



## Overview and Logistics

Welcome and thank you for your interest in the Michigan Library Advocacy Day. Your hosts include the Michigan Library Association (MLA), the Michigan Academic Library Association (MiALA), and the Michigan Association for Media in Education (MAME).



On Tuesday, April 20, the Michigan library community will unite to amplify our collective voice in support of ALL Michigan libraries at our inaugural (virtual) Michigan Library Advocacy Day! Passionate and committed library advocates from all across Michigan will join together to represent our public, school, academic, tribal and special libraries.

Join us from the comfort of your home, office or library, as we gather together in the morning on Zoom for an overview of the day and an inspirational keynote from special guest U.S. Representative Andy Levin. Advocates will then take their passion, knowledge, and stories to their individually scheduled virtual Zoom meet-and-greets with congressional leaders and will continue to strengthen our messaging throughout the day with emails, calls and tweets.

The following information includes everything you need to know to prepare for and participate in Michigan Library Advocacy Day.

### Step 1: Register

It all starts with a registration.

<https://www.milibraries.org/advocacy-day>

You don't need to be a Michigan Library Association (MLA) member to participate, however, you must register through the MLA website and create an MLA account. At the registration link -- scroll down to "New Users," input your email address, and click on "register." Then, complete your registration.

## **Step 2: How to identify your State Senator or State Representative**

When you register for the Michigan Library Advocacy Day, you will be asked to include your House and Senate district. This gives our team the necessary information to connect you with legislators from your district where your message will resonate.

It will be vitally important for you to get to know what your State Senator and State Representative look like (so when we meet virtually you can be sure to pick them out in the crowd of faces) as well as a little bit about their background (what committees they sit on, what issues are important to them, what are their leadership roles). We have included links below so you can do some advance research.

### **Find your State Senator**

<https://senate.michigan.gov>

### **Find your State Representative**

<https://www.house.mi.gov/mhrpublic/fmrFindaRep.aspx>

## **Step 3: How do I get a meeting with them on April 20<sup>th</sup>?**

While we might not reach each and every legislator, depending on participation, we are hoping to document the contacts with legislators over the course of the day.

MLA's lobbying firm, Governmental Consulting Services (GCSI), has secured 30-minute meetings with every member of the Senate and House. The virtual meetings will take place Tuesday, April 20 between 9:30am – 5pm.

An extensive spreadsheet has been created that we will share with you where we have added your name, organization, and email next to your Senate or House member that also indicates the time of the call and the call-in link. This spreadsheet will also be shared with the legislators so they know who they will be meeting with from their district.

## **Step 4: What you will need to prepare**

Virtual advocacy days are really no different than in-person advocacy days and preparation is the key to a successful legislative visit. You will want to make sure that you have reviewed and understand the talking points that will be discussed during the meetings. The Michigan Library Advocacy Day hosts have created a website for advanced viewing to give you all the information you need for a successful visit. <https://www.milibraries.org/advocacy-day>

Between April 1 and April 19, we encourage you to spend time on the website to watch the videos outlined below, read up on the overview and logistics of the event, and prepare for your visit.

- On the website you will find nine **EDUCATE** videos (3 min. viewing each) that are of importance to public, school and academic libraries across Michigan. They are available to view on-demand.
- On the website you will find a 30-minute video on Advocacy 101 that gives you all the information you need to **PREPARE** for your visit, as well as a short video about how to tell your story. Both are available on-demand.
- On the website you will find a video “Libraries Are More Than Just Books” which will include the **ASKS (talking points)** that have been agreed on by the host organizations.

#### **Step 5: Before your virtual visit**

You will be notified via email by April 15 with the zoom links and the scheduled meetings we have arranged for you. Meetings are in flux up until that time, and registrations will still be taken so we apologize in advance that we will not have the information to give you any sooner. We will also send you email addresses for others who will be joining you at the same meeting time.

If we have scheduled a visit with one of your legislators at a time that you are not available to meet, we need to know as soon as possible so we can take you off the list that we provide to the legislator.

Make sure you know how to use the Zoom platform. The most important items – mute and video – are located on the bottom left of your screen. You do not need a Zoom account to enter the meeting, just the link that we will provide.

Depending on your district and how many advocates register, you may be the only person meeting with your legislator at the allocated time, or you might be one of a dozen or more advocates meeting at the same time. If your meeting is the latter...acquaint yourself with others who will be attending the same meeting by reaching out by email in advance and making a plan how best to use the 30 minutes allotted. If it is a larger group, you will need to identify 3-4 individuals to help lead the call:

#### **Call Leader**

With so many calls on the calendar, staff from MLA, MiALA, MAME and GCSI will not be able to attend every meeting. With the help of the Michigan Library Advocacy Day host organizations, GCSI will assign a call leader who is experienced in advocating. The call leaders' job will be to thank the legislator for agreeing to meet with library advocates, initiate quick introductions, give a brief overview of why we are there, and close the meeting by asking the legislator if they have any questions or comments.

