

1969

Governor's Task Force to Study Library Needs in Maine - Planning Information

Maine Library Association

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalmaine.com/ogvn_docs

Recommended Citation

Maine Library Association, "Governor's Task Force to Study Library Needs in Maine - Planning Information" (1969). *Governor's Documents*. Paper 25.
http://digitalmaine.com/ogvn_docs/25

This Text is brought to you for free and open access by the Governor at Maine State Documents. It has been accepted for inclusion in Governor's Documents by an authorized administrator of Maine State Documents. For more information, please contact statedocs@maine.gov.

G70.30:
L1694
c.1

Governor's Task Force

LIBRARY USE ONLY

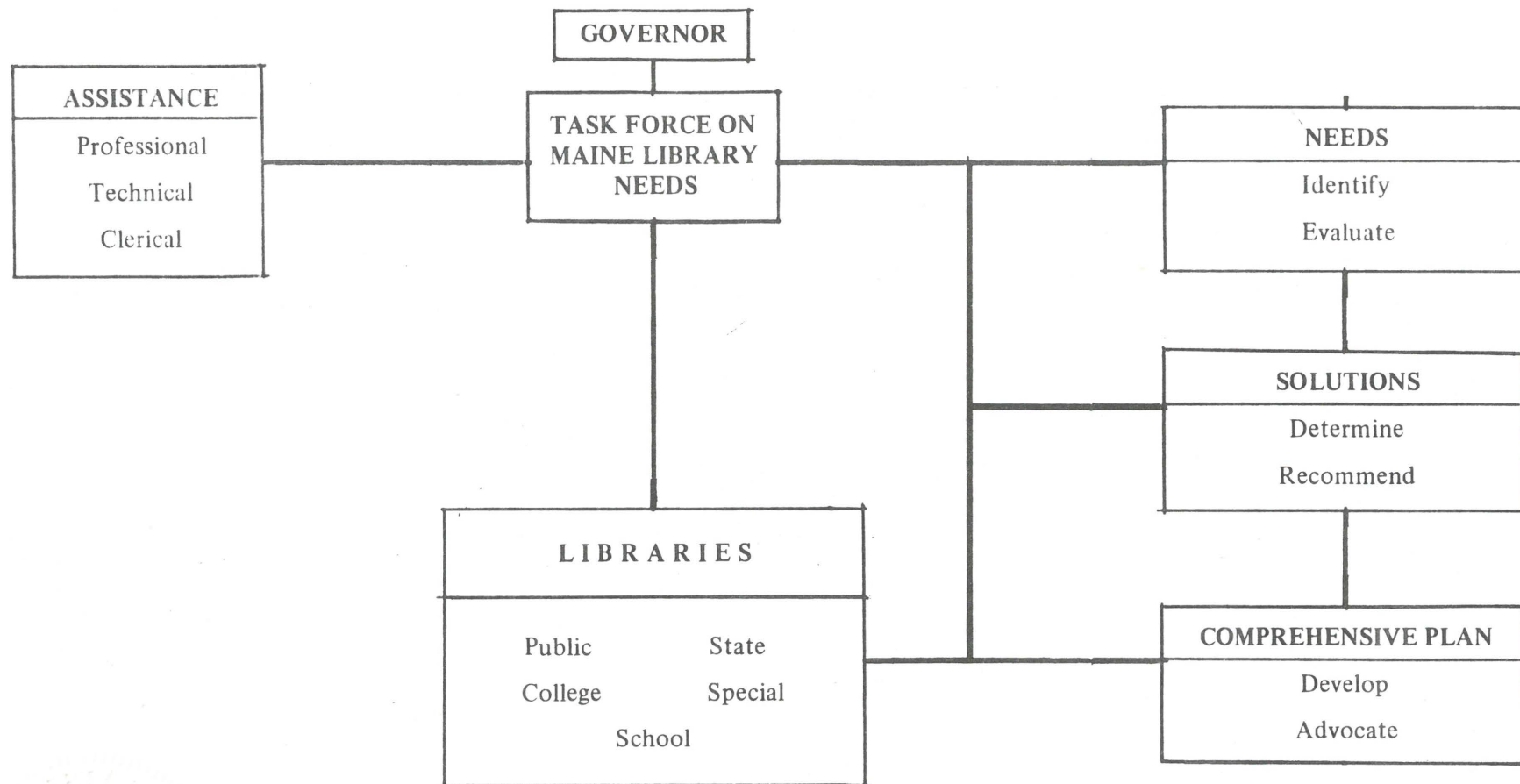
To Study

LIBRARY NEEDS

IN MAINE

Planning

Information



GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE
TO STUDY
LIBRARY NEEDS IN MAINE

The following outline develops briefly the reasons why the Maine Library Association believes that a Governor's Task Force should be named to begin work on a comprehensive study of Maine's library needs. It further indicates the manner in which the Task Force might be organized and suggests some goals toward which it may direct its efforts.

SECTION I.

REASONS FOR A TASK FORCE

1. Maine libraries do not adequately serve the needs of Maine people.
2. There is no plan for improvement which is comprehensive and which coordinates all library needs in all parts of Maine.
3. There is currently no group sufficiently broad based and representative to attract public recognition of the problem and gain public support for long range solutions to it.

Reason One

MAINE LIBRARIES DO NOT ADEQUATELY SERVE THE NEEDS OF MAINE PEOPLE

It has become a matter of growing concern to citizens, educators, librarians, library trustees and state and local government officials, that Maine libraries are not adequately serving the needs of Maine people. This concern has been expressed in articles, surveys of a limited nature, at local and statewide meetings and in numerous personal and group discussions.

THE STATE'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR LIBRARY SERVICE

A state without a library service is like an individual without adequate education. Governments as well as individuals must have and use the full record of knowledge if they are to realize their potentialities.

The many and varied responsibilities of state government for library service naturally group under five headings, all of which must be available in a full program:

1. Resources of state-wide value for both government and citizens, in subject fields ranging from broad questions of public policy to law and history of the State.
