

ANNUAL REPORT FY24

Mississippi Library Commission



ABOUT MLC

The Mississippi Library Commission (MLC) was established in 1926 by an Act of the Mississippi Legislature. The agency was charged with giving advice, when asked, to schools and public libraries and to communities desiring to establish libraries. Further, the agency was required to obtain annual reports from all libraries in the state and to make a biennial report to the legislature of its work. The Act also authorized the MLC Board of Commissioners to purchase and operate traveling libraries which might circulate to any library, organization, or group, including charitable and penal institutions. Today, the Mississippi Library Commission offers a wide variety of direct and indirect services to libraries, government agencies, and the citizens of Mississippi.

MISSION AND VISION

The Mississippi Library Commission is committed – through leadership, advocacy, and service – to strengthening and enhancing libraries and library services for all Mississippians.

The Vision of the Mississippi Library Commission is that all Mississippians have access to quality library services in order to:

- Achieve their greatest potential
- Participate in a global society
- Enrich their daily lives



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024:

Stephen Cunetto, Starkville

Ann Marsh, Brandon

Lori Barnes, Hernando

Becky Wright, Banner

Jolee Hussey, Oxford

In accordance with the requirements set forth in the Mississippi Code of 1972, §27-101-1, the Mississippi Library Commission respectfully submits the FY24 Annual Report for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2024.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For centuries in places separated by continents and seas, libraries have existed with the task to gather, preserve, and safeguard knowledge. The role of the librarian has been to steward that knowledge and help people find and make good use of it.

With the ever expanding technological and social changes that have taken place in recent years, the services rendered by public libraries have been evolving with many changes. While these changes have been both subtle and expansive, all of these changes have been accomplished to create, allow, and maintain a secure connection to knowledge. This knowledge prepares the next generation of our society.

Moving forward, libraries and the librarians who maintain them, must remain flexible, adaptable, and willing to accept change often via the transforming alteration of traditional library services. Within the following pages, the continued development of libraries and librarians in Mississippi during the past year outline how these challenges were met and accomplished.

