

# MHLS Operational Relationships

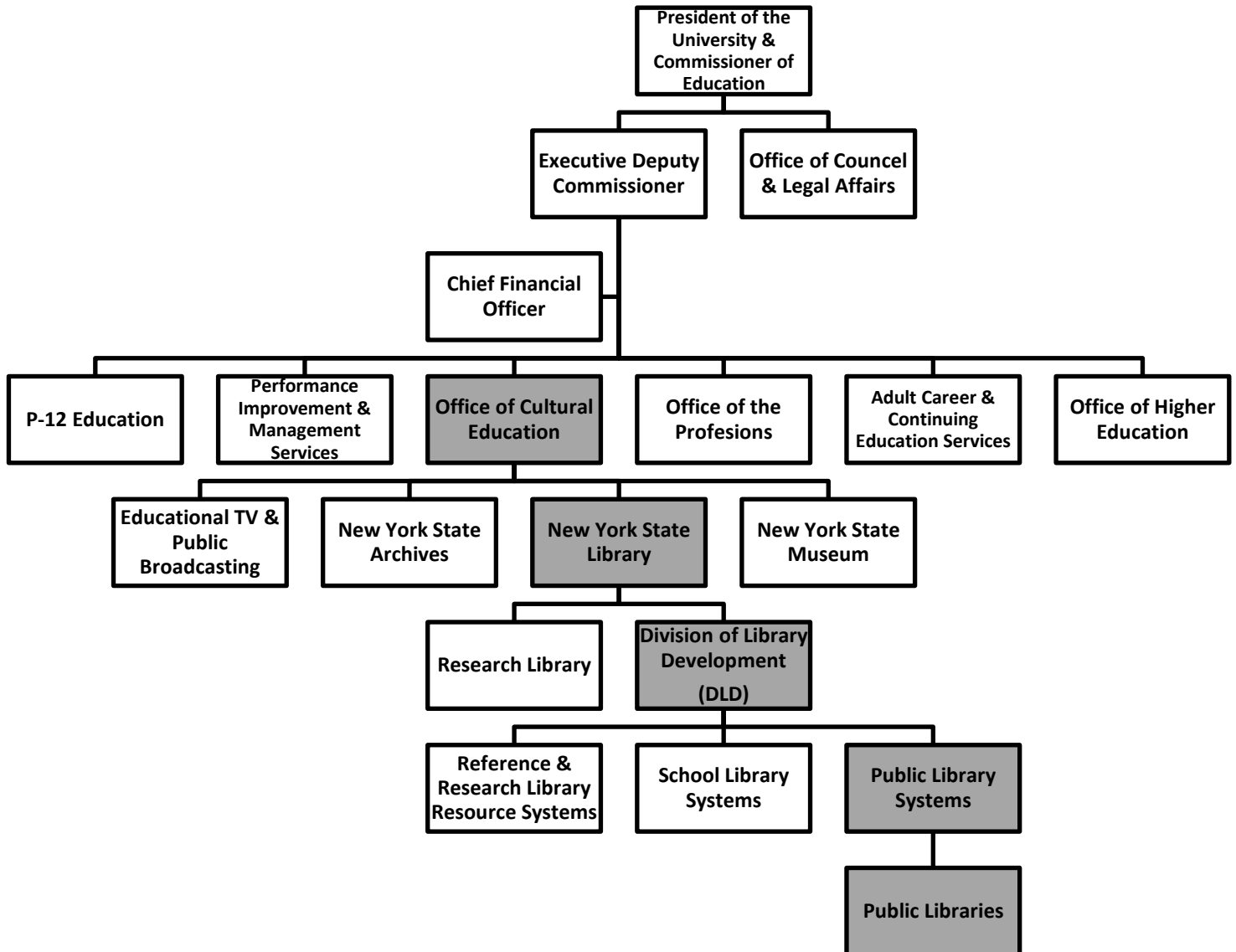
**Mid-Hudson Library System Board of Trustees  
2019 Orientation Program**

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# Library Infrastructure in New York State

## BOARD OF REGENTS





## **Mid-Hudson Library System Plan of Service 2017-2021** **Free Direct Access Plan**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Free Direct Access Plan (FDAP) is a State approved agreement between the Mid-Hudson Library System (MHLS) 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 FDAP reflects MHLS's commitment that no resident in the area served by MHLS 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 FDAP provides the process for member libraries to identify and place restrictions on excessive and unfair use of resources that have a negative impact on services a member library provides their resident borrowers<sup>1</sup>.

MHLS serves 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 are MHLS members and the remaining four libraries are Ramapo-Catskill Library System members.