### **Issue Presenter**

This person can be one or multiple people on the call who will present the talking points and the ASK to the legislators

### **Storytellers**

This person can be one or multiple people on the call who will present their personal stories connecting our issues. (Don't forget to view the "Telling a Good Story" on the Michigan Library Advocacy Day website.)

### **Secretary and Timekeeper**

This person will take notes on any feedback that was given by the legislator...do they support, oppose, need more information? This information should be shared with the host organizations and there will be an area on the evaluation to include it. This person should also watch the clock and make sure that virtual visits do not go longer than the allotted time.

## **Step 6: The day of the virtual visit**

Put your specific meetings and Zoom links on your calendar and be on time! Depending on where you live and work, you will participate in one (1) to five (5) meeting times scheduled for you.

On Zoom - cameras should be on, no hiding! Make sure your name is spelled out under your video, along with the name of your library or city. Audio should be muted until you are the speaker.

Be ready to introduce yourself – name, organization and city only. Keep introductions short! If it is a large group, you will not have time for individual introductions, the call leader should provide an overview of whom the group represents.

Present the issues and the action you would like the legislators to take

- Use personal experiences to emphasize the issues' importance
- Stay on topic, don't stray!
- Stay non-partisan
- Do not talk about the election and/or politics that do not pertain to the issues
- Be positive!

Be sure to watch the time and stay within the allotted 30 minutes. For small group, all advocates will get an opportunity to briefly share their story. For larger groups, it may not be possible.

Offer yourself/your organization/MLA/MiALA/MAME as a resource for finding solutions to the issues.

Make sure to give the legislator time to respond to the issues presented or to ask questions.

Wrap up the visit by thanking the legislator/staff for their time.

### **Step 7: Follow-up after the virtual visit**

Within 24 hours, send a thank you email and restate the issues you have addressed in the meeting.

If the legislator has asked for follow-up materials, and you said you would send it, make sure that is attached to your thank you email.

Continue to build a relationship with the legislator by staying in contact after the meeting.

- Invite the legislator to conduct office hours at the library, read to children, or take a “backstage” tour.

Fill out and return the online evaluation form that is sent to you after Michigan Library Advocacy Day.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **What is the agenda like for April 20<sup>th</sup>?**

8:30am – 9:30am: “Amplify Your Voice” – a virtual overview of how the day will work and motivational time to gather all library advocates as we set a tone for our advocacy work, moderated by Jenny Marr, MLA’s Advocacy and Legislative Committee Chair. The morning session will also feature the Presidents of MLA, MAME and MiALA, GCSI Lobbyist Bob DeVries, and special guest U.S. Representative Andy Levin who will start us off with an inspiring keynote and call us to action.

9:30am – 5pm: Pre-arranged Zoom meetings with State Senators and State Representatives

### **What if my legislator can’t meet?**

Don’t be disappointed if you only meet with legislative staff members. Schedules change rather suddenly on session days, so we sometimes get cancellations or are asked to reschedule. Meeting with a staff member should be treated the same as meeting with the legislator.

### **What makes a good advocate?**

A good library advocate can be just about anyone. Librarians, library staff, colleagues, trustees, friends groups, parents, teachers, community leaders, superintendents, deans, and anyone else who finds value and importance in public, school, academic, tribal and special libraries.

**This is my first time participating in an Advocacy Day, I’m nervous and a little bit intimidated, HELP!**

Not to worry...we are here to help. We will help identify a call leader with experience to help make your legislative visit go smoothly. Don't be intimidated. This is a low-stress way to get involved.

**Due to my work schedule, I cannot participate that day. How else can I participate?**

No worries! If you sign up for Michigan Library Advocacy Day you will have access to template emails, social media posts, etc. – easy ways for library advocates to communicate with legislators at any time during the day without being on the Zoom call. We also know that some people do not enjoy the Zoom platform, if you do not want to join in a Zoom call, but want to participate in Michigan Library Advocacy Day, we encourage you use the resources on the website to craft an email, send a social media message, call, or send a letter on April 20. We have sample templates for you to use for this purpose.

**If I have questions or technical issues on the day of, who should I call?**

If you have any issues that prevent you from attending your meeting, or if you are having technical issues during your meeting, please **TEXT**...tell us your name, what meeting you are calling about and the issue you are having. (We prefer text over email to make sure we reply quickly.)

Debbie Mikula – 517-404-3533

Lisa Buttigieg – 517-488-6405