

Call to Meeting
April 28, 2026

The next Regular Meeting of the Westchester Library System (WLS) is **Tuesday, April 28, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.** PLEASE NOTE: This meeting will take place at the WLS Headquarters, 570 Taxter Rd, Ste 400, Elmsford, NY 10523.

Regular Meeting Agenda

Minutes: March 31, 2026

Finances

President's Report

WLS Committee Reports

Executive Director's Report

NEXT MEETING: The next Regular Meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 26, at 6:00 p.m.

WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM
Trustee Meeting
March 31, 2026 – Approval Pending

REGULAR MEETING

The Regular Meeting of the Westchester Library System was called to order by Nishat Hydari at 6:03 p.m.

The quorum requirement was met with the following people in attendance:

Board Members present: Andrea Bober, Robert Cartolano, Ralph Esposito, Nishat Hydari, Wes Iwanski, Karen Kelley, Maureen LeBlanc, Susan Morduch, David Mener, Patricia Phelan, Hudson Trader, Barbara Tepper, Diane Tabakman, Karen Zevin

Board Members absent: Alice Joselow

Also present from WLS were: Wilson Arana, Patricia Brigham, Rob Caluori, Terry Kirchner, Kate Meyer

MINUTES

The minutes of the February 24, 2026, Board Meeting were approved on a motion by Ms. Zevin and seconded by Mr. Trader. The motion passed unanimously. [Ms. Morduch was not present for the vote.]

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Mr. Caluori presented the financial report for February 2026. Payment registers for the period were also distributed. The financial report for February 2026 were approved on a motion by Ms. LeBlanc and seconded by Ms. Bober. The financial reports were accepted unanimously.

ACTION ITEM

Designation of Depositories - Extension for TD Bank: Westchester Library System (WLS) is extending its transition from TD Bank to Valley National Bank (Valley Bank) due to delays in moving payroll and Treasury Bill accounts. While the Board originally planned to close the TD Bank accounts by March 31, 2026, management now recommends the following extensions for designation of deposits:

- Checking and Savings: Extended through May 31, 2026, to finalize payroll transitions.
- Treasury Investments (TD Wealth): Extended through August 31, 2026, as the new investment accounts are not yet established.

This transition follows a July 2025 RFP process where Valley Bank was selected to replace TD Bank to better align with WLS investment and purchasing policies. The Board approved the Extension for TD Bank on a motion by Mr. Iwanski and seconded by Mr. Cartolano. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Hydari noted that there are many programs currently being offered to Trustees and encouraged all Board members to take advantage of them.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget & Finance: The committee will reconvene in June prior to the WLS Board Meeting.

Audit: Mr. Iwanski noted that the Committee met with the auditor from Dorfman, Abrams, and Music on March 19, 2026, and finalized the 2025 audit and recommended Board approval. The FY 2025 Financial Audit was accepted on a motion by Ms. Tabakman and seconded by Ms. Tepper. The motion passed unanimously.

Governance: The Governance Committee will meet in April to discuss policy updates, changes in by-laws, and capitalization of right of access as it applies to the WLS office lease.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A copy of the Executive Director's Report was mailed in advance of the meeting.

- Dr. Kirchner announced that several transitions have occurred at the member libraries. Timothy Goldsmith has been named Library Administrator for the Purchase Free Library, Carolyn Reznick has been named Interim Director at Katonah Village Library, Lewisboro Library has named Greg Seres as Interim Director, and Tee Cotter is the new Director at the Port Chester-Rye Brook Public Library.
- The Disconnect 2 Reconnect Conference on April 27, 2026, features interactive breakout workshops led by professionals in education, social work, the arts and mental health. Sessions explore the role of play across topics such as digital technology, social media, education, parenting, mental health, organizational wellness and creativity. This conference is eligible for Continuing Education (CEU) credits, qualifies for CTLE hours for certified educators, and may be used toward New York State Public Librarian certification requirements.
- WLS is one of 13 nonprofits awarded a "ConnectAll" grant from NYS Empire State Development. WLS will lead a regional collaboration to train library staff as "digital navigators," create a training hub, and host public workshops on cybersecurity and digital literacy. The project involves the Mid-Hudson and Ramapo Catskill Library Systems, the Southeastern NY Library Resource Council, and Image PR for a region-wide awareness campaign. The goal is to provide high-quality digital resources and education to over 110,000 New Yorkers. Final negotiations and project planning are still in process with NYS.
- Following the WLS-funded hoopla threshold reductions put in place due to budget restrictions, Ms. Midgley worked with Dr. Kirchner and hoopla representatives to help libraries understand their patrons' use and estimated costs of library-funded borrows. More than half of WLS member libraries have added or are in the process of adding borrows to meet their patron demand.

- WLS IT is transitioning from a Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) to Windows desktop computers, prompted by rising hardware costs that have increased by approximately 45% between 2020 and 2026. This trend renders the current managed service model unsustainable, prompting ongoing discussions to develop a new, more predictable service model for libraries over the coming years. More information on the decommissioning project can be found on the WLS IT website.

ADJOURNMENT

Having completed its agenda, the Board adjourned its meeting at 7:15 p.m. on a motion by Ms. Morduch and seconded by Mr. Trader that passed unanimously.

