

# North Carolina Public Libraries

Fiscal Year 2012

## Summary

This report provides a quick comparison of North Carolina libraries to their Southeast peers<sup>1</sup> and libraries nationally using key metrics and data reported as part of the annual Public Library Survey. In April 2015, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) released the *Public Libraries in the United States Survey Report* for fiscal year 2012. The IMLS report analyzes national library usage trends, public library investments, and library services and resources. Library budgets, use and staffing began to stabilize in fiscal year 2012 with most key metrics being reported as similar to the prior year albeit still reporting decreases in key metrics across the board. Overall, NC library trends are consistent with the national observations.

## Quick Statistics about North Carolina Libraries

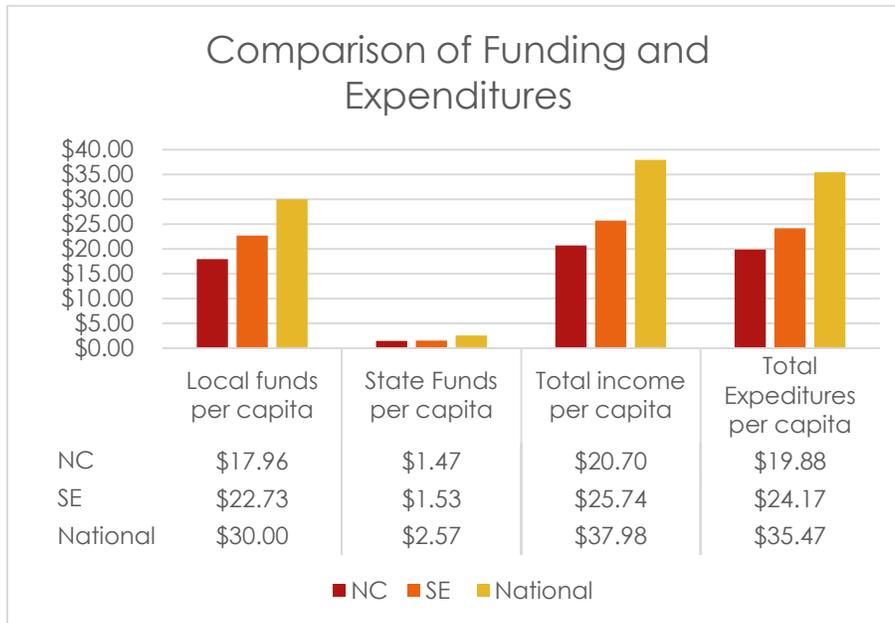
Number of Public Libraries: 77	Full-time equivalent staff: 2,848
Public Library Outlets: 384	Library Visits: 40,644,178
Population served: 9,669,244	Circulation: 55,515,553
Hours Open: 908,629	Program Attendance: 2,426,516
Full-time equivalent librarians: 744	Computer Usage: 8,970,594

## Average Funding and Expenditures for NC Libraries

	Local Income per Capita	State Income Per Capita	Total Income Per Capita	Total Expenditures per Capita
Fiscal year 2012	\$17.96	\$1.45	\$20.70	\$19.88
Percent Change from Fiscal Year 2011	+6%	-14.5%	-.6%	-.3%
Five year Average (FY2007-FY2012)	\$18.65	\$1.67	\$21.88	\$20.92
Five year Average Percent Change (FY2007-FY2012)	+85%	-6%	+1.7%	-1.6%

<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis region defines the Southeast as including: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia

