



**Mid-Hudson Library System**

103 Market Street, Poughkeepsie, New York 12601 | tel 845.471.6060 | fax 845.454.5940 | <http://midhudson.org>  
Michael Nyerges, Executive Director

April 20, 2011

To: The Regents Advisory Council on Libraries  
From : Michael Nyerges, Executive Director Mid-Hudson Library System

RE: Request for input from the Regents Advisory Council on Libraries for a new state-wide plan for libraries

Public library systems need the capacity--funding, staffing, expertise and leadership--to ensure the continuation and development of local library service that meets the diverse and changing interests and expectations of state residents for the next 10-15 years. Mandates when funded should be strengthened.

Restore full funding of public library systems in recognition that library systems leverage economies of scale to provide efficient and cost-effective local library services, which is a model of "shared services" in government that is desired by a majority of state residents.

A mandate for a minimum number of public library system professional staff should not be weakened. Instead, mandates should be immediately strengthened with continuing education requirements expected of all system and central library professional staff irrespective of when staff received their state certification.

Additionally, the training of system and member library trustees should be mandatory and provided by library systems.

System capacity should be sufficient to:

- Assist member libraries in the development of local funding by all available means, including the pursuit of chapter 259, chapter 414 and special district initiatives, as well as rechartering.
- Develop cost-effective and system-wide resource discovery tools for library catalogs, in addition to systems that manage loans and patrons, that are simple to use by state residents and include all resources irrespective of format, vendor or means of delivery; and engages state residents by providing opportunities to rate content and write reviews, manage their loans, and use social tagging to create added value to library "catalogs."

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- Facilitate the expansion of local library service through outreach and the formation of community partnerships, including with local schools, that raises the level of literacy in people of all ages and celebrates reading and the reader.
- Train member library staff to support state residents in the use of new technologies and devices that access ebooks and other downloadable content provided by public libraries.

Systems should collaborate state-wide in the development of platforms to deliver ebooks and downloadable content to state residents that manages licensing and digital rights when required and protects the public's investment in this content.

Public Library systems would benefit from the increased capacity of the State Education Department's New York State Library and Division of Library Development to seek, secure and administer grants and provide leadership state-wide.

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