

FAST ***FACTS***

Recent Statistics from The Library Research Service

ED3/110.10/No. 146

Revised September 22, 1998

Public Library Statistics: How Colorado Ranks Lack of State Funding Associated with Smaller, Aging Collections

In 1996, Colorado ranked in the top half of the states on most public library statistics. Three statistics on which the state ranked in the middle among the lowest are noteworthy:



- Colorado was one of only a half dozen states in which public libraries received no regular income from state government. In every other state, equity of access to public library services is guaranteed by a reliable, annual program of state funding. Among the vast majority of states with such programs, the level of support averaged two dollars per capita.
- Colorado ranks in the middle of the 50 states and D.C. on several statistics:
 - Colorado is 18th in staff per 25,000 served
 - Colorado is 19th in visits per capita
 - Colorado is 23rd in ILLS received per 1,000 served
- Colorado ranks surprisingly low on several measures such as:
 - Colorado is 32nd in volumes per capita
 - Colorado is 37th in audio materials per 1,000 served
 - Colorado is 37th in subscriptions per 1,000 served



These statistics suggest that the lack of state funding for public libraries diminishes the quality of library collections. They indicate clearly that the holdings of Colorado public libraries in a variety of formats were relatively small. It is further likely that collections are in jeopardy of becoming increasingly outdated, as libraries lack state support required to replace older materials.

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Keith Curry Lance ■ Director ■ Library Research Service
State Library & Adult Education Office ■ Colorado Department of Education
Library & Information Services Department ■ University College ■ University of Denver
201 East Colfax Avenue, Suite 309 ■ Denver, Colorado 80203-1799
Tel.: 303.866.6737 ■ Fax: 303.866.6940 ■ E-mail: lance_k@cde.state.co.us ■ Web site: www.lrs.org

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**Colorado Rankings on Selected Public Library Statistics
Compared with Highest and Lowest Ranking States and D.C., 1996**

Statistic	Colorado value	Rank	Highest ranking state	Value	Lowest ranking state	Value
Reference questions per capita	1.43	7	DC	2.37	WV	.02
Local income per capita	\$26.00	9	DC	\$38.22	HI	\$0.0
Total operating expenditures per capita	\$28.01	10	NY	\$38.19	MS	\$9.42
Circulation per capita	8.35	12	OH	12.34	DC	2.81
FTE staff per 25,000 served	12.91	18	OH	19.55	TN	7.30
MLS librarians per 25,000 served	2.58	18	DC	5.71	KY	.94
Visits per capita	4.92	19	CT	6.14	MS	2.37
ILLs received per 1000 served	34.37	23	RI	306.80	HI	.11
Volumes per capita	2.57	32	DC	5.18	TN	1.55
Audio materials per 1000 served	62.84	37	DC	601.52	AR	28.77
Subscriptions per 1000 served	4.84	37	NY	28.50	TN	3.58