Respectively submitted,

Diane H. Tabakman
Secretary

WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS WITH NOTES – MARCH 2026

REPORT NOTES

All of the figures in the accompanying notes are approximate to the nearest \$100 or 1% when practical. The figures in the financial statements are rounded to the nearest dollar and percentages are presented to two decimal places.

This month's report includes the following financial statements:

- Balance Sheet
- Statement of Revenues and Expenditures with Comparison to Budget
- Schedule of Temporarily Restricted Net Assets

UPDATE ON CHANGE TO VALLEY NATIONAL BANK

Work continues to transition WLS's bank accounts from TD Bank to Valley National Bank (Valley Bank). As of the time of this report, most cash balances have been moved to Valley Bank. The final changes to move payroll operations through ADP from TD Bank to Valley Bank have passed testing and are in the implementation phase. All cash balances held at TD Bank are expected to be transferred before the end of April and the TD Bank accounts are expected to be closed following posting of interest in May.

PAYMENTS OVER \$50,000

The WLS Purchasing Policy (Policy #13) requires that purchases exceeding \$50,000 without prior budget approval be formally reported to the Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting. To meet and exceed the policy directive, all payments over \$50,000 in March 2026 are listed below:

- Amount: \$78,022
 - Vendor: NYS Employees Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP)
 - Purpose: Employee health insurance for April 2026

BALANCE SHEET – MARCH 2026

The Balance Sheet shows comparative figures for the period from month-ending (ME) February 2026 through ME March 2026. The key changes include decreases in *Accounts Receivable* and *Prepaid Expenses*, which were partially offset by decreases in *Accounts Payable* and *Deferred Revenue*, resulting in a 1.4% increase in *Net Assets*. Details are discussed below.

ASSETS:

This section indicates the organization's liquidity by showing what assets WLS holds in cash and other assets. The net result for the period is an overall increase in assets driven primarily by anticipated recording of receivables in *Unconditional Promises to Give* and *Accounts Receivable*.

Operating Cash & Cash Equivalents (This shows the cash in WLS's operating and payroll bank accounts and petty cash): WLS's operating cash decreased by \$139,900. With \$320,800 in receipts, activity included \$250,800 from member libraries for IT services and group purchases and \$31,900 from New York State in Local Library Services Aid which represents the final 10% of the 2025-26 aid which gets passed-through to member libraries. Notable expenditures aside from rent, payroll and benefits, Internet, and delivery to libraries included \$25,000 to Hoopla for pay-per-use patron activity in February 2026 and \$15,300 to Aequa Strategies for work on data dashboards.

Reserve Cash & Cash Equivalents (This shows the cash in WLS's reserve accounts and short-term investment holdings): This line increased by \$7,600, the result of earnings on reserve funds held with NYCLASS, TD Bank, Valley Bank and earnings on US Treasury investments.

Unconditional Promises (These are promises to give money to WLS such as governmental aid): This line increased by \$312,200, the result of recording \$344,100 receivable revenues from Westchester County, New York State and the Federal E-Rate program against the receipt of \$31,900 for the final 10% of the 2025-26 aid which gets passed-through to member libraries.

LIABILITIES:

This section shows WLS's near-term obligations. The net result for the period is an overall decrease in liabilities, primarily driven by the recording of *Deferred Revenue*. Details are discussed below:

Deferred Revenue (Funds received which have not yet been earned): This figure decreased by \$244,600, the result recognizing \$251,600 in revenues from 6-month and 3-month invoices to member libraries for IT services and group purchases against the deferral of \$7,000 in revenues for the April D2R conference, prepaid sublease rent, and an overpayment by a member library.

STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES

COMPARISON TO BUDGET WITH PREVIOUS YEARS TO DATE – MARCH 2026

Revenues were \$30,200 more than expenses before depreciation for March, which represents a \$71,000 positive variance from the budget, which had called for a \$40,800 deficit.

REVENUES:

Total revenue for March was essentially in line with the budget with offsetting positive and negative variances in several lines. Details are discussed below.

Other Revenues with Restrictions came in \$3,200 more than budget, and was driven by two key factors: (1) Receipt of a \$2,500 contribution from the M&T Charitable Foundation to support the HSE Connect, WLS's High School Equivalency education program and; (2) The recognition of \$7,100 in revenue from the LIU Palmer School program.

Interest outperformed the monthly budget by \$2,900 better than expected interest earned in WLS's operating and reserve cash accounts and investments with NYCLASS.

State Revenues without Restrictions and *State Revenues with Restrictions* – These lines are flat against the budget. This is based on WLS's procedure to recognize NYS revenues in-line with the budget until NYS releases official aid figures which will not be known until after the State budget is passed and figures are released by the Division of Library Development.

EXPENSES:

Expenses before depreciation came in \$70,800 less than the budget and were \$30,200 less than revenues for the month. Lines with significant variances and/or noteworthy activity are discussed below:

Fringe Benefits – This line carried a \$17,900 surplus for the month. This can be attributed to several factors including: (1) health insurance premiums not increasing as much as planned, (2) health insurance contributions from retirees, and (3) there are currently three positions in the budget which are not currently filled. The three vacancies are also the primary driver of the \$18,600 surplus in the *Salaries* line. WLS had planned for a 15% increase in health insurance premiums, while the actual increase was 9.2%, which should drive an anticipated \$25,500 savings for the year.