Hulen E. Bivins
Executive Director

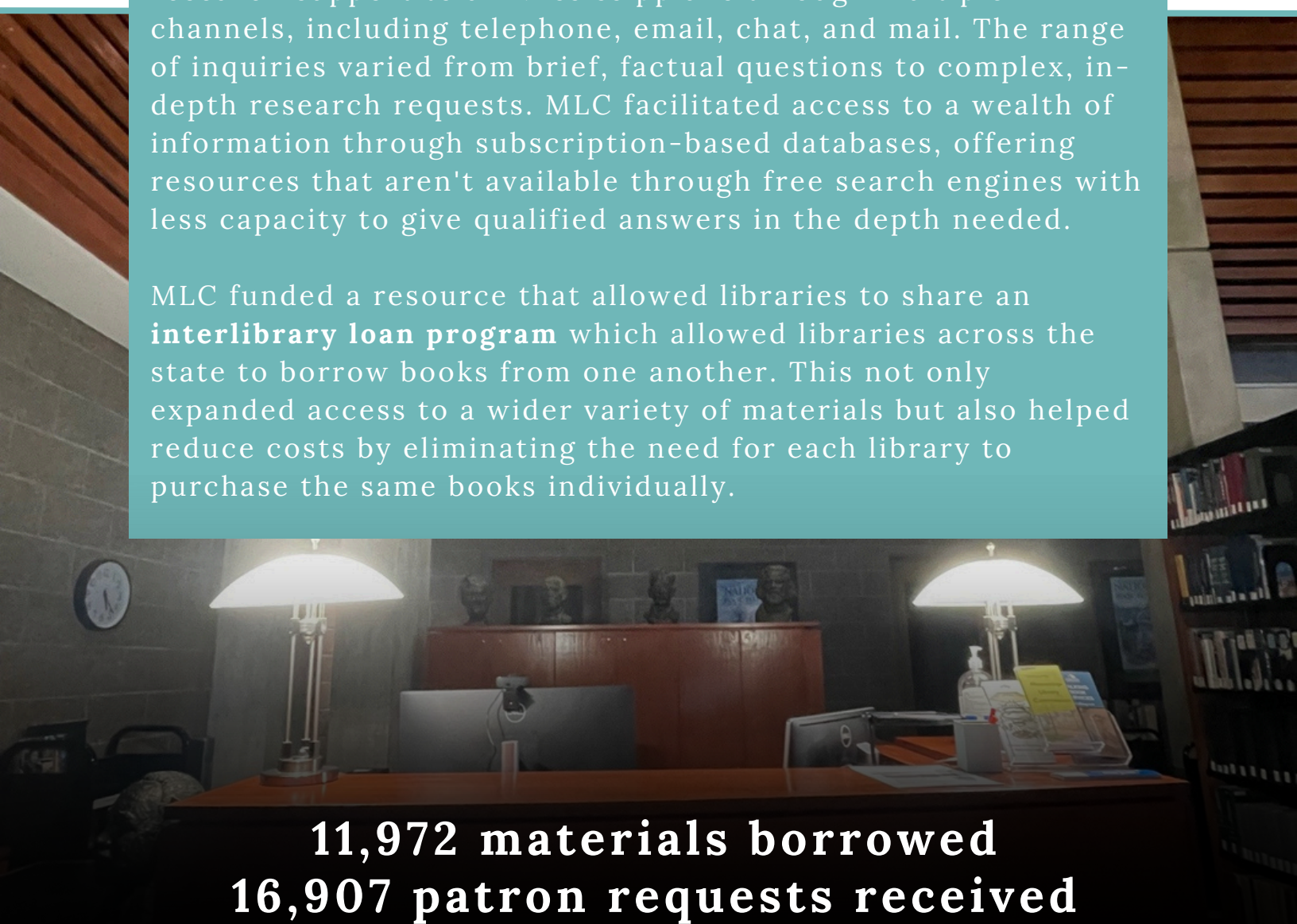
LIBRARY SERVICES

In order to improve library operations and MLC's staff knowledge, the Library Services Bureau offers direct and indirect services to Mississippi's public libraries. These services include materials, reference questions answered, software that allows libraries to catalog books and borrow and loan books to one another, books in alternative formats for patrons with disabilities, and guidance, support, and training for public libraries.

Information Services

Information Services provided comprehensive reference and research support to all Mississippians through multiple channels, including telephone, email, chat, and mail. The range of inquiries varied from brief, factual questions to complex, in-depth research requests. MLC facilitated access to a wealth of information through subscription-based databases, offering resources that aren't available through free search engines with less capacity to give qualified answers in the depth needed.

MLC funded a resource that allowed libraries to share an **interlibrary loan program** which allowed libraries across the state to borrow books from one another. This not only expanded access to a wider variety of materials but also helped reduce costs by eliminating the need for each library to purchase the same books individually.



11,972 materials borrowed
16,907 patron requests received

Patent and Trademark

MLC offered onsite training and a designated research area for individuals and businesses conducting patent and trademark searches. These services helped assist innovators and entrepreneurs learn how to use patent and trademark tools and information to fuel innovation and protect their intellectual property. Through hands-on training, participants gained the knowledge and skills to efficiently search existing patents and trademarks, assess potential risks, and understand the nuances of intellectual property protection. Our designated research area provided access to the latest databases and resources.

12,140 total patent and trademark items used
598 requests

MAGNOLIA

MLC is the home for the **Mississippi Alliance for Gaining New Opportunities Through Library Information Access (MAGNOLIA)** which is as a legislative-funded consortium of databases that provided enhanced access to high-quality information across the state.

