

# MHLS Operational Relationships

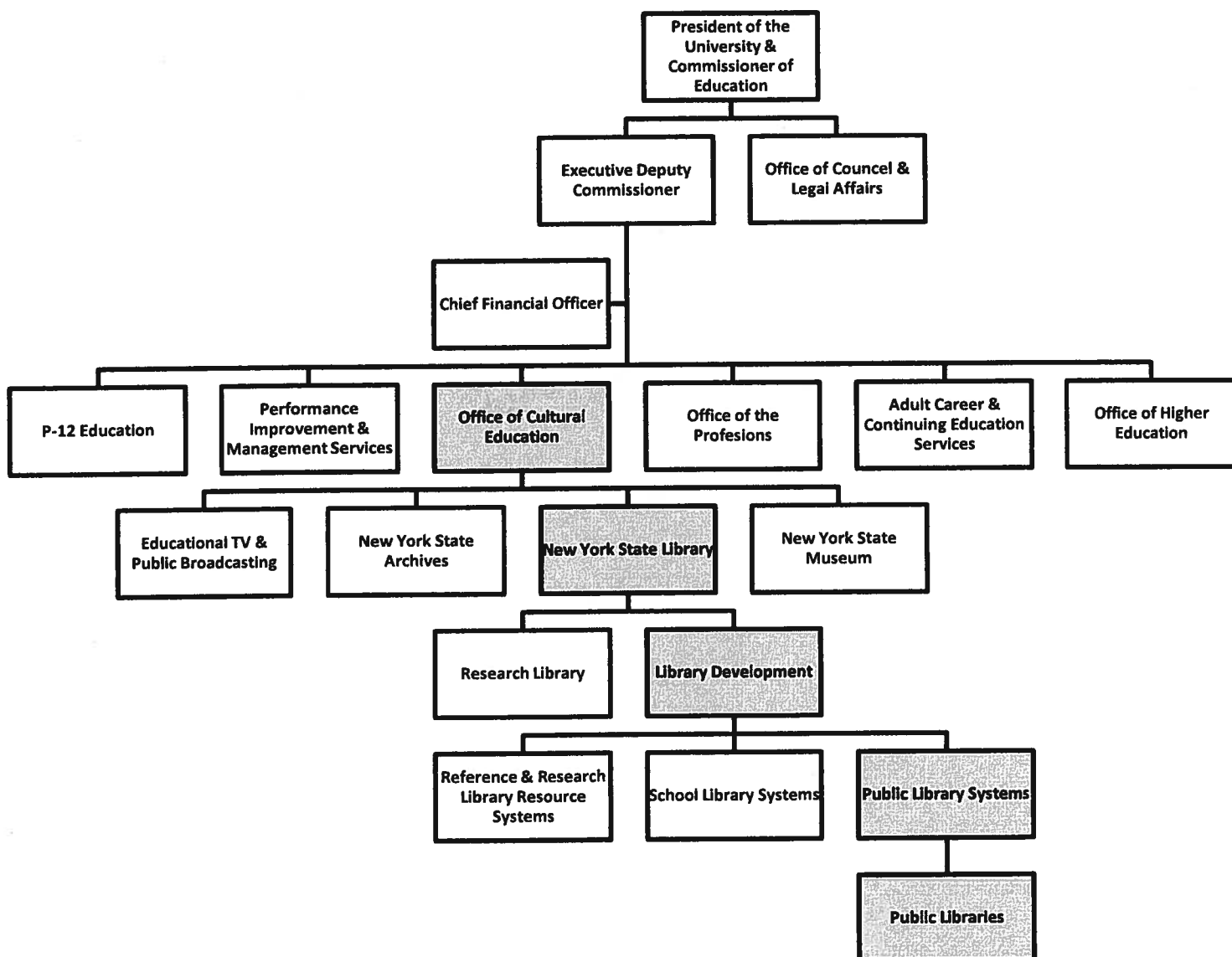
Mid-Hudson Library System Board of Trustees  
Orientation Program  
March 22, 2014

Provided by:  
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# MHLS, Member Libraries & State Government

## BOARD OF REGENTS



## Mid-Hudson Library System Direct Access Plan

### PURPOSE

The Direct Access Plan is an agreement between the Mid-Hudson Library System and the State Education Department's Division of Library Development of the New York State Library and is required by Commissioner's Regulations 90.3 (a) through (d) (4).