Contractual Services – This line ended the month with a \$5,000 deficit and a \$1,000 deficit for the YTD. There are budgeted activities in this line that have larger milestone payments that will occur within in the year. This will cause some months to have notable positive and negative variances; however, it is expected that the line will run in-line with the budget for the year.

Library Materials expenses were \$5,000 less than budget. The revised service reductions in Hoopla and Kanopy implemented in February to meet the budget were successful in curbing spending in this line. The line is expected to carry a small surplus every month, which will continue to bring the YTD deficit, currently \$37,100, in line with the budget by the end of the year.

Westchester Library System
Balance Sheet
As of March 31, 2026

	Month Ending 03/31/2026 <u>Actual</u>	Month Ending 02/28/2026 <u>Actual</u>	Month Ending 03/31/2026 Period difference	Month Ending 03/31/2026 Period variance	Year Ending 12/31/2025 <u>Actual</u>
Assets					
Current Assets					
Operating Cash & Cash Equivalents	962,922	1,102,791	(139,870)	(12.68) %	1,167,040
Reserve Cash & Cash Equivalents	3,097,433	3,089,786	7,648	0.24 %	3,074,462
Unconditional Promises to Give	1,032,399	720,181	312,218	43.35 %	402,696
Accounts Receivable	320,457	585,351	(264,893)	(45.25) %	82,600
Prepaid Expenses	870,277	976,411	(106,135)	(10.86) %	792,708
Total Current Assets	<u>6,283,488</u>	<u>6,474,520</u>	<u>(191,032)</u>	<u>(2.95) %</u>	<u>5,519,506</u>
Long-Term Assets					
Property & Equipment	160,655	169,610	(8,955)	(5.27) %	188,848
Right Of Use Asset	418,334	418,334	0	0.00 %	418,334
Total Long-Term Assets	<u>578,989</u>	<u>587,944</u>	<u>(8,955)</u>	<u>(1.52) %</u>	<u>607,182</u>
Total Assets	<u>6,862,477</u>	<u>7,062,464</u>	<u>(199,987)</u>	<u>(2.83) %</u>	<u>6,126,688</u>
Liabilities					
Short-Term Liabilities					
Accounts Payable	374,680	354,713	19,967	5.62 %	393,111
Deferred Revenue	719,712	964,270	(244,558)	(25.36) %	23,400
Short-Term Right of Use	332,189	332,189	0	0.00 %	332,190
Total Short-Term Liabilities	<u>1,426,581</u>	<u>1,651,172</u>	<u>(224,591)</u>	<u>(13.60) %</u>	<u>748,701</u>
Long-Term Liabilities					
Long-Term Right of Use	173,924	173,924	0	0.00 %	173,923
Post-Retirement Benefits Payable	3,441,346	3,441,346	0	0.00 %	3,441,346
Total-Long-Term Liabilities	<u>3,615,270</u>	<u>3,615,270</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.00 %</u>	<u>3,615,269</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>5,041,851</u>	<u>5,266,442</u>	<u>(224,591)</u>	<u>(4.26) %</u>	<u>4,363,970</u>
Net Assets					
Net Assets, Beg Bal	1,796,022	1,744,133	51,889	2.97 %	2,094,535
Change in Net Assets	24,604	51,889	(27,285)	(52.58) %	(331,817)
Total Net Assets	<u>1,820,626</u>	<u>1,796,022</u>	<u>24,604</u>	<u>1.36 %</u>	<u>1,762,718</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>6,862,477</u>	<u>7,062,464</u>	<u>(199,987)</u>	<u>(2.83) %</u>	<u>6,126,688</u>
Net Asset Detail					
Working Capital	4,856,907	4,823,348	33,559	0.69 %	4,770,805
Long-Term Net Assets	(3,036,281)	(3,027,326)	(8,955)	(0.29) %	(3,008,087)
Total Net Asset Detail	<u>1,820,626</u>	<u>1,796,022</u>	<u>24,604</u>	<u>1.36 %</u>	<u>1,762,718</u>

Westchester Library System
Statement of Revenues and Expenditures
Comparison to Budget with Previous Years To Date
As of March 31, 2026