This initiative allowed state-funded colleges and universities to integrate additional databases into their school portals, expanding access to valuable resources for students. K-12 schools also benefited from MAGNOLIA as it offered lesson plans and a wealth of quality information to support educators. Access was provided based on age-appropriate logins to access materials. Furthermore, all Mississippians had access to these resources through their local public libraries, ensuring widespread availability of valuable educational tools and information throughout the state.

31,157,533 total searches
on MAGNOLIA



Center for the Book

MLC is home to the state's Center for the Book, part of a network of 56 affiliate Centers across the United States and its territories. Charged with promoting literacy and a love of reading and libraries, the MLC Center for the Book participated in the Mississippi Book Festival, funded the Wash, Dry, Read grant for Mississippi public libraries, and the National Book Festival hosted by the Library of Congress.



At the Mississippi Book Festival, a Pop-Up Library exhibit featured a puppet theatre with Mississippi-themed puppets, free books for attendees, and a library made up of books by authors featured at the festival.

The Wash, Dry, Read grant promoted literacy by providing five public library sites across Mississippi with a mini library area consisting of a bookstand, rug, table, and chairs to set up at a local laundromat in their community.

Summer Library Programs

The theme for the summer library programs was "Adventure Begins at Your Library," and it brought communities together through a wide range of engaging activities for all age groups, from toddlers to adults. Libraries across the state offered diverse programs, some of which were held virtually, while others took place on different weeks throughout the summer months. These events were carefully designed to keep children reading during the summer break and prevent the "summer slide," a common phenomenon where students lose academic progress while on vacation.

ADVENTURE
— BEGINS AT —
YOUR LIBRARY™



**6,948 total number of
programs held
178,137 total number
of attendees**

LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Consulting

Each public library system in Mississippi was assigned a designated consultant who provided valuable advice and guidance to enhance library services across the state. These consultants worked closely with library systems, as well as their Friends Groups and Boards of Trustees, to ensure a thorough understanding of library policies and regulations.

Consultants offered tailored services such as specialized training on a variety of topics, including collection development, programming, databases, makerspaces, and more. By providing targeted support, consultants helped library systems improve their operations, expand their services, and better meet the needs of their communities.

With growing awareness of autism and other learning disabilities, MLC provided resources through a Disability Support Services Coordinator. The coordinator offered training to libraries on how to create and maintain support groups. Additional services included one-on-one consulting and parent support.



3,307 consulting hours
214 site visits



LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Continuing Education

MLC provided a variety of continuing education programs designed to enhance the skills, knowledge, and expertise of public library staff members. To reach a broader audience, virtual and hybrid training formats were introduced, allowing for greater participation across the state. These training opportunities covered a wide range of topics, including community partnerships, genealogy, artificial intelligence, statistics, census data, collection development, and more. Additionally, the Library Leadership 101 Institute was held to specifically support paraprofessional library staff, equipping them with the tools and knowledge needed to grow within their roles and better serve their communities. Through these initiatives, MLC fostered ongoing professional development and empowerment for library staff statewide.



