



**NATIONAL
SKILLS
COALITION**

Every worker. Every industry.
A strong economy.

Gearing up for the Digital Equity Act with Libraries

**National Skills Coalition &
American Library Association/
Public Library Association**

April 12, 2022



Speakers

- Caroline Treschitta, National Skills Coalition
- Larra Clark, ALA-PLA
- Lauren Moore, NY State Librarian
- Scott Rasmussen, Director of the NY ConnectAll Office
- Becky Raymond, Chicago Citywide Literacy Coalition
- Gwenn Weaver, Independent Consultant, ALA Committee on Literacy
- Amanda Bergson-Shilcock, National Skills Coalition

Libraries & the Digital Equity Act

Larra Clark
Deputy Director,
PLA, ALA Public Policy & Advocacy

Gwenn Weaver
Independent Consultant
Chair, ALA Committee on Literacy

Libraries as keystone for digital equity



- 1996 Telecommunications Act, Universal Service, [E-rate](#)
- National Broadband Plan
- Broadband Technology Opportunities Program ([BTOP](#)), as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
- Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security ([CARES Act](#)): \$50M to IMLS
- American Rescue Plan Act ([ARPA](#)): \$200M to IMLS
 - Emergency Connectivity Fund: \$7B
- Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act ([IIJA](#))
 - [Digital Equity Act](#): \$2.75B

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/broadband>

Collaborating to Advance Digital Equity



- Digital Durham: <https://digitaldurham.net/>
- Local collaborations to support:
 - Workforce Development
 - Telehealth
 - Public housing residents
- ***Digital Inclusion Coalition Guidebook*** (NDIA)
- ***Keeping Communities Connected*** [report](#) (ALA)

ALA advocacy for libraries in Digital Equity Act



- Include libraries in all stages of planning, application and implementation
- Leverage state libraries' role in state government and connection to local libraries
- Streamline procurement processes and keep reporting as simple as possible (ensure participation of smaller and less-resourced libraries)
- Ensure transparency at all stages
- Protect/respect privacy
- Maximize flexibility, creativity, and responsiveness
- Prioritize human/softer side of digital inclusion

Getting ready for Digital Equity Act



[Assess & Map](#)



[Stay Tuned!](#)



[Reach Out](#)



[Plan & Prepare](#)



Digital Equity Act provisions

- Historic legislation passed last November as part of infrastructure bill – \$2.75B
 - *Thank you* for your advocacy!
- Funding will come from Dept of Commerce, NTIA, in three different streams
- First: May/June **state planning grants: \$60M**
 - Who is the administering entity for your state?



Digital Equity Act provisions, cont.

- **Next:** State formula funding coming in 2023; **\$1.44B** – will go to state administering agency and then be regranted locally
- **Final:** Federal competitive grants also coming in 2023; **\$1.25B** – libraries will be able to apply directly to NTIA for funding
- NSC has guidance and resources for states – see last slide



Don't miss our resources!

- At the end of today's presentation are several slides with resources – including reports, fact sheets, and more
- You'll receive these slides via e-mail following today's webinar