The Direct Access Plan reflects the Mid-Hudson Library System's commitment that no resident of the system will be excluded from direct or on-site access to the resources of any of the system's member libraries on the basis of age, cultural, economic or civic status. The Plan makes possible a set of restrictions on direct or on-site access that would address excessive and unfair use or inadequate levels of public support that negatively impact the services member libraries provide their residents. It also allows certain other restrictions as specified in this Plan.

### DEFINITIONS

1. The *State Education Department's Division of Library Development of the New York State Library* is a state agency organized to oversee library services in New York State and authorizes the system to operate and receive state funding, and is party to this agreement.
2. *Mid-Hudson Library System* (MHLS) is a sixty-six member (and four-branch) library system in the five counties of Columbia, Dutchess, Putnam, Ulster, and Greene. It is governed by a board of fifteen trustees. Three members are drawn from each county.
3. The *Directors Association* (DA) is an association of directors of Mid-Hudson's sixty-six member libraries and a key library system consulting and advisory body. Approval of the Direct Access Plan requires a vote of the DA according to its By-Laws.
4. *Library system members* means a public library in the library system's service area chartered by the Board of Regents of the State of New York to provide public library service to the residents of their chartered service areas in New York State and within the Mid-Hudson Library System's chartered service area
5. *Direct access* means the ability of an individual, who resides within the boundaries of a public library system and who has a valid borrower's card issued by the system or any member library in the system, to borrow materials for home use directly from the premises of any library that is a member of the public library system on the same basis as that specified for cardholders in each individual library.
6. *Chartered service area* means the geographic area served by a library as stated in charter documents approved by the Board of Regents and on file with the State Library. For purposes of this section, the phrase "and its environs" or its equivalent as contained in any charter document will not be recognized by the commissioner as a valid part of the library's chartered service area. For purposes of this section, the commissioner will not recognize areas served by the library under contract as a valid part of a library's chartered service area.
7. *Resident borrower* means an individual who resides within the boundaries of the chartered service area of a public or association or Indian library as defined in section 253 of the Education Law and who is a library cardholder at that library.
8. *Non-resident borrower* means an individual who resides outside the boundaries of the chartered service area of a public or association or Indian library as defined in section 253 of the

## Mid-Hudson Library System Direct Access Plan

Education Law and who is a library cardholder at that library or at another member library system or who is a system cardholder.

9. *Library resources* means the print and non-print materials owned by the library and any other services provided by the library to the resident borrowers of the library's chartered service area.
10. *On-site use* means the ability of an individual to use the library resources on the premises of a library.
11. *Serious inequities and hardships* means those conditions which adversely affect resident borrowers of member libraries. Such conditions are defined in accordance with the free direct access provisions contained in each system's approved plan of service and may include, but are not limited to, a definition of what constitutes excessive borrowing of a library's resources by non-resident borrowers.
12. *Unservd* means those individuals residing in geographic areas that are within the boundaries of a public library system but outside the boundaries of a chartered service area of a library which is a member of that system.
13. *Underserved* means those individuals residing in geographic areas that are within the chartered service area of a member library and which the public library system has identified as having an inadequate level of local income to support the delivery of acceptable library services.

### PLAN DEVELOPMENT, REVISIONS AND APPEALS

A committee shall be formed or designated to ensure the system's compliance under Commissioner's Regulations for the development, review and revision of the Direct Access Plan as required by the state or when requested by the MHLS Board of Trustees or the DA and such requests have been approved the Board of Trustees or the DA according to their by-laws.

The committee shall include directors and staff of member libraries as well as MHLS staff. Its review will include the current plan, relevant Commissioner's Regulations and state law, available state guidelines for the development of direct access plans, and other material that may be identified as helpful by the committee.

The Direct Access Plan shall be provided to the DA, Mid-Hudson Library Board of Trustees, and the Commissioner of Education or the Commissioner's designee for consideration and approval.

Approval of the Direct Access Plan by the DA is required before its approval by the MHLS Board of Trustees. The Board's approval of the Plan is required before approval by the Commissioner of Education.

The Mid-Hudson Library System's resource sharing advisory committee may also periodically review the Plan to ensure consistency between the Plan and resource sharing agreements and make recommendations to the MHLS as needed.

Appeals to decisions and remedies under this Plan may be made by a member library in writing to a MHLS trustee from their county. The matter will be reviewed by the MHLS Board of Trustees in its next regularly scheduled meeting and a determination given.