**41 continuing
education
opportunities
offered
735 in
attendance**

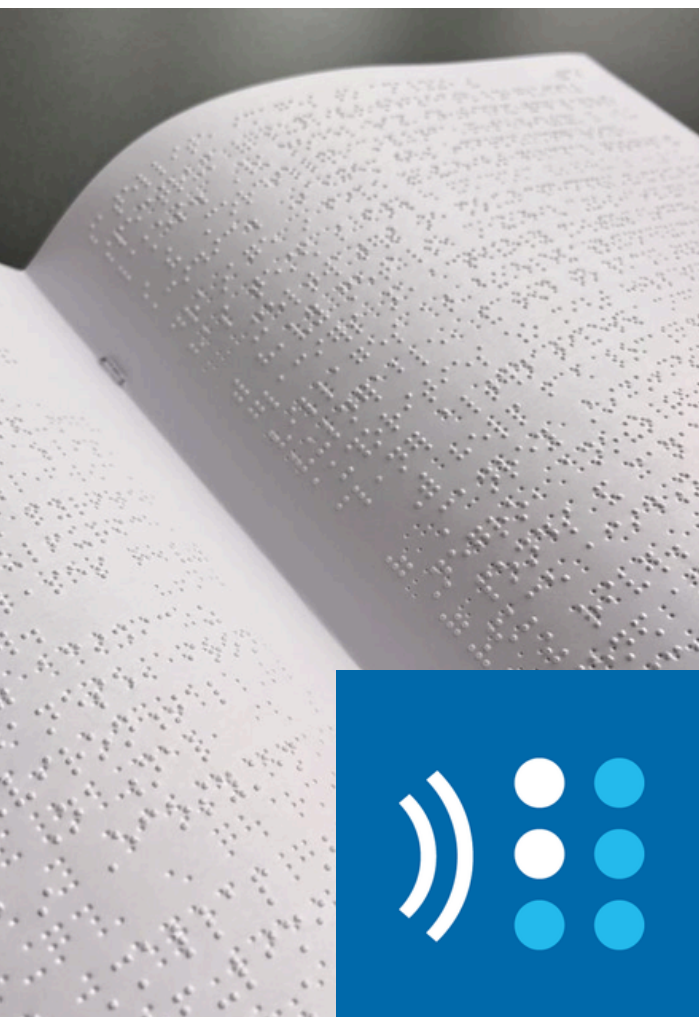
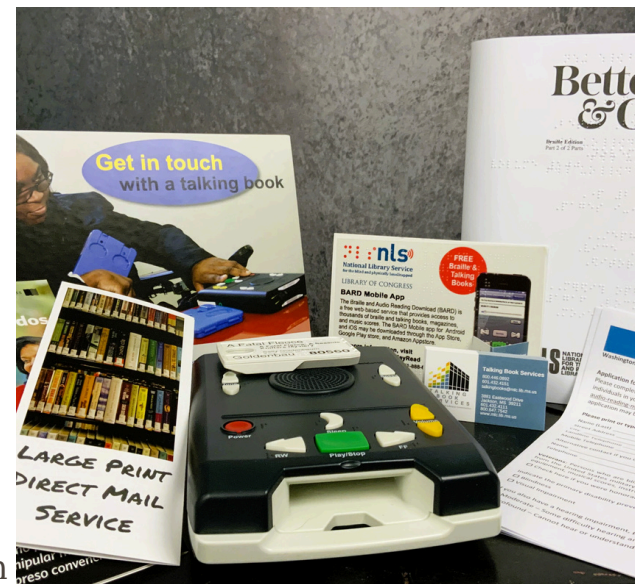


LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Talking Book Services

Talking Book Services at MLC provided vital access to adults and children with visual impairments, physical limitations, and those with reading disabilities. Through a variety of accessible formats—such as large print books, audiobook players, braille eReaders, and other specialized materials—the program ensured that these individuals had the resources they needed so that “All may read.”

Talking Books staff actively conducted outreach efforts across the state to raise awareness and connect with those who may qualify for the services. These outreach efforts included engaging with veterans’ homes, public libraries, schools, and attending numerous conferences, ensuring that those who could benefit from the services were informed and supported.



Patrons checked out 158,315 digital books and magazines

1,400 large print books were mailed to patrons

44,304 books were downloaded on BARD

39 outreach events performed

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

The Administrative Services at MLC played a vital role in supporting the overall operations of the agency by overseeing the financial administration. This included the preparation and monitoring of the agency's budget, establishing and tracking performance measures, ensuring compliance with internal controls and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), and managing accounts payable. Additionally, Administrative Services handled procurement, inventory control, and all mandatory fiscal reporting, ensuring the agency's financial operations were efficient, transparent, and in compliance with all regulatory requirements.