2. Library service to the public directly and special library services for state government - to officials, agencies, and institutions.
3. Consultant and promotion services for those libraries which bring facilities close to readers, particularly public libraries serving communities and school libraries serving educational institutions.
4. Sharing with local government the financing of both public library systems and school libraries as fundamental institutions within the total educational program of the State.
5. Research and planning leadership to stimulate steady improvement in state-wide library resources.

Purposes and Agencies

The objective of state library agencies is to see that sound library service is widely available, from the state capital to the most remote communities.

In part the state library agencies are additional units among the various libraries in the state. Their program and resources should be built in coordination with public, school, academic and special libraries. The total resources of the State will be stronger if all are developed and utilized cooperatively.

Since the legal basis for education resides at the state level, state library agencies also play a distinctive and strategic role. They carry special responsibility for promoting the development of a genuine state-wide program of library service.

MAINE PUBLIC LIBRARIES

FACT

In 1966, when the Maine State Library filled out reports for the federal government on Maine's public libraries, it was discovered that only two of the 253 Maine public libraries

measured up fully to minimum standards for:

Hours of Operation

Size of Book Collections

Annual Book Acquisitions

Size of Staff

Training of Staff

Less than one percent of all the public libraries in Maine met minimum standards of operation in 1966.

FACT

Some indication of the problem in the area of public libraries is given by the following tables compiled from "Directory and Statistics - Public Libraries of Maine 1968"

Per Capita Expenditures 1967

Dollars \$	Number of Public Libraries
0 - 1	51
1 - 2	67
2 - 3	32
3 - 4	14
Over 4	18
NA or No Report	71
Total	253

As a nationally accepted standard, it is recommended that public libraries spend about \$4 per capita in total operating expenditures each year. Maine's average per capita expenditure has increased as follows:

Year	Per Capita - Maine
1964	\$1.87
1965	\$2.06
1966	\$2.38
1967	\$2.49

The preceding figures indicate that about 45% of the Maine libraries spend less than \$1 per capita; about 75% spend less than \$2 per capita. The average expenditure per capita is just over half the amount recommended.. (If the expenditure of the heavily endowed Bangor Public Library - \$9.11 per capita - is deducted Maine's per capita expenditure is \$2.14.)