	Month Ending 03/31/2026			Year To Date 03/31/2024	Year To Date 03/31/2025	Year To Date 03/31/2026			Year Ending 12/31/2026
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget	Variance	Total Budget
Revenue									
State Revenues without Restrictions	176,897	176,897	0	525,024	556,509	530,691	530,690	1	2,122,760
County Revenues without Restrictions	102,973	106,331	(3,358)	335,760	335,782	308,919	318,993	(10,074)	1,275,970
Federal Revenues without Restrictions	13,333	13,333	0	32,490	34,998	39,999	39,999	0	160,000
Member Technology Fees	237,045	238,377	(1,332)	676,427	689,351	723,854	715,131	8,723	2,860,520
Fund Raising & Contributions	30	133	(103)	512	209	1,148	399	749	1,600
Interest	8,558	5,625	2,933	36,974	37,481	33,120	16,875	16,244	67,500
Other Revenues without Restrictions	4,780	5,917	(1,137)	8,188	4,562	16,585	17,751	(1,165)	71,000
State Revenues with Restrictions	50,930	50,924	6	151,245	158,798	152,790	152,772	18	611,090
Other Revenues with Restrictions	10,279	7,041	3,237	6,071	18,633	21,740	21,125	615	84,500
Total Revenue	604,825	604,578	246	1,772,691	1,836,323	1,828,846	1,813,735	15,111	7,254,940
Expenditures									
Salaries	183,997	202,559	18,563	542,185	570,379	554,896	607,678	52,782	2,430,711
Fringe Benefits	114,059	131,935	17,875	317,923	332,384	327,010	395,805	68,794	1,583,219
Professional Fees	3,429	4,650	1,222	10,166	10,109	10,119	13,950	3,832	55,800
Equipment	4,770	8,550	3,779	16,766	60,585	14,667	25,650	10,982	102,600
Library Materials	57,022	62,042	5,020	271,106	329,473	223,218	186,125	(37,092)	744,500
Rent and Utilities	32,931	35,183	2,253	93,065	95,021	97,694	105,550	7,855	422,200
Repairs and Maintenance	40,922	52,983	12,061	181,252	156,666	126,509	158,950	32,441	635,800
Supplies	709	2,584	1,875	897	5,618	1,054	7,750	6,696	31,000
Telephone and Internet	36,572	37,408	836	116,062	110,083	102,987	112,225	9,239	448,900
Printing and Postage	1,750	4,233	2,484	15,605	12,003	8,710	12,700	3,990	50,800
Bibliographic Fees	7,818	8,192	373	22,019	23,096	23,420	24,575	1,155	98,300
Professional Development	12,905	8,037	(4,868)	7,010	23,437	21,747	24,112	2,365	96,450
Travel	1,833	6,084	4,250	15,044	5,757	8,871	18,250	9,379	73,000
Memberships	1,139	2,416	1,278	8,433	3,537	4,173	7,250	3,077	29,000
Contractual Services	31,510	26,525	(4,984)	62,822	68,875	80,532	79,575	(957)	318,300
Delivery Service	40,807	41,292	484	112,733	117,394	123,345	123,875	530	495,500
Special Events	0	4,500	4,500	0	0	0	13,500	13,500	54,000
Insurance	3,307	3,417	110	8,465	9,784	9,920	10,250	330	41,000
Miscellaneous	(806)	2,833	3,639	2,749	4,256	2,193	8,500	6,307	34,000
Total Expenditures	574,674	645,423	70,750	1,804,302	1,938,457	1,741,065	1,936,270	195,205	7,745,080
Total Net Revenue Before Depreciation	30,151	(40,845)	70,996	(31,611)	(102,134)	87,781	(122,535)	210,316	(490,140)
Non-Cash Activity									
Depreciation	8,955	8,300	(655)	45,956	37,202	28,193	24,900	(3,293)	99,600
Unrealized Gain/Loss on Investments	(3,408)	0	3,408	279	1,510	1,679	0	(1,679)	0
Total Non-Cash Activity	5,547	8,300	2,753	46,235	38,712	29,872	24,900	(4,972)	99,600
Total Net Revenue	24,604	(49,145)	73,749	(77,846)	(140,846)	57,909	(147,435)	205,344	(589,740)

Temporarily Restricted Net Assets
as of March 31, 2026

Code	Asset Title	Asset Description	Temporarily Restricted Net Assets December 31, 2025	2026 Revenue	2026 Expenses	Temporarily Restricted Net Assets March 31, 2026
34025	Central Library	Library materials, services & training	\$0	\$95,109	\$52,728	\$42,381
70133	Fostering Envi. & Climate Literacy (ConEd)	Fostering Environmental and Climate Literacy Through Library Service	\$30,000	\$0	\$0	\$30,000
80008	Outreach Fundraising	Fundraising to support outreach activities (continuous)	\$8,964	\$1,540	\$368	\$10,137
70132	United Way - CI2025	Community Impact Grant - Supporting Outreach Activities	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	\$5,000
70134	United Way - Capacity Building 2025	Capacity Building Grant - Supporting Outreach Activities	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	\$5,000
70136	M&T - HSE Connect 2026	Donation to support HSE Connect	\$0	\$2,500	\$0	\$2,500
80225	LIU Certificate Program	Supports training in public library administration through Long Island University	\$0	\$14,180	\$12,600	\$1,580
70102	TASC - Private contributions	Private monies for adult literacy programs	\$469	\$0	\$0	\$469
80010	CCS Fundraising	Fundraising to support career coaching activities (continuous)	\$306	\$0	\$0	\$306
40400	BTOP - New Rochelle	Broadband Technology Opportunity Program at New Rochelle Public Library	\$0	\$3,465	\$3,300	\$165
70135	D2R Donations	Donations to support D2R activities	\$0	\$100	\$0	\$100
21902	Great Potentials	Program to educate middle school students on Leadership, Communication, Anti-Bullying and Teamwork	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTALS			\$49,739	\$116,894	\$68,995	\$97,638

History of TRNA balance as of 12/31
2019 - \$239,361
2020 - \$264,015
2021 - \$314,375
2022 - \$423,228
2023 - \$212,210
2024 - \$34,338
2025 - 49,739

WLS Executive Director Report

April 28, 2026

WLS Strategic Initiatives



Promoting equity and access



Expand Community/Member Library/Partner Engagement



Update and Improve Our Infrastructure

Advocacy

NYS Budget Update: The NYS Legislature passed another one-week emergency budget extension, which allows for payments to state employees and external vendors, contractors, and suppliers to continue. The budget process stalemate continues to center on several high-profile issues: the Governor's push for auto insurance reforms, including changes to the serious-injury threshold and no-fault system; her proposal to dial back key provisions of the 2019 Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA); revenue raisers; and the campaign to overhaul Tier 6 pension benefits, which carries an estimated \$1.5 billion annual price tag. These are all complex issues, and it is unclear when there will be forward motion and a final budget proposal.