Human Resources provided a range of essential services to support employees and enhance organizational effectiveness. These services included employee development programs designed to foster professional growth, benefits administration to ensure staff understood health and wellness options, and performance evaluations to assess and improve job performance. HR also managed onboarding processes to ensure new hires were smoothly integrated into the organization, as well as retention strategies to retain top talent. Additionally, the department handled agency travel arrangements, ensuring employees had the necessary resources and support for business-related travel.

Operations played a crucial role in maintaining the cleanliness and safety of the agency's building and grounds, ensuring a secure and welcoming environment for both staff and patrons, as well as for other state agencies that used MLC's meeting rooms for events and meetings. Additionally, Operations was responsible for keeping the vehicle fleet maintained, ensuring supplies were available for agency use, managing mail services, and overseeing the general maintenance of agency equipment and facilities to support day-to-day operations.



ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

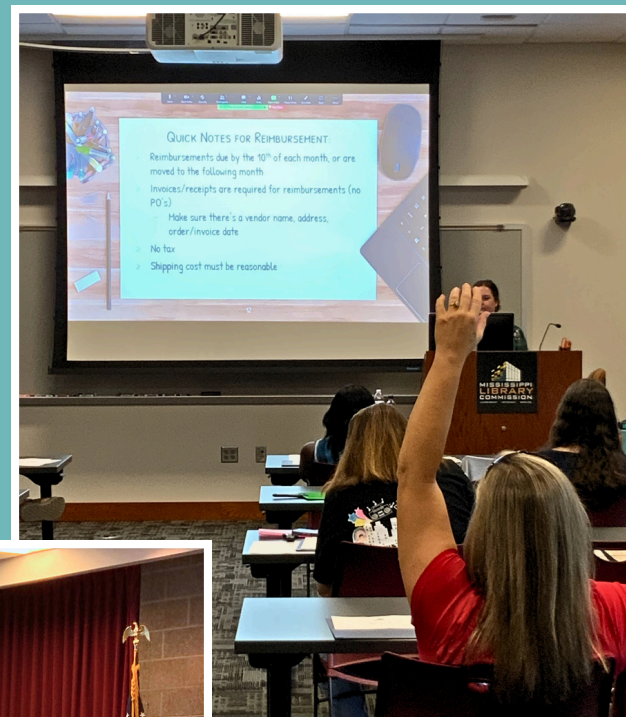
Grant Programs

MLC's grants program provided critical funding to public libraries through both state and federal sources. State grants included the Personnel Incentive Grant Program (PIGP) and the health and life insurance grants which enabled libraries to maintain qualified staff, ensuring quality library services for communities. Federal funding through the Library Service Technology Act supported the creation of new projects, which include increasing and improving library collections through the purchase of new print materials, ebooks, audiobooks, DVDs and materials to assemble kits to be circulated, such as tool kits for home repair. The funding also supported new projects to improve programming capabilities, create mobile libraries, address technology and security needs, and create or improve spaces in the library such as job search areas, teen areas, and children's areas.

\$7,187,746 in state funding provided to libraries for Personnel Incentive Grant Program

\$605,536 in federal funding provided to libraries for projects and upgrades/scholarships

309 total grants awarded



ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Technology Services

MLC offered technology services to public libraries across the state and internal staff. A help desk provided an opportunity to discuss issues, create tickets for follow-up, and resolve problems. As with past years, most libraries were not able to afford quality technology assistance, making library services in rural, underfunded areas suffer. By offering technicians to assist with their issues, libraries were able to maintain reliable technology infrastructure, improve digital access, and better serve their communities. Further, assistance with E-Rate, a federal program with extensive paperwork, was offered one-on-one to each library, along with a needs assessment during on-site visits to individual branches to gather information.

