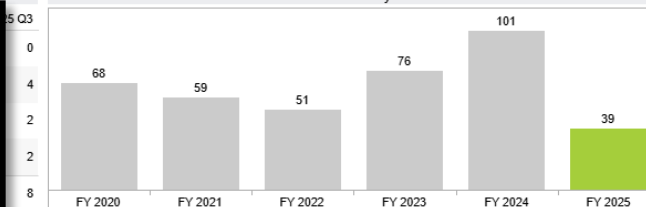


Certificates Earned Previous and Current Fiscal Year

Certification Type	FY 2024 Q1	FY 2024 Q2	FY 2024 Q3	FY 2024 Q4	FY 2025 Q1	FY 2025 Q2	FY 2025 Q3
Trustee	4	4	1	1	3	1	0
Staff	8	8	13	11	4	5	4
Renewal Administrator	9	6	4	10	9	2	2
Initial Administrator	3	5	7	7	4	3	2
Grand Total	24	23	25	29	20	11	8

In FY 2024, library staff, trustees, and administrators earned 101 certifications. To date in FY 2025, 39 people received their certification.

Certificates Earned by Fiscal Year



Certificates issued, excluding initial certificates earned by completing a Master of Library Science (MLS) degree and OPI renewal units.

Certificates Earned All Tracks (FY 24 and FY25)

Trustee Certification Participation by Library

96% or 79 of
82 libraries

- at least 1 active trustee has started a certification track



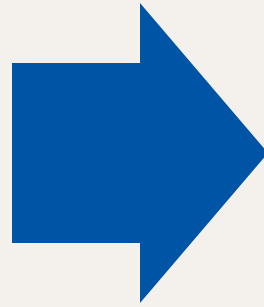
34% or 28 of
82 libraries

- all trustees enrolled in certification track

Trustee Certification Participation

91

- current trustees have started a track



43

- trustees earned credits but do not have a track

The background of the slide features two bald eagles perched on a weathered log. The eagles are positioned on the right side of the frame, with one slightly behind the other. They have white heads and necks, and dark brown bodies. The background is a soft-focus landscape showing a body of water in the foreground and a range of mountains in the distance under a bright sky. The overall tone is light and serene.

Trustee Continuing Education

Credits and Standards

Trustee Continuing Education Standard

Standard

- majority of library board members need to receive at least 3 hours of continuing education.
 - 94% of public libraries meet this standard.

Deferrals

- 5 of 86 libraries asked for a deferral
 - 3 public libraries
 - 2 tribal college libraries.

Trustee Credits (disaggregated)

Year	Library Administration	Collection Management and Technical Services	Library Services to the Public	Technology	Grand Total
FY22	237.5	30	65.5	17	350
FY23	431	9.5	109	25	574.5
FY24	465.5	17.5	71	44.5	598.5
FY25 (YTD)	259	16	33	24.5	332.5

Possible Goals for Trustees

What will we measure and report?

Metric	Trustee Goal
# of offerings (events, videos, courses, resources)	10 new offerings each FY
# of attendees	150/450
# of newsletter subscribers	450/450
# of certified individuals	100/450
% of evaluation responses	85% of evaluation responses in top 2 categories

Questions and Discussion

Trustee Continuing Education