## National and Southeastern Comparisons



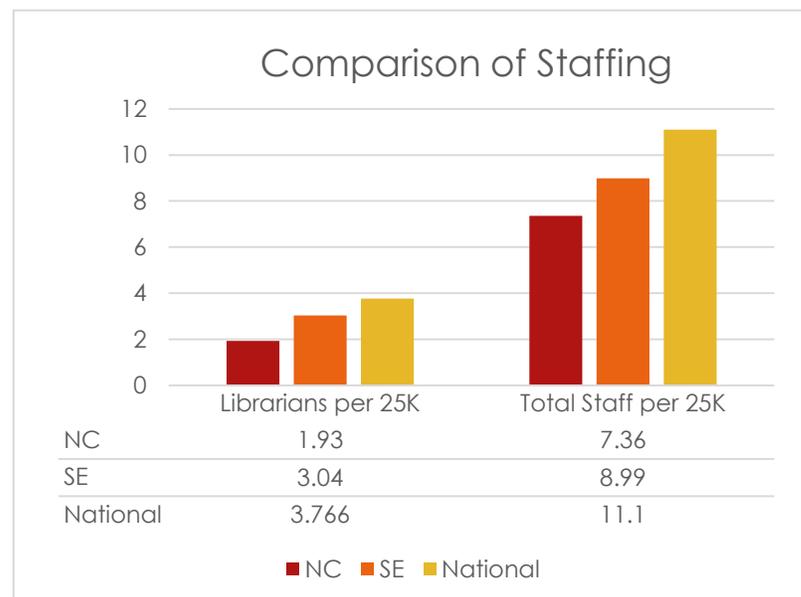
### Funding and Expenditures

North Carolina libraries continued to receive less local funding per capita than their Southeastern peer libraries; however, as in 2011, the difference continued to shrink. In 2012, NC libraries received 21% less local funding per capita compared to 25% less in 2011 than the average reported by other southeastern libraries. Compared to the national average, NC libraries received 40% less local funding per capita. State per capita funding is a small portion of library funding in all three comparison groups. NC libraries received 4% less state funding than the southeast average and 43% less than the national average. As for total per capita income, NC libraries

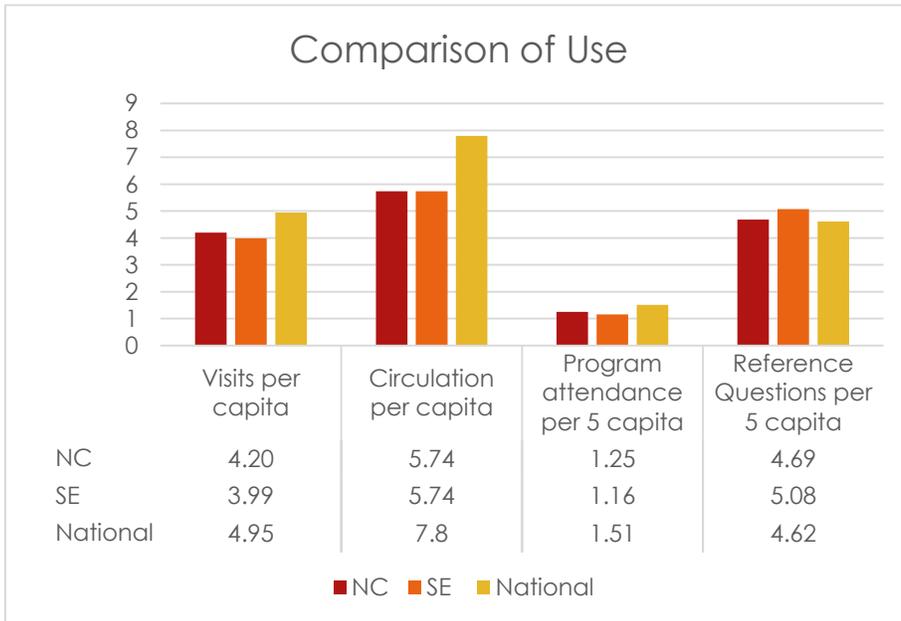
lag behind the national average by 46% and southeastern average by 20%. Nationally, libraries spend on average 44% more per capita than NC libraries. Southeastern libraries spend 18% more than NC libraries.

### Staffing

In 2011, we reported that NC libraries employed 49% fewer librarians per capita than their Southeastern peers. In 2012, the difference decreased to 37%. Compared nationally, NC libraries employ 49% fewer librarians per capita. NC ranked 25<sup>th</sup> out of 55 survey respondents for professionals on staff.<sup>2</sup> Taking into account all full-time equivalent employees, NC libraries employ 18% and 34% fewer people than their Southeast and National peers respectively.



<sup>2</sup> In addition to the 50 United States, the Public Library Survey includes America Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands



### Usage

Despite lagging behind both the regional and national averages in both funding and expenditures, NC libraries are keeping pace with usage of materials and services trends. While NC libraries are still slightly below the national averages, they match or out perform their Southeastern peers in all but one of the usage metrics included in this report. Visitation of NC libraries is 5% above the Southeast average but 15% below the national average. NC libraries rank 12<sup>th</sup> out of 55 in total program attendance and 20<sup>th</sup> for total circulation (per capita rankings are 40<sup>th</sup> and 39<sup>th</sup> respectively). North

Carolina library staff answer roughly the same number of reference questions per capita as their national colleagues and slightly less than the Southeastern average. These metrics deserve particular acknowledgement when taking into consideration that NC libraries employ 34% fewer staff members to provide these services than the national average as stated earlier in this report.

The number of public access computers available at NC libraries increased slightly from just over 14 in 2011 to 15 computers per 20,000 residents in 2012. Despite this increase, NC dropped to 44<sup>th</sup> place in computers available per capita from 42<sup>nd</sup> in 2011. As the graph to the right shows, computer usage per open hour in NC libraries is on par with the Southeastern average and 6% above the national average.

While availability of computers in NC libraries is limited, demand is high as NC ranks 13<sup>th</sup> in total computer usage nationally despite having fewer computers than most libraries. Usage per computer available is 2% higher than the Southeastern average and 10% higher than the national average. These statistics show a clear demand and need for public computer access in NC libraries.