What does this mean for libraries and library systems? It basically means that we can anticipate payment delays because the formulas for how the 2026-2027 funds will be allocated cannot be created and approved until after the final budget is approved by the Legislature and signed by the Governor. For member libraries, which means that we will have a delay in knowing how much Public Library Construction Aid will be available for the 0386-27 application cycle and the Local Library Services Aid (LLSA) allocation per library.

Federal Funding Update: The American Library Association (ALA) and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) have reached a settlement agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice that protects the Institute of Museum and Library

Services (IMLS) and ensures the agency will continue carrying out its congressionally mandated work.

Under the settlement, the agency will continue awarding grants, conducting research, and operating programs that support libraries and museums across the country. The agreement also confirms that previously terminated grants have been reinstated, agency staff reductions have been reversed, and the administration will not take further steps to implement the executive order targeting IMLS. Also, this month, the U.S. Department of Justice dropped its appeal of an order won by a group of 21 state attorneys general to protect IMLS services in their states. All related litigation is now resolved.

President Trump's budget proposal for fiscal year 2027 budget proposal eliminates all IMLS funding. This is not a new occurrence, but it does highlight the importance of ongoing advocacy with our federal legislators to encourage them to support IMLS and other library-related funding. Each year, Congress must pass 12 spending bills for the entire government, establishing funding levels for hundreds of programs, including the [Library Services and Technology Act \(LSTA\)](#), administrated through the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the [Innovative Approaches to Literacy \(IAL\)](#) program in the Department of Education.

Developing Advocates Program: WLS Executive Director Terry Kirchner partnered with Jen Park, Ramapo Catskill Library System (RCLS) Government Relations Specialist, to support the Developing Advocates Program. This program was a 4-session pilot workshop series developed by Ms. Park to help public library staff and trustees increase their awareness of the many moving parts of the NYS budgetary and legislative processes and the role of advocacy in keeping libraries top of mind for our elected officials. Sessions were focused on specific topics and actions:

Introduction to State Advocacy (virtual) - Led by Advocacy Institute, this session gave an overview of the basics of advocacy. In this training, Advocacy Institute discussed why it is important for library staff and trustees to make their voices heard and work with elected officials to address issues affecting their communities.

Who's Who & Relationship-Building (virtual) - Led by Advocacy Institute, this session equipped participants with a clear, actionable overview of the principal actors within New York State government and their roles in the legislative process. Participants learned strategies for relationship-building with key elected officials, agency leaders, and staff.

How Policy Passes (virtual) - Participants reviewed how a bill (really) becomes law at the state level, including issues to consider before drafting, the role of sponsors, and strategies for moving bills through committees and to the floor. Participants were provided with an overview of the "bill to law" process in NYS and different pathways to pass legislation and strategies to navigate Albany politics and move a bill through committees to a vote.

Networking & Personal/Organization Advocacy Plan Creation (in-person at WLS) – Participants worked together in small groups to discuss advocacy challenges and strategies, with the assignment of moving forward with, and reporting on, their progress in achieving steps outlined in their advocacy plan. A discussion on including the NYS Annual Report and other data rich resources as an advocacy toolkit was explored through a brief "data walk" of WLS-related data and trends.

There were 21 participants who completed the series. Ten individuals were affiliated with WLS member libraries, and 11 individuals were affiliated with RCLS member libraries. Fourteen individuals identified as library staff members and 7 identified as library or system trustees. A follow-up evaluation will be conducted to determine if this program should be repeated, and if so – what elements worked especially well and what could be changed to make the next series even more effective.



Career Coaching Services (CCS)

Seminar - *Managing Your Career in Changing Times*: WLS Career Coaching Services (CCS) provides virtual and in-person career development seminars which meet weekly for ninety minutes over six consecutive weeks during the Winter, Spring, and Fall terms. The seminars provide participants with current information on self-assessment and employer hiring practices.

The METRO Library Council seminar concluded at the end of February with individual participant meetings held in March. Participants found the experience helpful in their decision-making process, particularly in identifying future career goals and determining how to move forward. The librarians brought diverse work experiences that they used to connect with and support one another.

A second virtual seminar was offered to Westchester County residents beginning on March 10th through April 14th. Participants are enthusiastic and are working through the content to clarify and synthesize their career decisions. Promotion for a third virtual seminar is underway for a program that will run from April 22nd through May 27th. Although in person seminars seem to be preferred, the option for virtual was better suited for the participants thus far.

CCS offers individual advisement and career coaching services to patrons with specific career and job search needs. CCS continues to actively work with both ongoing and new clients seeking job search guidance. Career Coaches provide direction and recommendations to help individuals navigate their unique situations and overcome obstacles. Clients appreciate the personal attention and support provided to help them achieve their goals.