FACT

During 1967 public libraries spent on books:

Dollars \$	Number of Libraries
0 - 500	84
500 - 1,000	43
1,000 - 2,000	36
2,000 - 3,000	17
3,000 - 4,000	10
4,000 - 5,000	8
5,000 - Over	10
NA or No Report	45
Total	253

If the average price of a book for a public library is estimated at \$4.50 after discount, it is evident that about 50% of the Maine public libraries added 100 books or less to their collections during 1967, and 70% added 200 books or less.

FACT

In its minimum standards for public libraries, the Maine Library Association states that every public library should be open at least 15 hours and those in communities over 1,000 population should be open more than 20 hours.

The 1968 compilation of public library statistics makes available the following:

Hours Open 1967*	Number of Public Libraries
0 - 9	96
10 - 19	38
20 - 29	32
30 - 39	16
40 - 49	10
50 - Over	15
NA or Not Reporting	46
Total	253

*Based on Winter Hours

The figures indicate that about 55% of the public libraries do not meet even the lowest minimum standard since they are open less than 10 hours a week and more than 70% of the libraries are open less than 20 hours a week.

CONCLUSION

A substantial amount of additional information is available related to services, quality and quantity of materials, lack of up-to-date reference sources, staff salaries and education, size of staff, and other aspects of Maine Public Library Service. This information along with what is presented here make it evident that more than 50% of Maine's population has only token public library service. This represents a substantial educational and cultural deprivation for more than half a million people.

MAINE PUBLICLY SUPPORTED COLLEGE LIBRARIES

FACT

Number of volumes available 1967 - 68 academic year at expanded University of Maine	670,000
Minimum number of volumes required according to the Association for College and Research Libraries. Com- mittee on Standards.	1,440,000

In order to meet minimum standards in higher education the University of Maine should be concerned with meeting an immediate shortage of 770,000 volumes - a library investment that would require spending about six million dollars at today's prices.

FACT

When measured against minimum standards, none of the libraries of the University can be considered adequate, except that of the School of Law which contains 75,000 volumes.

FACT

The main library of the University of Maine (Fogler Library - Orono) now contains some 400,000 volumes. It should contain 1,000,000 volumes. Even this figure is considered minimal by some accreditation groups for the support of programs at the doctoral level.

The main library is seriously deficient as it is required to assume responsibility for the support of graduate programs at both the master's degree and doctoral levels and to serve as the central collection for statewide programs in higher education.

FACT

There is an immediate need for a minimum of 30 professional librarians to be added to the staff of the university system. They must also be supported by a staff of non-professional personnel.

CONCLUSION

Library service is a major consideration in planning for and implementing higher education in Maine. With exceptions, as noted, libraries of the University of Maine are dangerously inadequate.

(Note: The relationship of the University of Maine library service and the activities of the Continuing Education Division should be considered. Some 6,732 individuals, representing the largest group in CED history, enrolled last fall in 483 undergraduate, graduate and community service courses at 25 different locations in the state.)

PRIVATE AND SPECIAL LIBRARIES

FACT

The Bates College Library contains about 128,000 volumes, the Bowdoin College Library about 330,000 volumes and the Colby College Library about 255,000 volumes. These major private college libraries, as well as smaller private college libraries throughout the state, contain well over 700,000 volumes. In addition to sheer size, they have specialized collections that are recognized not only within Maine but nationally as well.

FACT

In addition to college libraries, Maine has more than 40 special libraries located throughout the state. These include county law libraries, historical libraries, hospital libraries, institutional libraries, research libraries, business and industrial libraries and a variety of specialized collections. These libraries constitute a valuable addition to the total library resources of the state, particularly since the materials represented are often unobtainable elsewhere.

