

Cohort Libraries Programming Assessment

01. Overview

This project was undertaken to determine an appropriate quantity of programs based on the Irvin L. Young Memorial Library's current staffing and budget.

The first step was to use annual report data to determine who our cohort libraries were. The most recent data is from 2023. 24 libraries were selected as cohort libraries. Nine were selected based on a similar service population (15,000-19,999). An additional 15 were selected based on a similar number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff (9-11 FTE). The number of FTE a library has is determined by how many staff hours add up to full time positions.

A short survey was created and emailed to all 24 libraries. The survey was brief and focused on the amount of staff members allocated to programming, what kinds of programming they offer, and the amount of budget allocated to programming.

Of the 24 libraries, 11 responded. Their responses were recorded in a spreadsheet and comparisons were generated. In addition, the programming calendar for each of the respondents was analyzed.

02. Key findings

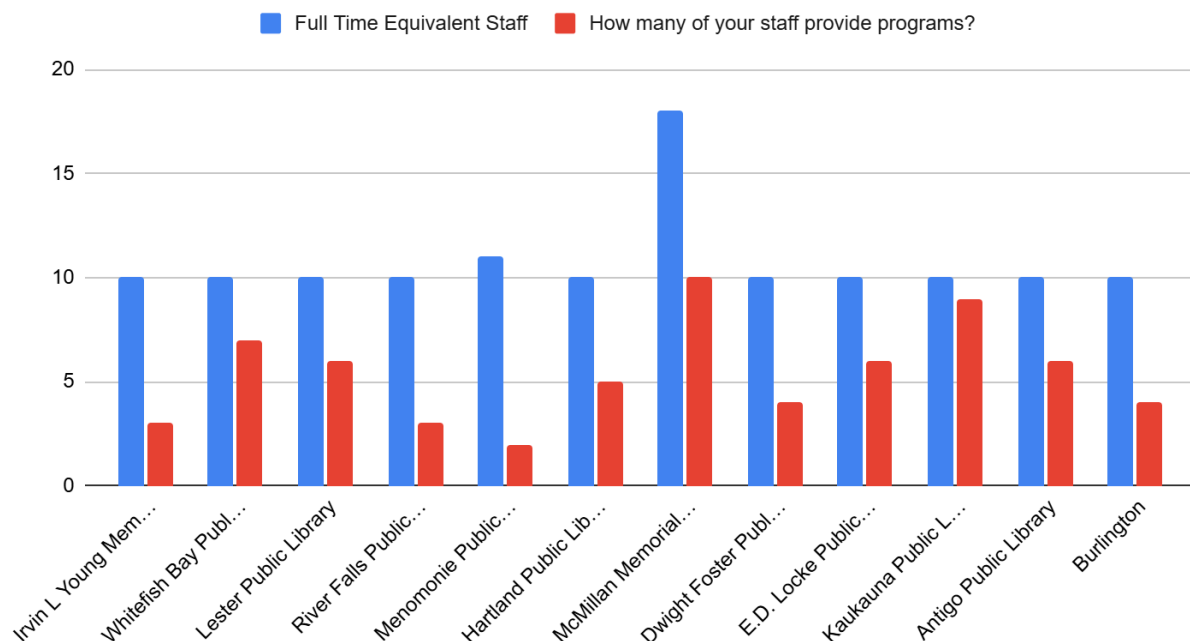
Of the 11 libraries surveyed, our library had the lowest number of programs and the second lowest number of staff conducting programs. Our budget is in the middle of our cohort.

Common programs include storytimes, LEGO clubs, book clubs, STEAM programs, and teen hangouts.

Libraries with high programming numbers tended to have regular, consistent programming rather than unique, one-time events. For example, Burlington hosted over 900 programs in 2023. They offer six weekly storytimes and four adult book clubs per month.

None of this data includes passive programming or outreach. It also does not reflect how duties such as desk time, collection management, or marketing are distributed amongst the staff.

How Many Programmers Per FTE



03. Solutions

Based on current staffing levels, 300-350 programs per year would be the maximum number of programs appropriate for our library.

In order to meet increased programming goals, the youth services department will be adding bi-weekly preschool programming in addition to our weekly storytime, introducing weekly family and teen programming, and adding three monthly children's programs.

Adult programming goals will be set by the new assistant director.

Sorted by Number of Staff Providing Programs

Library	Service Population	Full Time Equivalent Staff	How many of your staff provide programs?	Total Number of programs in 2023	What is your programming budget?
River Falls Public Library	16,840	10	10	312	\$7,500
McMillan Memorial Library	18,655	18	10	442	\$47,000
Kaukauna Public Library	17,701	10	9	642	\$6,000
Whitefish Bay Public Library	14,782	10	7	211	\$13,000
Antigo Public Library	19,311	10	6	660	\$2,300
E.D. Locke Public Library	9,625	10	6	553	Varies
Lester Public Library	11,150	10	6	293	\$12,000
Hartland Public Library	10,084	10	5	365	Not provided
Burlington	11,098	10	4	952	\$12,000
Dwight Foster Public Library	12,502	10	4	447	\$11,750
Irvin L Young Memorial Library	15,816	10	3	175	\$12,000
Menomonie Public Library	19,311	11	2	349	\$3,000