## **Mid-Hudson Library System Direct Access Plan**

### **PLAN ANALYSIS AND PROCEDURES**

Mid-Hudson Library System serves a region of 2,372 square miles and a population of 627,042 according to 2010 U. S. Census. Member libraries of MHLS include the public libraries of five counties, Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Putnam and Ulster. All public libraries in these counties are members of MHLS with the exception of Ulster County, where seventeen of the county's twenty-one public libraries belong to Mid-Hudson and the remaining four belong to the Ramapo-Catskill Library System.

MHLS serves sixty-six public libraries and four branches. There are no jurisdictions of 10,000 or more residents that are not currently served by a member library. All member libraries of MHLS meet minimum standards or are in the process of compliance. Resource sharing across MHLS is viewed as a strength and a benefit to local service. Borrowing from outside of the Mid-Hudson Library System is available to all residents.

All direct and on-site service to system residents, including those in underserved and unserved areas, are the responsibility of member libraries. The role of MHLS is to support its members with the services its members determine to be essential. MHLS assists members as they work to provide the best possible service to their own residents while still providing an adequate level of library service to non-residents in underserved and unserved areas. The MHLS Direct Access Plan provides member libraries with tools to use when restrictions due to overuse by non-residents are necessary.

#### Unserved areas

There are approximately 37,700 system residents who live in unserved areas, areas which are not included in any member library's chartered service area. In Columbia County there are approximately 13,100 residents living in unserved areas. In Dutchess County there are approximately 15,800 residents living in unserved areas. In Greene County there are approximately 7,600 residents living in unserved areas. There are no residents living in unserved areas in Putnam County. In Ulster County there are approximately 1,200 residents living in unserved areas.

#### Underserved areas

Underserved levels of support occur in the Mid-Hudson Library System when member libraries fail to meet minimum state standards and are not in the process of compliance, or when support for a member library falls below a minimum level of local public support for public library service. For the purpose of this Plan, the minimum level of support shall be based on the median or average per capita support of library services by county or by the support provided contiguous member libraries, whichever is less.

#### Claims and procedures

The Mid-Hudson Library System develops services in collaboration with its members, but where differences in local support may lead to underserved system residents, MHLS will work with member libraries to increase funding to adequate levels through consultation and budget vote support. Currently, 53 of the system's 66 member libraries hold votes on their local public funding. MHLS has assisted member libraries with chapter 259, chapter 414 or special district initiatives. Information on re-chartering has led to improved funding as well. Leadership and education for member boards on advocacy and funding strategies are ongoing and in the system's plan of service.

The Mid-Hudson Library System will act promptly, within 30 days, on claims of serious inequities and hardships as defined under the terms of this agreement. Claims must be in writing and submitted to MHLS with the approval of the member library's board of trustees.

## **Mid-Hudson Library System Direct Access Plan**

On receipt of a claim, the Mid-Hudson Library System will verify the levels of use by non-residents leading to the claim of serious inequities and hardships, as well as verify any other criteria in the claim that may be applied under this agreement. Verification by MHLS will be transparent but authoritative. MHLS staff will then meet with the director and board of trustees of the member library submitting the claim.

For claims of serious inequities and hardships resulting from service to non-residents from unserved areas, member libraries must also document efforts by its director and board of trustees to secure adequate support from the unserved area in its claim of serious inequities and hardships.

### **Plans for restrictions and remedies**

Once a claim of serious inequities and hardships is verified by MHLS, a plan for implementing restrictions and remedies will be developed by MHLS staff and the staff of the member library. The plan will include a time-line for implementing the restrictions permitted under this agreement, as well as identifying responsibilities and determining a clear set of goals and actions that lead to the end of the restrictions. The plan shall require the approval of the member library and MHLS boards of trustees. Restrictions may be system-wide or implemented on-site by a member library.

## **DIRECT ACCESS AGREEMENTS**

All residents in the Mid-Hudson Library System enjoy the same rights of direct access to MHLS member library resources by the system-wide acceptance of a borrower's card, which is issued free and without charge by MHLS or by any member library in the system to all eligible residents.

All residents in the Mid-Hudson Library System enjoy the same rights of on-site access to the library resources of the system or any of its member libraries, and no individual shall pay a fee for such on-site access.