Workshops: CCS collaborated with the Rye Reading Room/Library to offer once again the ‘Teen Job Search: Tips, Applications, Resumes & More’ workshop for teens seeking summer employment. This popular event is widely supported among the member libraries and provides guidance on where to look for a job, writing a resume, insights into applications and interview preparation. The program also includes unique teen perspectives on their job search experiences.

A newly developed 2-day workshop is being offered at the Tuckahoe Library entitled ‘Pivoting into a New Career: Tips to Help You Make a Successful Transition’. This interactive workshop series explores a practical process for making informed decisions about career transitions. Participants will engage in self-assessment to clarify their motivations for changing careers, identify skills required for target occupations, and recognize transferable skills they already possess.

The program guides participants through exploring career options and developing strategic action plans that include building relevant experience and expanding professional networks. Through reflection and hands-on activities, participants will leave with actionable strategies they can implement immediately.

The White Plains Public library will also sponsor an Interviewing Workshop, Tips for Successful Interviewing in April.



Cataloging Services

World Languages: The member libraries serve the diverse Westchester County population by lending materials in many different languages, and WLS Cataloging Services catalogs these materials to make them discoverable in the shared online catalog (aka, ILS or Evergreen), and to facilitate their circulation. In the past month, the catalogers handled Arabic, Chinese, French, Hebrew, Japanese, Korean, Persian, and Polish items. As always, Manager of Cataloging Services Melissa Glazer specialized in the non-Roman alphabet works. She also cataloged several Braille books. Director of Cataloging Doug Wray and Part-time Cataloger Steven Pisani cataloged additional world language items as well.

Original cataloging examples, including "library of things" items: Some cataloging requests from the member libraries need to be addressed with original ("from scratch") cataloging by all of the WLS catalogers. Among other things, Mr. Wray cataloged:

- a score for Ardsley Public Library (100 Easy Piano Songs for Beginners: Folk, Classical, Holiday & Jazz Songbook / by Yiching Li);
- a DVD/VCR recorder/player for Port Chester-Rye Brook Public Library; and
- two library passes—one to the Lincoln Depot Museum in Peekskill (for the Field Library), and the other to the Nature Center at Greenburgh (for the Purchase Free Library).

Cataloging Service Level Agreement (SLA): WLS is considering a service level agreement (SLA) for cataloging services to identify what services would be covered through state and county funds at no additional cost to member libraries and when the "ask" is one that requires a level of cataloging services that might require additional charges. WLS anticipates that there will be ongoing financial restraints on many of the system-wide services if the economy weakens and is trying to proactively work with the member libraries to maintain a high level of service within the available resources. The department is in the earliest phase of exploring how a cataloging services SLA might redefine the scope of services, the turnaround timelines for cataloging/processing items, and potential costs for enhanced cataloging services. Mr. Wray is reaching out to the library world at large for ideas and examples.



ILS, Discovery, and ILL Services

ILS/Evergreen related trainings: In the 1st Quarter of 2026, Allison Pryor, ILS Discovery Specialist led 11 training sessions, a combination of in-person-on-site, virtual, group, and one-on-one sessions, with a total of 63 attendees.

Off-Network Library Evergreen Username Updates: WLS IT staff & the ILS staff have been working together to begin the process of separating off-network libraries' Active Directory accounts from Evergreen. Three member libraries, Pound Ridge, Bedford Free, and Bronxville have successfully undergone the process of updating their Evergreen usernames and resetting their Evergreen passwords. Ms. Pryor was on-site for Pound Ridge and Bronxville to monitor the process and to offer support as needed.

Evergreen upgrade: Lindsay Stratton, Integrated Library System (ILS) Administrator / System Librarian has updated the Evergreen Test Server to version 3.16.4 in preparation for the annual upgrade happening in May.



Outreach Services

Battle of the Books 2026: The Westchester Library System's Battle of the Books (WLS BoB) is a reading motivation program for those entering Grades 4–12 in Westchester County, New York. The goals of the program include:

- Promoting a love of reading in kids and teens,
- To introduce contestants to titles and authors that they might not encounter otherwise,
- To encourage contestants to think of their local public library as a resource for entertainment, and
- To inspire teamwork and good sportsmanship in an atmosphere of friendly competition.

This year's competition will take place on Saturday, October 24, 2026, at the Anne M. Dorner Middle School in Ossining. Save the date and help support this fun-filled and action-packed event by volunteering for the day. The call for volunteers will be coming later this year.

The 2026 WLS BoB book selections are as follows:

Grades 4-7:

The Accidental Apprentice by Amanda Foody*

Benny on the Case by Wesley King

Creaky Acres by Calista Brill & Nilah Magruder

Safiyah's War by Hiba Noor Khan

The Wrong Way Home by Kate O'Shaughnessy

**The Accidental Apprentice is Book 1 in a series called Wilderlore.*

Grades 6 - 12:

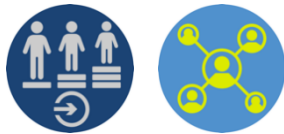
Boy 2.0 by Tracey Baptiste

Breathe and Count Back From Ten by Natalia Sylvester

Lunar New Year Love Story by Gene Luen Yang & LeUyen Pham
The Paper Girl of Paris by Jordyn Taylor
Six Crimson Cranes by Elizabeth Lim