CONCLUSION

Both the size and the specialized nature of the private and special libraries in the state make it of the utmost importance that they be included in the framework of the survey of Maine's total library resources and that they be included in the comprehensive library plan. This inclusion would work to the benefit of both the private and special libraries themselves and of the general public. An instance of how this type of planning and cooperation can be effective is already in existence in the statewide telephone - teletype library network which links public and school libraries with Maine's nine major resource libraries (both public and private) to make more than two million volumes available to Maine people.

The future of library service lies in the direction of cooperation and coordination at all levels and between all types of libraries. This is clearly indicated in the Minimum Standards for Public Library Systems, 1966, which states:

"The concept of library systems is not limited to public libraries in a natural trade area working together. School and academic libraries, and those special libraries serving industry, have their appropriate role to play in systems dedicated to the task

of making adequate resources available to all the people. The systems, in turn, reach out to a wider world, drawing on even greater and more specialized resources offered by state and federal agencies. In a well-organized structure of library service, the reader in smaller, more remote places will have access not only to all books and materials in his region, but beyond that to the resources of the state and of the nation."

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY PUBLIC SCHOOL LIBRARIES

FACT

More than 200 Maine elementary schools have no library or a library of such limited scope that no professional staff is employed. In a majority of schools where there is no organized library or regular staff, the school administration considers the facilities and service "adequate".

Preliminary findings of a Maine School Library Survey conducted by the Maine School Library Association (planned for release in March 1969) make the "appalling" state of school libraries in Maine immediately apparent.

FACT

Only 59 Maine high schools have at least one full time certified librarian (two have two librarians). Only 13 junior high schools have a full time certified librarian. Clerical and secretarial staff are generally lacking or provided in inadequate numbers. The majority of school libraries have no clerical help at all.

Libraries of all junior and senior high schools are seriously understaffed. This can only mean that the true role of the librarians cannot be realized and professional training cannot be translated into service to students and faculty.

FACT

School budget provisions do not begin to meet or reflect the rising costs of books, periodicals, library supplies and audio-visual materials and equipment - all of which are necessary to the instructional purposes of the school.

There is a serious lack of financial support for school libraries and therefore an inability to plan realistically for growth, expansion and change in curriculum.

CONCLUSION

Preliminary tabulation of the MSLA survey indicates three areas of immediate concern to school library service:

1. Need for statewide, comprehensive implementation of elementary school libraries.
2. Inadequate provision of professional certified school librarians and supporting clerical - secretarial - technical staff.
3. Inadequate financial support of school library programs.

In summing up the preliminary findings of the MSLA survey, the Association President said, "Most school libraries in Maine are at best sub-standard to the recommendations of the American Library Association's Standards for School Libraries. Adverse conditions exist in an area vital to the educational growth and development of students."

Reason Two

THERE IS NO PLAN FOR IMPROVEMENT WHICH IS COMPREHENSIVE AND WHICH COORDINATES ALL LIBRARY NEEDS IN ALL PARTS OF MAINE.

FACT

In 1962 a study of public library service in Maine was initiated by the Maine State Library as part of its program under the Federal Library Services Act. The survey was conducted by Miss L. Marion Moshier with the members of the Executive Council and the Committee on Public Library Standards of the Maine Library Association serving as a survey advisory committee.

Time allotted to the study was three months. The field was limited to public libraries. To quote the survey itself "This report is not an all-inclusive survey nor does it pretend to be 100% objective. It is primarily an appraisal, by one person, based on field visits, reports and statistics. This report . . . provides some of the pertinent facts necessary for local planners to evolve a prudent plan."

The Moshier Report "Are Maine's Public Libraries in Focus?" is the only state-wide survey of Maine Public Libraries. It is not and was not intended to be a comprehensive study of all library needs and a coordinated plan for their future development.