Residents of the chartered service area of any member library that withdraws from MHLS shall continue to enjoy the same rights of on-site and direct access to any member library as any other MHLS resident, unless such access leads to "serious inequities and hardships" for member libraries and restrictions are in place under the terms of this agreement to address these hardships.

## **EXCEPTIONS TO DIRECT ACCESS**

The following exceptions are limited to library resources purchased with local funds only and not, for example, state, county and federal funds.

1. Member libraries may give preference to the residents of their taxing district for attendance at library programs.
2. Member libraries may give preference to the residents of their taxing district for the use of computers and Internet resources.
3. Member libraries may restrict the loan of special, experimental or pilot collections or services purchased with local funds to the residents of their taxing district, (such as museum passes, eBook readers, equipment, and electronic content), in compliance with Mid-Hudson Resource Sharing Standards.

## Mid-Hudson Library System Direct Access Plan

### SERIOUS INEQUITIES AND HARDSHIPS

On-site and direct access may lead to “serious inequities and hardships” for a member library when non-residents make excessive use of a library’s resources that affects the library’s ability to provide direct and on-site access to its residents.

Under this plan, claims of serious inequities and hardships may be made by a member library and its board of trustees when:

- Non-residents in the aggregate--from multiple areas--represent 51% of a member library’s total circulation based on a three-year average.
- Non-residents from a single area represent 40% of a member library’s total circulation based on a three-year average.
- Non-residents from underserved areas represent 40% of a member library’s total circulation based on a three-year average.
- Non-residents from unserved areas that provide less than the median or average funding and represent 5% of a member library’s total circulation based on a three-year average.

The following restrictions to direct and on-site access may be applied on the basis of residency in verified cases of serious inequities and hardships and in the context of approved plans of restrictions and remedies:

- Restrictions upon the loan of library resources. Such restrictions shall be limited to non-print materials and equipment, and printed materials less than one year old, including fiction and nonfiction books and periodicals. Such materials must have been purchased from local funds.
- Restrictions upon attendance at library programs. If attendance must be limited, then local residents may be given first access to them. Such programs must have been supported entirely from local funds.

When cases of serious inequities and hardships based on non-resident use from unserved areas are documented and verified, restrictions may be system-wide or implemented on-site by a member library.

Restrictions beyond those permitted under this Direct Access Plan shall require the approval of a majority of the system’s member libraries, the Mid-Hudson Library System Board of Trustees and the Commissioner of Education.

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Approved by Directors Association 5/3/11

