



**Educational
Communications
Board**

2013 – 2015 Biennial Report

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To: The Honorable Scott Walker, Governor of Wisconsin
Members of the Wisconsin State Legislature
Citizens of the State of Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Educational Communications Board (ECB) has the unique mission of delivering high quality educational and public media to the citizens of Wisconsin. While there have been many changes in technology since the founding of the ECB in the early 1970's, that essential mission of using technological platforms to deliver non-commercial public media remains unchanged.

During the 2013-2015 biennium, the ECB's mission continued to be to produce, acquire and deliver public media programming designed to support K-12 education as well as to advance the cultural and intellectual enrichment of all Wisconsin residents.

ECB meets these goals by utilizing a variety of technologies including public radio and television broadcasts and internet based platforms.

Here is a link to ECB's budget details for the 2013-2015 biennium:

<http://doa.wi.gov/Documents/DEBF/Budget/Biennial%20Budget/2013-15%20Executive%20Budget/225-2013-15ExecutiveBudget.pdf>

In the 2013-2015 biennium, the ECB provided educational and non-commercial radio and TV programming to residents throughout the state in a variety of accessible formats.

K-12 Educational Media

In the area of K-12 educational media, Wisconsin Media Lab continued to transition its technology and media production towards web based materials which provide a high degree of flexibility for educators as schools throughout Wisconsin are changing the way in which they utilize media technology.

Wisconsin Media Lab's production of "Wisconsin Biographies" is an outstanding example of contemporary, Wisconsin-focused K-12 educational media. This web-based series is customized for specific grade levels and provides interactive activities for students as well as support material for teachers.

"Wisconsin Biographies" also demonstrates ECB's commitment to collaboration with others to produce and distribute educational media for the entire state.

In addition to seeking the advice of teacher advisory groups, "Wisconsin Biographies" was funded in part by the Wisconsin Humanities Council and is used by others including the Wisconsin Historical Society Museum in Madison where the series has been included in the Museum's exhibits.

"Wisconsin Biographies" was recognized with a Midwest Emmy award in 2014.

Here is a link to learn more about Wisconsin Biographies: <http://wimedialab.org/biographies/>

In partnership with state educators and the state's Department of Public Instruction, ECB's impact on Wisconsin K-12 educators and students is substantial. ECB/Wisconsin Media Lab materials are also available for use by private schools and homeschoolers in Wisconsin. The need for educational media has been demonstrated by a steady increase in usage of Wisconsin Media Lab content.

Additionally, ECB's partnership in operating Wisconsin Public Television and its membership in PBS (www.pbs.org) provides Wisconsin Media Lab with access to the high quality, vetted, and trusted instructional programming from public media sources from throughout the country and around the world.

As school budgets have tightened, the resources provided by ECB and the Wisconsin Media Lab (at no cost to educators and students) have become even more critical.

You can learn more about the work of Wisconsin Media Lab here: www.ecb.org

Public Broadcasting

ECB continues its commitment to its long-standing partnership with the University of Wisconsin – Extension to operate Wisconsin Public Radio (www.wpr.org) and Wisconsin Public Television (www.wpt.org).

Even as WPR and WPT both endeavor to bring the outside world to Wisconsin through affiliations with NPR (www.npr.org) and PBS (www.pbs.org), the past two years have also seen WPR and WPT increasing their efforts to bring Wisconsin topics to the people of Wisconsin in ways that no other media can.

Whether it's the daily talk show coverage produced on the "Ideas" network of WPR, a focus on election coverage online at WisconsinVote.org; "Here and Now" with Frederica Freyberg on WPT; the "Wisconsin Life" series on WPR and WPT; or a unique glimpse of our state with "Wisconsin From the Air", WPR and WPT strive to bring high quality educational programming with a sense of place to the state's citizens.

ECB's specific functions related to public broadcasting are focused on guaranteeing efficient and reliable transmission to state residents via the Broadcast Interconnect system and transmitters located throughout Wisconsin.

In addition, by partnering with our public broadcasting colleagues at Milwaukee Public Television and WDSE-TV in Duluth Minnesota, ECB is able to ensure broadcast delivery of its Wisconsin-based programming to the entire state.

You can learn more about the work of those broadcast partners here: Milwaukee Public Television (<http://www.mptv.org/>) and WDSE-TV (<http://www.wdse.org/>)

Public Safety

ECB engineering staff is responsible for the efficient and reliable distribution of the state's broadcast-based Emergency Alert System (EAS) and Amber Alert, as well as operating and maintaining the 28 National Weather Service Transmitters which serve Wisconsin.

Here is a link which will provide you with more information about ECB's public safety responsibilities:

<http://www.ecb.org/services.html>

Together, WPR and WPT were utilized by nearly one-million people in Wisconsin on any given week during the past two years as well as by thousands of educators and we continue to have success in our efforts to broaden the base of financial support for both public radio and public television.

During 2013-2015, the ECB provided these services with 56.68 FTE, following a reduction of 5.50 FTE in the 2011-2013 budget.

The ECB has compiled many years of experience with flexible work patterns since the agency implemented its policies and procedures in the early 1980s. The ECB has also implemented policies on telecommuting and work-at-home. To better equip the agency for COOP responsibilities, the Agency continues to offer its employees permanent part-time positions, job sharing, flexible-time work schedules and other alternative employment arrangements.

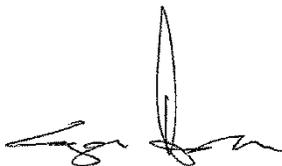
The goal of serving all of the state's citizens with public educational media is one that ECB, its predecessors and its partners have been striving to meet for decades. ECB accomplishes this goal through Wisconsin Public Radio; Wisconsin Public Television; delivering K-12 Educational media via Wisconsin Media Lab; along with our work in public safety.

All of us at the ECB are proud to be part of the fabric and culture of Wisconsin and believe our services are things in which the residents of Wisconsin can all take pride in.

As you have seen, this report is augmented by web links which will provide you with much more information about ECB, its services and its partners.

I encourage you to spend a few minutes exploring these resources and learning more about the important work of the Educational Communications Board.

Sincerely,



Gene Purcell
Executive Director