



Budget Priority: An increase in Library Aid that is proportional to Educational Aid

Provide desperately needed funding to maintain NYS's critical information infrastructure. Enable libraries to continue delivering needed educational services to every New Yorker.

Libraries are chartered by the same Board of Regents that oversees schools, colleges, BOCES and other educational institutions, and library aid is administered through the NYS Department of Education. Libraries are successfully supporting the State's education agenda—and are viewed by the state, the courts and the public as educational institutions—but they have not been funded as such. Please help libraries benefit from funding increases that are proportional to education funding increases.

Libraries are a key part of our education system – *Libraries ARE education:*

- For pre-school aged children, libraries have continuously provided opportunities for enrichment in an environment dedicated to creativity and free inquiry.
- When schools close at the end of each day, each week and each school year, libraries remain open to children and New York's families.
- Libraries are the "People's University." For adult learners, including those that did not attend or could not afford college, libraries provide an avenue for free, lifelong intellectual enrichment.
- Libraries of all types – school, public, academic – are the leading digital literacy educators in New York State.

Library funding benefits every New Yorker:

- State library aid ensures that economically disadvantaged urban and rural communities have quality libraries and that resources are *shared* across the region and across the state.
- Libraries are the #1 source of internet access in households earning less than \$30k annually.

Libraries have significant technology needs that have been deferred due to chronic underfunding:

- The library funding formula was adopted several decades ago and contemplated needs based on traditional library functions. The formula never considered technological needs, let alone technological innovation, that New York's libraries are now asked to provide.
- Public libraries are the primary portals to online job resources for millions of New Yorkers.
- Public libraries enable access to eBooks and other current technologies, making technology affordable and accessible to elderly, disabled and low income communities.

Libraries and library systems are models of shared services and collaborative planning:

- According to the State Education Department, for *every dollar* of aid the state invests in libraries, patrons receive *seven dollars*-worth of services.
- The Monroe County Library System provides city, suburban and rural libraries with the infrastructure necessary to meet the ever-changing needs of our community members, including technology support, materials delivery, and the online catalog which makes over 2 million items – books, e-books, audiobooks, DVDs, etc. – available to your constituents.
- The Monroe County Library System, the School Library Systems, and the Rochester Regional Library Council collaborate on shared programs and services that serve people in every stage of life – pre-schoolers, K-12, college, at work and at home. Libraries are interconnected to meet the educational needs of everyone.