Approved by Mid-Hudson Trustee Planning and Personnel Committee 5/5/11

Approved by the Mid-Hudson Library System Board of Trustees 7/13/11

Reviewed and revised by the Ad Hoc Direct Access Plan Committee 4/13/12

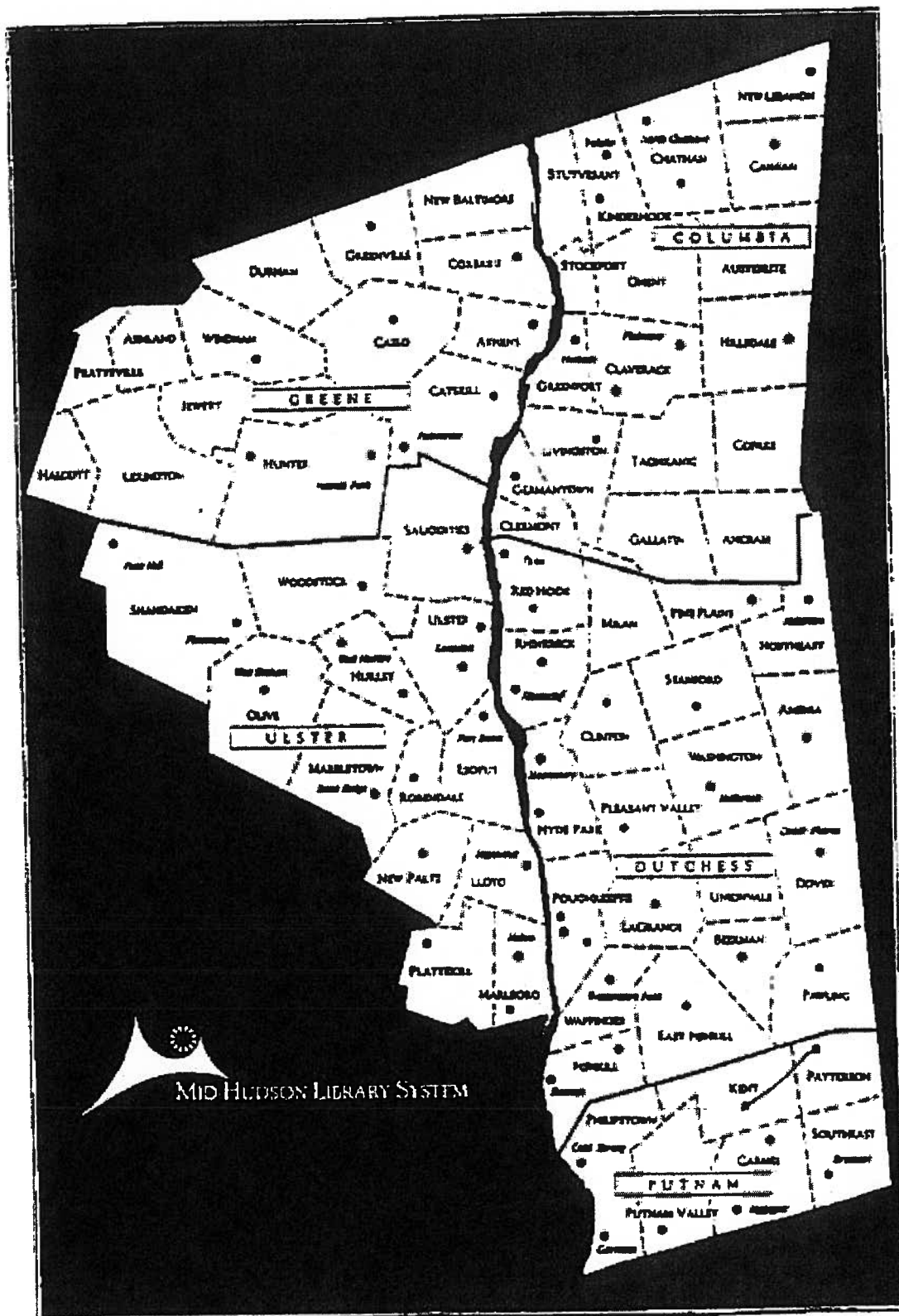
Approved by the Directors Association 6/7/2012

Approved by the Mid-Hudson Library System Board of Trustees 7/11/2012





# Area Served by the Mid-Hudson Library System



# Mid-Hudson Library System Billing Explained

## Funds Paid to MHLS

MHLS bills its members their share for the purchase of several shared services and products, such as the catalog and integrated library computer system, delivery, and databases, as well as for fee-for-services such as web site hosting and tech support contracts.

- **Assessment Fees** (billed bi-monthly)
  - January, March, May, July, September, November
  - The link to the Member Assessment Fee and Database spreadsheets is:  
<http://midhudson.org/mhls/committee/main.htm> or from MHLS website – Contacts (on left)  
then - Director's Association (under Committees & Groups)
- **Databases & Elective Services**
  - January
    - Chilton's
    - Gale Testing
    - OverDrive (ebooks & downloadable audiobooks)
    - (if applicable) Web Hosting
  - March or April: (if applicable) TitleSource
  - May: JobNow
  - July
    - Mango Languages
    - (if applicable) SAM – public terminal management software
  - September
    - Learning Express
    - Cypress Resume
    - Syndetics (online catalog enhancement features)
  - October: (if applicable) Teleforms (automated patron notices via phone)
  - December: TumbleBooks (ebooks for children)
  - Tech Support contracts (bill if and when applicable)

## Funds Paid to Libraries

MHLS writes checks to members under a number of circumstances:

- **State funds** (Local Library Services Aid/LLSA). Usually paid out in August.
- **eCommerce** (fines paid by patrons online). Paid in March, June, September & December (when applicable)
- **County funds** (when applicable)

## MHLS Staff Contacts:

Linda Vittone, MHLS Finance Manager – x213 or [lvittone@midhudson.org](mailto:lvittone@midhudson.org)

Joan Kay, MHLS Accounting Assistant – x214 or [jkay@midhudson.org](mailto:jkay@midhudson.org)

# Document of Understanding | Mid-Hudson Library System

## Document of Understanding between the Mid-Hudson Library System and its Member Libraries

This document sets forth the major responsibilities of the System and its member libraries and their mutual expectations in order to provide better service to the public. In general, libraries serve the public directly and the System serves the member libraries. Systems were created by New York State to provide a means of encouraging and enabling libraries to share resources. Historically, this has been accomplished through the development and sharing of a union catalog of holdings and by providing delivery to facilitate interlibrary loan service. Over time more services have been added such as printing, rotating collections, and training sessions on technology and library issues. By using the central facility for its collective buying power (e.g. for such purchases as electronic databases), economies can result for all participants.