Department of Senior Programs and Services (DSPS) Volunteer Support: WLS supported a hybrid training session for DSPS volunteers led by Diane Poonai, Social Caseworker, DSPS, focused on Medicare and related benefits. Volunteers reviewed complex client scenarios and shared best practices, covering enrollment penalties, Medicare Savings Programs, Extra Help eligibility, Advantage plan coverage limitations, and access to services such as vaccines and medically necessary dental care. The session also addressed challenges with provider networks, emergency and urgent care coverage, and medical transportation requirements, strengthening participants' ability to assist community members navigating Medicare. In addition, Senior Benefits Individual Counseling (SBIC) continues to be well-utilized, with monthly one-on-one sessions held on the first Thursday at the Grinton I. Will Branch of the Yonkers Public Library. More information about the programs described above and additional senior programs can be found online at <https://seniors.westchesterlibraries.org/senior-benefits/>.

Demystifying Medicare: WLS also supports the County's Demystifying Medicare program, coordinated by Julie Woodward (DSPS volunteer), who leads these comprehensive sessions at libraries across the county. WLS provides support through the printing of flyers and other materials, as well as promotional assistance to help expand program reach. This spring, sessions are scheduled at Katonah Village Library, Rye Free Reading Room, Hastings-On-Hudson Public Library, Scarsdale Public Library, Croton Free Library, and John C Hart Memorial Library, increasing access to trusted Medicare information for residents throughout the county.



Small Business and Workforce Development

Yonkers Workforce Roundtable - Westchester County Association: Peter Riffel, Director, Small Business & Workforce Development, attended a Westchester County Association (WCA) sponsored members roundtable to discuss Yonkers workforce issues. The WCA-led meeting provided an opportunity to listen and engage with Yonkers based business, government, education, and non-profit organizations. In addition, the event allowed WLS to network and raise awareness of the library workforce development resources available to the community. To further support WLS' workforce development and community engagement efforts, WLS has joined the WCA's Workforce Committee.



Southern Westchester BOCES (SWBOCES) Adult & Community Services Spring Connections Open House: Mr. Riffel participated in the SWBOCES Center for Adult & Community Services Spring Connections Open House. This event allowed WLS to highlight BlueCareer and other job

search and learning resources. There was a strong interest in BlueCareer and the Job Search Toolkit. We look forward to future collaboration with SWBOCES.

Celebrating Women in Business - Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce (HVGCC): Mr. Riffel and Jane Goodenough, Administrative Assistant, Career Coaching Services (CCS), participated in the Celebrating Women in Business expo sponsored by the Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce's (HVGCC). It was an opportunity to engage women entrepreneurs and learn about their challenges and share ways WLS can support them in starting and growing a small business and to further their career related goals. The small business owners were impressed by the full array of resources to support their entrepreneurial endeavors. In addition, we networked with HVGCC leaders and briefly discussed ways to collaborate on future small business and workforce related initiatives.



Strategic Data Analysis and Member Library Support

2026 Public Library Association (PLA) Conference: Allison Midgley, Manager of Strategic Data Analysis and Member Library Support, attended the Public Library Association (PLA) 2026 Conference in Minneapolis, MN from April 1 – 3. Several sessions that she attended reinforced that WLS continues to create and build successful strategies and practices, including How To Create a Library Style Guide, Beyond ESL Classes: Serving Adult English Language Learners, Library Data Discussion, Trust & Verify: Information Accuracy in the Age of SEO, AI, and Algorithms. She discussed WLS needs and strategies with vendors like Counting Opinions, hoopla, Libraria, My Film Friend, The Pillar, PolicyMap, SpringShare, Solus, and others. Ms. Midgley had the opportunity to meet system staff from as far away as Hawaii and library staff from as near as Greenburgh - she enjoyed a lunch of delicious Somali foods with Jennifer Daddio, Director of the Chappaqua Library! The closing Session with Chef Sean Sherman, a member of the Oglala Lakota tribe, raised on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, focused on the revitalization and evolution of Indigenous foods systems throughout North America. He made it clear that progress on deeply rooted problems is possible through personal effort and community action.

2025 Annual Reports: NYS Member Library Annual Report submission continues with the opening of the Division of Library Development (DLD) data portal; in addition to a few unexpected question changes, several libraries reported software anomalies that have been reported to DLD and the software vendor, Counting Opinions. With the help of Dr. Kirchner, Executive Director, the WLS deadline for WLS library Annual Report submission was extended to the end of April to provide time to adjust to the new State platform. This extension is to give data submitters who are new to the Annual Report submission process or new to their library location (combined, the new to the process or library data submitters account for about a third of the WLS libraries this year). Ms. Midgley is processing sixteen libraries' final reviews, and all member libraries except one have submitted their reports to Ms. Midgley for initial review. Remediating building issues, which caused temporary building closure, has taken priority for the Ruth Keeler Memorial Library; Ms. Midgley is working with them to expedite their submission. Ms. Stratton was able to quickly step in and help move the process forward by providing a new

set of statistics required by a series of unanticipated and unannounced questions in the NYS Annual Report.