FACT

In the fall of 1968 the Maine School Library Association conducted and is still in the process of compiling the results of a survey of public school libraries. This is being conducted on a voluntary, spare time basis by MSLA members in an effort to get basic information which will help the MSLA in its efforts to improve school libraries in Maine. The MSLA survey, which includes responses from 58% of the schools queried, was not intended to be a comprehensive, coordinated survey of all Maine library needs.

FACT

While the standards of accreditation make certain college library needs obvious, there has not been in recent years any overall survey of any kind of all of the libraries of publicly supported institutions of higher learning.

CONCLUSION

While a certain amount of information is available from a variety of sources, it has not been organized, reviewed and evaluated in a manner which would enable a group of persons to identify the total library needs of Maine and move in the direction of determining and recommending solutions. Neither has any plan been developed for meeting Maine's total library needs as they exist now and as they will develop over the next thirty years.

Reason Three

THERE IS CURRENTLY NO GROUP SUFFICIENTLY BROAD BASED AND REPRESENTATIVE TO ATTRACT PUBLIC RECOGNITION OF THE PROBLEM AND GAIN SUPPORT FOR LONG RANGE SOLUTIONS TO IT

FACT

There are a number of local and statewide organizations interested either directly or indirectly in library improvement. These include but are not limited to the Maine Library Association, the Maine Library Trustees Association, the Maine School Library Association and a variety of professional associations.

None of the groups and associations now interested in or working on library improvement can claim to represent broad based public support. In addition their statements and factual findings may be questioned in the public's mind because of their direct professional involvement in library service.

FACT

Each of the organizations now involved in library improvement operates on a volunteer basis without paid staff. Such time as is given to publications, meetings, assembling factual material, etc. is donated to the work of the organization.

There is not in Maine any existing organization sufficiently well financed or staffed to undertake the considerable number of man hours involved in assembling the supporting data for a comprehensive survey of all Maine library needs.

CONCLUSION

The creation of a Governor's Task Force to Study Library Needs in Maine is warranted both from the standpoint of the need to achieve broader based public participation and support of a comprehensive library development plan and from the standpoint of the need to obtain professional, paid assistance in gathering the supportive data and evaluating it.

SECTION II

ORGANIZATION OF THE TASK FORCE

Membership

The membership of the Task Force should be about 24 persons broadly representative of citizens, librarians, trustees, businessmen, civic organizations and others to enable the Task Force to get a clear perspective on total library needs and to give its findings and recommendations broad public participation and eventually support.

The membership of the Task Force will be selected by the Governor in cooperation with the chairman. Suggestions will be offered of appropriate organizations to be represented.

Professional Assistance

Funds available from Title III Interlibrary Cooperation - Library Services Construction Act will make it possible to hire professional, technical and clerical services, and, where possible, support the work of the Task Force.

Time Schedule

It is hoped that organization of the Task Force can be completed and the initial meeting held in April during National Library Week this year. It is anticipated that the Task Force will meet at regular intervals to assure the fullest use of the time from its inception to the report to the Governor. A minimum of 16 months seems desirable to accomplish this goal. To allow for consideration of possible legislation, the target date to complete the study and publish a report should be September 1970.

SECTION III

DUTIES AND GOALS OF THE TASK FORCE

Basically the Task Force is being asked to:

1. **Identify** and **evaluate** Maine's total library needs.
2. **Determine** and **recommend** solutions to library problems.
3. **Develop** and **advocate** a comprehensive plan which will coordinate all library development over a reasonably extensive span of time.

The Task Force Shall:

Identify the library needs of Maine citizens; survey the present resources and services of the State, public, college, school and special libraries in Maine and evaluate these resources and services in terms of identified needs; determine ways in which libraries, their services and resources, may be improved and coordinated at all levels to assure equal access for all citizens to their educational and cultural benefits; and recommend action by which the State can encourage and effect the development of library service indicated by the Task Force's study.

CMLD 021 G721

Governor's Task Force
to study Library needs
in Maine.