### ***1. Describe how all individuals residing within the boundaries of the system but outside a member public library's chartered service area will receive library services.***

- A. All residents in the area served by MHLS 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 any member library to all eligible residents in the area served by MHLS.
- B. Exceptions to Direct Access: MHLS member libraries may implement, at their discretion, the following limited restrictions, on individuals residing outside the library chartered to serve area for services funded with local public funds<sup>2</sup>.
  - 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, pilot or experimental collections to the residents of their taxing district, (such as e-readers, equipment, and museum passes), in compliance with MHLS Resource Sharing Standards<sup>3</sup>.

The entitlement to library services and borrowing privileges outlined in this FDAP shall be forfeited by any individual who fails to observe the rules and regulations or follow the policies of MHLS member libraries and/or MHLS.

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<sup>1</sup> CR 90.3 (a) - Resident borrower is defined as an individual who resides within the boundaries of the chartered service area of a public library as defined in section 253 of the Education Law and who is a library cardholder at that library.

<sup>2</sup>Local Public Funds are funds reported by a MHLS member library as local public operating fund receipts in the library's Annual Report for Public and Association Libraries to the State of New York.

<sup>3</sup> Special collections, such as e-readers, equipment, and museum passes may be excluded from the holds system and that checkout and check in of said items be done only at the owning library. Pilot or experimental collections may be non-requestable for a period of six months. ~Approved by MHLS Directors Association 9/7/2012.



**2. Describe (a) how the system will assure that those persons living within the system boundaries in an area where a member library chooses to withdraw from the system, or (b) where a chartered and registered library was never a member of the system, will be served by the system.**

- A. In the event a library withdraws from MHLS, residents of the library's chartered service area will continue to be entitled to on-site access as specified in #1, above, including the Exceptions to Direct Access.
- B. Residents served by a newly chartered and registered library which have not joined MHLS, will be entitled to on-site access as specified in #1, above, including the Exceptions to Direct Access.

**3. Describe what the system considers serious inequities and hardship and the criteria used by the system to make the determination.**

- A. MHLS considers "serious inequities and hardships" to be those conditions which adversely affect residents of the chartered areas of member libraries and/or significantly deprive resident borrowers of the opportunity to borrow library materials.
- B. The criteria used by the system to make the determination of serious inequities and hardship are:
  - 1) Excessive use of a library's collection by residents outside the library's chartered to serve area.
  - 2) Excessive use of a library's collection by residents of a single geographic and/or administrative area<sup>4</sup> outside the library's chartered to serve area which is: (1) served by a chartered public library, and (2) does not provide equitable funding<sup>5</sup> for library services.
  - 3) Excessive use of a library's collection by residents of a geographic and/or administrative area that is: (1) not within a chartered public library service area, and (2) does not provide equitable funding<sup>6</sup> for library services by contract for library service with MHLS or a MHLS member library or MHLS member libraries.

**4. Describe what constitutes excessive out of chartered service area borrowing in the system.**

- A. MHLS considers "excessive out of chartered service area borrowing" to be:
  - 1) 51%<sup>7</sup> of the member library's total circulation based on a three-year average to residents of all geographic and/or administrative areas<sup>8</sup> outside the library's chartered service area.
  - 2) 40%<sup>9</sup> of the member library's total circulation based on a three-year average to residents of a single geographic and/or administrative area<sup>10</sup> which is: (1) served by a chartered public library, and (2) does not provide equitable funding<sup>11</sup> for library services.
  - 3) 5%<sup>12</sup> of a member library's total circulation based on a three-year average to residents of a geographic and/or administrative area<sup>13</sup> that is: (1) not within a chartered public library service area, and (2) does not provide equitable funding<sup>14</sup> for library services by contract with MHLS or a MHLS member library or MHLS libraries.

<sup>4</sup> ILS Town Code data is used to determine geographic or administrative area(s).

<sup>5</sup> *Equitable funding* of library services is defined as the average Total Local Public Funds per capita for all MHLS member libraries within the county they are located, based on the average of the last three years, as reported by MHLS member libraries in their Annual Report for Public and Association Libraries to the State of New York.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Percent same as current Direct Access Plan; Percentage based on ILS Circulation Data by Terminal & Town Code

<sup>8</sup> ILS Town Code

<sup>9</sup> Percent same as current Direct Access Plan; Percentage based on ILS Circulation by Terminal & Town Code

<sup>10</sup> ILS Town Code

<sup>11</sup> *Equitable funding* (see footnote 5)

<sup>12</sup> Percent same as current Direct Access Plan; Percentage based on ILS Circulation by Terminal & Town Cod

<sup>13</sup> ILS Town Code

<sup>14</sup> *Equitable funding* (see footnote 5)



## 5. *Unserved and Underserved Populations*

### **5.a -Describe the unserved<sup>15</sup> and the underserved<sup>16</sup> populations within the system.**

Unserved populations exist in some areas of Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, and Ulster Counties. Putnam County has no unserved population. The unserved area of the Town of Union Vale contracts with MHLS for funding neighboring libraries. The areas of unserved populations have been mapped by the NYSED Division of Library Development: <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/libs/pldtools/plsmaps/mhls.htm>

There are currently no underserved populations within MHLS (see 5.b, below, for MHLS criteria to identify underserved populations).