Building Data Literacy and Culture: In April, Ms. Midgley and Bijan Kimiagar, principal at AEQUA Strategies, held the first SCALE Dashboard Walkthrough of 2026. The library directors and staff who attended were engaged and eager to investigate SCALE more fully. On Thursday, April 16th, they also held a data walk to help WLS and library staff to see demographic trends, look at library data in new ways, provide feedback about what’s important and how it’s presented, and hone data literacy skills. Planned as annual events, these data walks will continue to develop WLS and member library data cultures. In addition to these events, Ms. Midgley and Mr. Kimiagar are investigating and developing the data catalog, processes, and platform to meet the proposal requirements for the monthly data dashboard, which is tentatively named Library Online Calculated and Analyzed Local Statistics, or LOCALS.



Strategic Relations and Development

Sustainable Library Initiative: The WLS Trustee Institute on April 6, 2026, at Harrison Public Library brought together library directors, library staff, and board members to learn more about the Sustainable Library Initiative. Library directors Jill Davis, of the Hendrick Hudson Free Library and Galina Chernykh, Harrison Public Library shared their experience in obtaining the Sustainable Library Certification. Both directors discussed their personal commitment to advance environmentally sound, socially equitable, and economically feasible practices in their libraries.

Prompted by questions led by WLS Director of Strategic Relations and Development, Pat Brigham, both highlighted the importance of staff and board “buy-in” in the process. For each, it was a team process – from using reusable kitchen supplies in the staff lunchroom, banning plastic water bottles, to installing LED light bulbs and promoting practices that reduce the libraries environmental footprint through library policy. And importantly, the process played an important and unique role in promoting community awareness about resilience, climate change, and a sustainable future. The audience was eager to learn specific steps in the certification process, particularly various energy cost savings. While it took time and effort, both directors agreed it was well worth the process.



Ms. Brigham also promoted the resources of America Library Association and the Sustainable Library Initiative, for more information on more environmentally sound, socially equitable and economically feasible available to all libraries. Everyone enjoyed a tour of the library at the end.

A second WLS Trustee Institute on May 6, 2026, at WLS, 6- 8 pm will highlight

Brooklyn's Greenpoint Public Library in conversation with Acacia Thompson. Ms. Thompson will share how Brooklyn Public Library's Greenpoint Library was transformed into an environmental hub, the Greenpoint Library and Environmental Education Center.

(Photo: Library Directors, Galina Chernykh, Harrison Public Library; Jill Davis, Hendrick Hudson Free Library; and Giovanna Fiorino-Iannace, Tuckahoe Public Library)



Trustee Education Opportunities

The 2026 Trustee Handbook Book Club's schedule includes new sessions. These sessions are hosted online and run from 5 PM to 6:30 PM. Register for these sessions at <https://midhudson.org/trusteebookclub/>.

Wednesday, June 17: Laws and Regulations

Thursday, October 29: Duties and Responsibilities of Key Officer Roles

Archived recordings of earlier sessions are available on the Trustee Handbook Book Club Archive at <https://midhudson.org/trustee-handbook-book-club-archive/>.

Nonprofit Westchester (NPW) provides numerous information and training sessions that qualify for trustee education credits. **All WLS member library trustees and staff are NPW members** through WLS' umbrella membership.

WLS has partnered with the Ramapo Catskill Library System (RCLS) to offer additional attorney led (Stephanie "Cole" Adams, Esq.) online education sessions on a range of topics in 2026. All library staff and trustees are welcome to attend these sessions and individuals who attend can self-affirm their attendance for their trustee education and public librarian certification requirements. These sessions will not be recorded. Registration is not required and the event link will be shared a day before the scheduled session. The tentative list of dates and topics for 2026 includes:

April 30, 10 AM-12 PM: Collection Development and Procurement

Recent court cases and legislative action are inspiring questions about collection development policy and procedure. What are the important considerations for 2026? How can you be ready if there are questions about collection development in your community?

June 11, 10 AM-12 PM: Supporting Social Services at the Library

Is your community turning to your library for needs related to well-being, food security, housing, supervised visits, and addiction?

This session will review the law, policy, procedure, and practical tips for providing library services while maintaining solid boundaries for those needing

help from social service, health departments, and other helping agencies. We will also explore templates and language for developing partnerships with government and NGOs to meet community needs.

August 13, 10 AM-12 PM: Grants and External Funding

There are many kinds of grants, aid packages, and donations, and almost all of them come with strings (a.k.a. legal conditions).

This session will review the basic vocabulary, policies, and procedures for compliance, and discuss typical grant requirements. This session will be helpful for those just learning grant writing, and for experienced directors who want to see the latest.

October 29, 10 AM-12 PM: Civil Service

Civil Service compliance can be...a challenge. This session will review the basics, review sample policy and procedure language to coordinate compliance with local rules, review legal requirements that can help smooth the relationship, and discuss techniques for using your local Civil Service as either a trusted partner (or at least a baseline competent resource who does not get in the way of timely hiring and promotion).

Disconnect 2 Reconnect (D2R) Conference: The Transformative Power of Play: Combatting Depression, Anxiety, and Isolation in the Digital Age

Monday, April 27, 2026, 8 AM-4 PM – [Windrose on Hudson](#) (Ossining)

Learn more about the conference and register to attend at

<https://conversations.westchesterlibraries.org/d2r/d2r-conference/>



Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terry L. Kirchner".

Terry L. Kirchner, PhD
Executive Director