Gearing Up for the Digital Equity Act with Libraries

Lauren Moore, Asst. Commissioner for Libraries and NYS Librarian

&

Scott Rasmussen, Acting Director, New York State ConnectALL Office

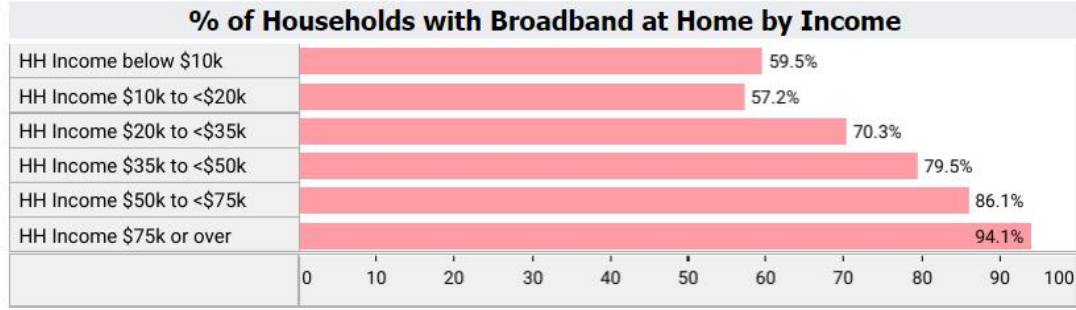
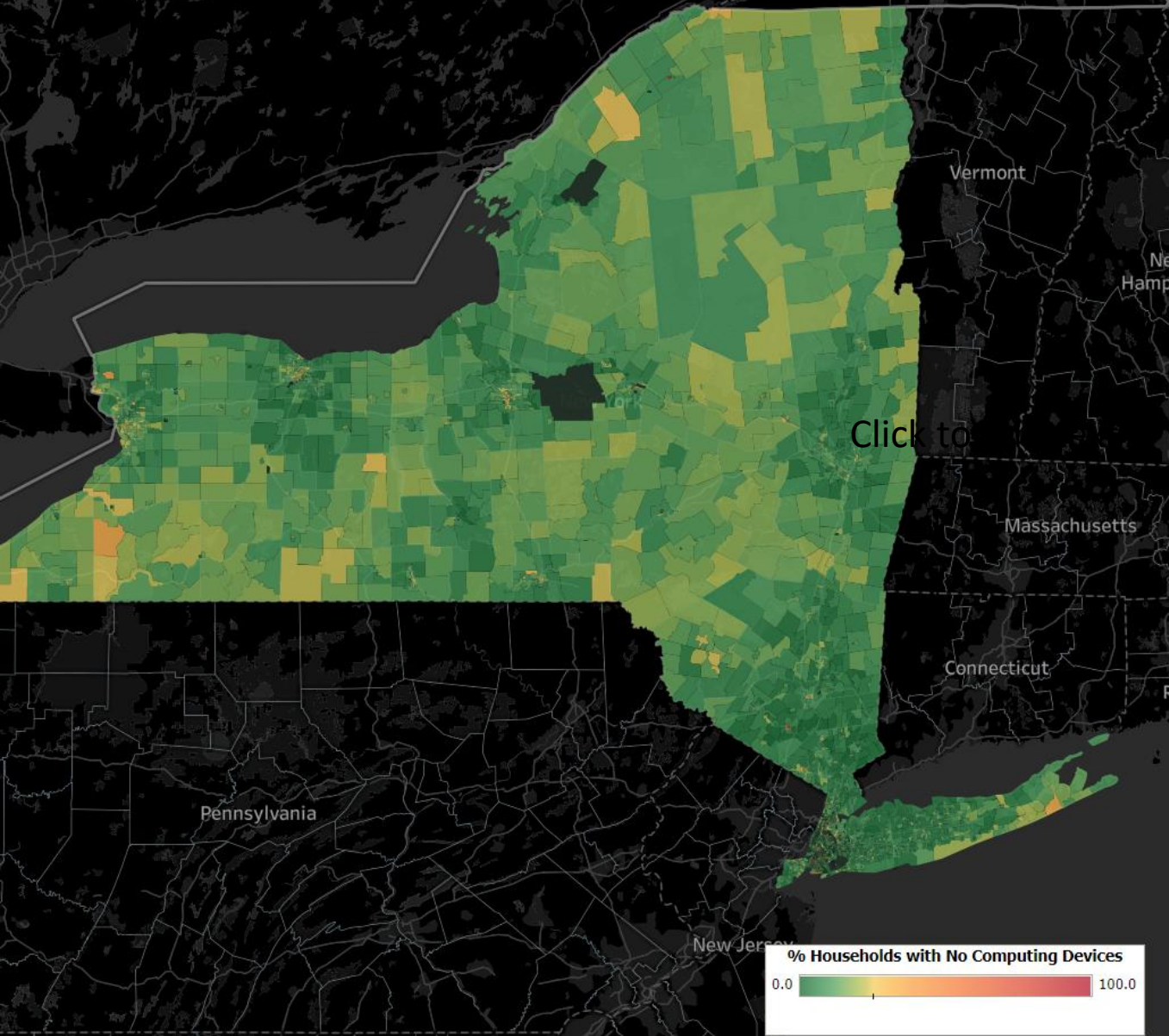
State Library Digital Equity Summits

- Convened stakeholders in 2021 to:
 - establish a shared understanding of digital inequity in the state
 - Create a joint vision for achieving digital equity
- Identified three strategic areas:
 - Establishing state-level presence to organize digital equity work
 - Fostering digital equity ecosystems
 - Addressing intersecting conditions contributing to digital inequity

Laying the Groundwork

- State Library ARPA funding- \$4M for digital inclusion efforts
- Digital equity reports
- Statewide communication channels
- Digital Equity Data Portal
 - An interactive, online data mapping tool for communities across the state seeking data on New Yorkers' ability to access the internet, with the goal of advancing digital equity
 - <https://blogs.cornell.edu/nysdigitalequity/home/>