The explosive growth in communications and computer technology, and the growing expectations of our libraries and their patrons have put a severe strain on library resources, both in personnel and costs. The pervasiveness of the Internet in all facets of information has also had an influence in the way libraries operate. To facilitate a better cooperative approach to meeting our mutual expectations for service, the following are understood by both the member libraries and the System. These are **Core** and **Shared** services.

**Core Services:** Essential or Required under State Education Law, and funded primarily by New York State funds directed to the System:

- The System will maintain and operate an online union catalog and a delivery service for the interlibrary and library System distribution of materials for the support of ILL service and other library materials as appropriate. The scheduling of deliveries will be done with input from the member libraries.
- The System will arrange training and consulting to member libraries on professional library issues and issues of computer and communications technology to encourage and enable member libraries to take advantage of the evolving information environment. The System will be available for consultation with member library board and staff members on professional library issues and issues pertaining to general management.
- The System will inform members of grant opportunities and will administer any grants received by the System for the benefit of members as well as provide support for appropriate programs.
- System will provide a means for the mutual exchange of ideas and plans for service, such as the Directors Association, joint committees, and the Listserv.
- The System will communicate directly with any member library or libraries wishing to discuss issues.
- The System will provide Outreach Services as mandated by section 90.4 of the Commissioner's Regulations.
- The System will support services to all age groups including Children, Young Adults, Adults and Senior Adults.

- ❑ The system will support library development, and provide guidance on national, state and regional issues.
- ❑ The System will support the Central Library as detailed under Section 90.4 of the Commissioner's Regulations.

**Shared Services:** Jointly supported, primarily elective, and may require a fee or charge to the using member(s) which might require a separate agreement or document of charges and services

- ❑ The System will provide centralized support for printing services, rotating collections, and advocacy for libraries in the region; and will serve as a repository of professional material for libraries.
- ❑ The System will provide access to an integrated online library system, which supports circulation and patron database management, public catalogs and other functions.
- ❑ The System will communicate to the members changes in the capabilities and use of the central system and provide written guidelines of the level and type of system support.
- ❑ The System will try to make its facilities available to member libraries for appropriate functions, with a possible fee to cover the overhead costs.

**Shared Services | Member Libraries:**

- ❑ Member libraries are expected to participate in planning and financial support for the cost of such shared services as they use.
- ❑ Member libraries are expected to maintain and contribute to an up-to-date, appropriate catalog of their holdings for a union catalog.
- ❑ Member libraries are expected to provide borrowing privileges to patrons of other libraries in the System area as provided for in the System's Free Direct Access Plan.
- ❑ Member libraries are expected to participate in the Inter-library Loan service within the System area.
- ❑ Member libraries are expected to participate, to the extent possible, in the "Electronic Doorway Library" initiative of New York State.
- ❑ Member libraries are expected to provide, in a timely manner, the various reports required by the New York State Library.
- ❑ Member libraries are expected to encourage participation of their Director in Directors Association meetings and at least one System committee for the planning and improvement of System services.
- ❑ Member libraries are expected to keep their Trustees informed about events and services available from the System and to keep the System informed of the services they desire.

**Approved: September 2000**

## Mid-Hudson Library System and Poughkeepsie Public Library District

### Central Library Plan: January 1, 2012 - December 31, 2016

**The central library plan describes the services funded by state aid for central library development aid and central book aid.**

#### **Element 1 – Digital Collection Development**

1. Goal Statement: A system-wide digital collection will be developed in response to member library needs.
2. Intended Result(s):
  - The Central Library will collaborate with member libraries and MHLS to review and select appropriate non-fiction adult system-wide digital collections that are affordable and cost-effective.
3. Evaluation Method(s):
  - Biannual advisory committee review and analysis of patron use.
  - Survey member library satisfaction with digital collection selection, affordability, and cost.
  - Quarterly reports to the MHLS Board of Trustees.
  - Advisory committee will determine ways to validate patron satisfaction

#### **Element 2 – Public Service Staff Training and Education**

1. Goal Statement: Member library services in targeted areas of collection development and reference services will reflect best practices.
2. Intended Result(s):
  - Member library staff will have the skills and understanding to provide effective reference service to patrons.
  - Member libraries will employ best practices in developing their collections.
3. Evaluation Method(s):
  - Ongoing advisory committee review of training and education, number of sessions and number of participants, topics covered, and participant evaluations.
  - Surveys of participants for selected sessions to determine levels of change in participant behavior, skills and knowledge.
  - Quarterly reports to the MHLS Board of Trustees.