1,146 help desk tickets resolved

149 on site public library assessments/assistance

Public Relations

MLC's public relations staff provided creative design assistance to public libraries by producing flyers, bookmarks, and other essential promotional materials. Ready-to-use templates were created and made available to libraries, offering vital support to those without dedicated public relations staff. Additionally, videos were produced to highlight the importance of libraries and their profound impact on communities, showcasing their critical role in education, access to information, and community development. These videos not only increased public awareness but also equipped libraries with valuable tools for advocacy and outreach.

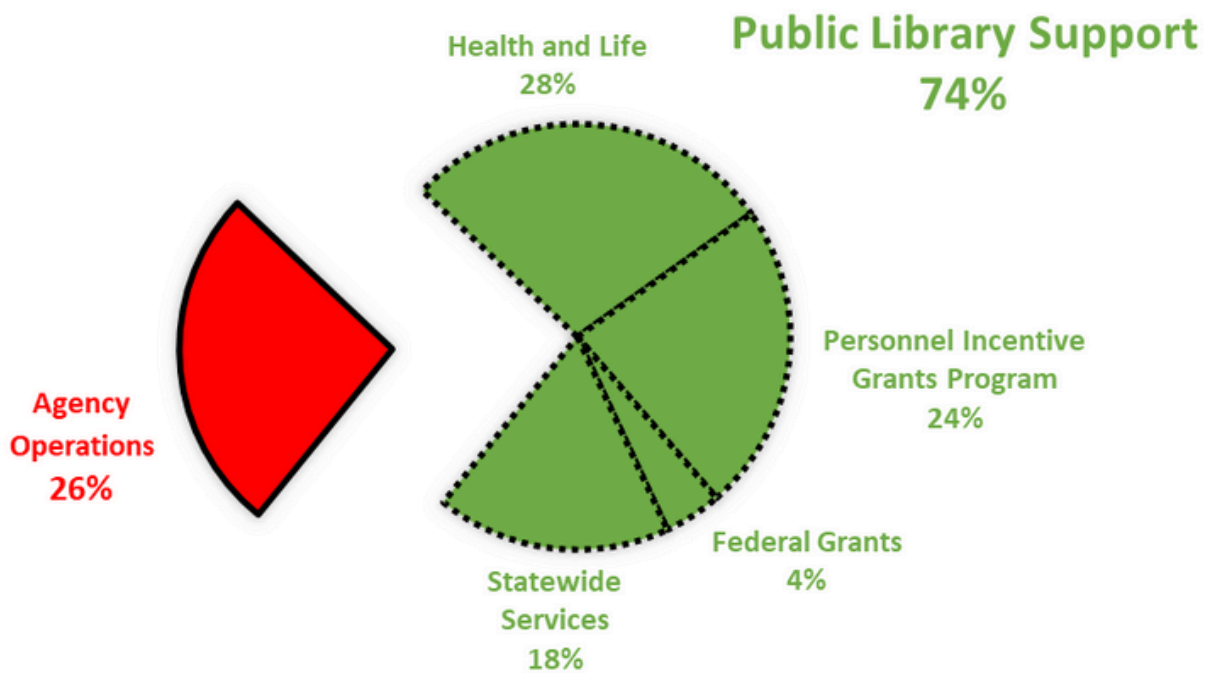
MLC further promotes both the agency and public libraries by utilizing social media platforms to amplify their messages, share success stories, and engage with the community. By offering professional design services, accessible templates, and effective digital promotion, MLC empowered libraries to effectively promote their services, particularly in areas with limited resources.



FY24 EXPENDITURES

Agency Operations	26.21%	\$3,621,805.30
Health and Life Grants	28.13%	\$3,887,305.85
Personnel Incentive Grants Program	23.50%	\$3,246,882.75
Statewide Services	17.78%	\$2,456,454.68
Federal Grants	4.38%	\$605,535.67
	Total	\$13,817,984.25

MISSISSIPPI LIBRARY COMMISSION FY2024 BUDGET-\$13,817,984 EXPENDED





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