NYS Digital Equity Portal

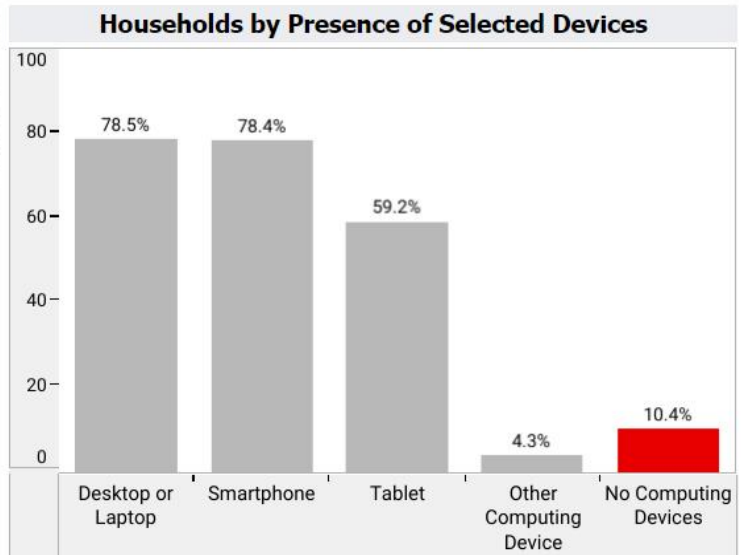


Households by Connection Type (n=7,321,374)

% with No Internet at Home	13.9%
% with Dial-Up Only	0.3%
% with Broadband like Cable, Fiber Optic Or DSL	72.6%
% with Cable, Fiber Optic, or DSL Only	17.8%
% with Cellular Data Plan	63.5%
% with Cellular Data Plan Only	8.3%
% with Satellite Internet Service	3.6%
% with Some Other Service Only	4.3%
% with Internet Access Without A Subscription	2.9%

Lack of Connectivity for Children

Total Children under 18 Years Old	4,073,497
% without broadband at home	11.5%
% without broadband (has computer)	7.2%
% without a computer at home	4.3%



- NY Public Library System**
(All) ▾
- County**
(All) ▾
- Congressional District**
(All) ▾
- NYS Senate District**
(All) ▾
- NYS Assembly District**
(All) ▾
- County Subdivision**
(All) ▾
- Zip Code**
(All) ▾

Joint Comments Submitted to NTIA on DEA

Reimbursement for administrative expenses

Flexibility with funds to meet regional and local needs

Simplification of rules for easy implementation

Access to federal data on the availability, access, use, and cost of wireline broadband, cellular service, and devices

Streamlined reporting requirements

Inclusion of state libraries in the digital equity planning process and in development of relevant programming

Inter-Agency Working Group on Digital Equity

New York state agencies and offices whose work impacts, or could impact, digital inclusion for the covered populations in the Digital Equity Act

Starting this process early ensures coordination and collaboration from the beginning

State Funding for Digital Equity

- State funding to support organizing efforts and to codify a State digital equity program.
- Attention on digital equity in addition to infrastructure
- Emphasis on partnerships
- All-of-government initiative to increase enrollment in Affordable Connectivity Program



Recommendations

- Bring together your core coalition right away. Define your guiding principles, mission, and vision so that you all support the same goals.
- Ensure your coalition includes people working to support underrepresented groups. States must ensure that underrepresented groups are included in their plan.
- Develop a timeline for action with responsibilities clearly defined.





Chicago Citywide Literacy Coalition

Becky Raymond
Executive Director





Time for your questions!

Please submit questions via the Q&A or chat box on screen.



NSC Resources

- [Digital Equity @ Work](#) – sign up to get on NSC's digital equity list and receive regular updates
- NSC's [comments](#) to NTIA on DEA – includes recommendations
- [Implementing the Digital Equity Act webinar](#) – more details on funding
- [State leaders in digital equity](#) (examples from CO, HI, NC)



Digital Skills Statistics, Charts, and Graphs

- Industry-specific [fact sheets](#) on digital skills (*includes 4 industries: construction and transportation, hospitality, manufacturing, health and social work*)
- *The New Landscape of Digital Literacy* ([report](#) and [slides](#) with statistics on US workers' digital skills)
- [Applying a Racial Equity Lens to Digital Literacy](#) fact sheet (*statistics broken out by major racial/ethnicity groups*)
- National Digital Inclusion Alliance [State Digital Equity Scorecard](#)

ALA & PLA Resources



- ALA policy advocacy for libraries in [broadband](#) and [workforce](#)
 - JOIN our [advocacy network](#) for libraries
- [DigitalLearn.org](#), PLA's hub for English/Spanish digital literacy support and training
- [Project Outcome](#), PLA's hub for outcome measurement
- [Census Data Literacy](#) resources for using census data to improve library planning and services
- Public Libraries: Partners in Workforce Development [webinar series](#)
- ALA Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services ([ODLOS](#))
 - [Lifelong literacy](#)



Stay in touch

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