#### **Element 3 – Collection Management and Use Analysis**

1. Goal Statement: Member libraries will have access to training and tools for collection analysis.
2. Intended Result(s): Member libraries will be provided:
  - Opportunities to learn about managing reference and non-fiction collections.
  - Evaluation and analysis.
3. Evaluation Method(s):
  - Annual advisory committee review of the number of member library collections evaluated remotely and on-site.

## Mid-Hudson Library System and Poughkeepsie Public Library District

- Survey member library satisfaction for the opportunities to learn about collection management and the evaluation and analysis provided them, and for the levels of change in member library behavior, skills or knowledge.
- Quarterly reports to the MHLS Board of Trustees.

### **Element 4 – Reference Services**

1. Goal Statement: Member libraries will have supplemental reference support.
2. Intended Result(s): Member libraries will have expanded resources and services to assist their patrons.
3. Evaluation Method(s):
  - Annual advisory committee review and analysis of resources and service.
  - Survey member library satisfaction of supplemental reference support.
  - Quarterly reports to the MHLS Board of Trustees.
  - Advisory committee will determine ways to validate patron satisfaction

### **Element 5 – Delivery and Interlibrary Loan**

1. Goal Statement: Member libraries will have access to regional and national collections.
2. Intended Result(s):
  - Member libraries will provide their patrons affordable access to materials outside of their libraries.
3. Evaluation Method(s):
  - Evaluated as stated in the MHLS Plan of Service at Element 1 Section 4.5.
  - Quarterly reports to the MHLS Board of Trustees.

### **Element 6: Supplemental Adult Non-Fiction Collections**

1. Goal Statement: Member libraries will have access to adult non-fiction materials that supplement their collections.
2. Intended Result(s):
  - Central Library Book Aid (CBA) funds will be used to purchase circulating non-fiction materials in high-demand and targeted subject areas.
3. Evaluation Method(s):
  - Annual advisory committee assessment of CBA purchases, including usage statistics.

*Goal Statements and Intended Results developed by Central Library staff, MHLS staff and MHLS Central Library / Collection Development Advisory Committee 6/7/11. Full plan reviewed by the MHLS System Funding Task Force 6/23/11 and the MHLS Trustees Planning and Personnel Committee 6/28/11.*

# Public Relations and Advocacy

From the Handbook for Library Trustees of New York State 2010 Edition by Jerry Nichols

**As the citizen control over the public library, the board of trustees has a responsibility for telling the library's story to the taxpayers, donors and funding bodies that support it.** Even the best programs and services are of limited value if people don't know about them. Conversely, people are more likely to support programs they understand, value and use.

More traditional publicity avenues include newsletters, public service announcements and feature stories on radio, television and newspapers. **Personal communication is always the most effective way to get the library's message across in a meaningful fashion.** Trustees are leaders in the community and must be prepared to discuss the importance of the library at every opportunity.

**Public relations also involve partnerships.** Trustees should look for ways to form networks and coalitions of library advocates. Many other organizations, such as the school district, service clubs, the chamber of commerce and local social service agencies have a vested interest in a strong and vital community library.

A critical aspect of public relations is **legislative advocacy**. Elected officials want to be invited to public events at the library and they should be on the mailing list for all library publications. Dynamic boards and trustees write, call and visit their elected officials frequently. Trustees are in a unique position to be effective in the governmental arena because they are citizen volunteers with no direct financial stake in library funding decisions. **Trustees keep the library's financial needs in front of elected officials.** Of course there are many other non-financial issues at the local, state, and federal level that affect libraries. Zoning ordinances, labor law, copyright, telecommunications rules, environmental regulations, censorship and many other issues can have an impact on libraries and trustees must ensure that the library's interests are well represented.

Many trustees **support library lobbying** through their active membership in the **Library Trustees Association of New York State (LTA), New York Library Association (NYLA) and New Yorkers for Better Libraries PAC.**