### **5.b -Describe the criteria used by the system to identify libraries having an inadequate level of local income to support delivery of acceptable library services (underserved). List those libraries so identified.**

The MHLS criteria for determining an “inadequate level of local income to support delivery of acceptable library services (underserved)”, is the member library’s ability to comply with minimum standards for public libraries as described in New York State education law and New York State Commissioner’s Regulations ([http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/excerpts/finished\\_regs/902.htm](http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/excerpts/finished_regs/902.htm)). Each member library reports on their compliance with the NYS minimum standards in their Annual Report for Public and Association Libraries to the State of New York. If the library is in compliance with the minimum standards, or if the Commissioner of Education has granted a waiver from one or more of the standards, the library is deemed to have an adequate level of support.

### **5.c-Describe the actions the system will take to expand the availability of library services to unserved and underserved individuals residing within the boundaries of the system.**

MHLS and its member libraries have a successful history of sharing resources and providing library services to residents in the area served by MHLS, including persons in unserved areas. MHLS will assist libraries in securing sustainable funding so they can better serve library patrons, including residents in unserved areas. MHLS will provide consulting services to member libraries and report to the MHLS Board of Trustees and the MHLS Directors Association regarding unserved areas. MHLS will work with member libraries to advocate for and to negotiate fair and equitable contracts with unserved communities in order to ensure the availability of library service for the residents of underserved communities. MHLS will work with member libraries serving residents in unserved areas to ensure adherence with the FDAP, which guarantees no resident in the area served by MHLS will be excluded from direct or on-site access to library resources.

### **5.d-Provide a timetable for such actions**

All of the efforts in 5.c will be ongoing.

### **5.e-Identify who will be responsible for carrying out these actions.**

The MHLS Executive Director, MHLS Assistant Director, and the MHLS Coordinator for Library Sustainability will be primarily responsible for carrying out these actions.

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<sup>15</sup> CR 90.3 (a) - Unserved 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.

<sup>16</sup> CR 90.3 (a) - 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.



**6. Describe the conditions under which modifications to the free direct access plan can be made:**

**6.a-Without the prior approval of the Commissioner of Education.**

- (1) MHLS member libraries that experience excessive out of chartered service area borrowing, as defined in Section 4, above, may submit to the MHLS Executive Director a claim of serious inequities and hardship. A claim must: (1) be in writing; (2) be based on the official approval of the claim by the member library's board of trustees at a public meeting; and (3) include documented efforts by the library director and board of trustees to secure adequate support from the area(s) in its claim of serious inequities and hardships.
- (2) MHLS will act within 90 days on a claim of serious inequities and hardships as defined in Section 4, above.
  - a) On receipt of a claim, MHLS staff will verify the levels of library use leading to the claim, as well as, verify any other criteria in the claim that may be applied under the FDAP. Verification by MHLS will be transparent but authoritative.
  - b) The MHLS Executive Director will report MHLS findings regarding the claim to the director and board of trustees of the member library submitting the claim.
  - c) The MHLS Board of Trustees will review, at a public meeting of the Board, all claims of serious inequities and hardships submitted to MHLS and the findings of MHLS staff regarding a claim. The MHLS Board will decide if a claim of serious inequities and hardship is valid.
- (3) Based on the MHLS Board accepting a claim of serious inequities and hardship as valid, MHLS staff will confer with the MHLS Directors Association to implement one or more of the following:
  - a) Restrict system wide loaning of non-print materials;
  - b) Restrict loan of printed materials less than one-year old from acquisition date.

**6.b-With the prior approval of the Commissioner of Education.**

- (1) Proposed restrictions to library service or access beyond those defined in this FDAP, must be approved by MHLS Board of Trustees and the MHLS Directors Association prior to transmission to the Commissioner of Education for approval.
- (2) A request for restrictions beyond those defined in this FDAP must be accompanied by the following, in a form acceptable to the Division of Library Development:
  - a) Documentation of the completion of the serious inequities and hardships claim process as described in 6.a, above;
  - b) A clear description of the proposed restrictions and modifications to the FDAP being requested provided such modifications do not include charging for library services;
  - c) Description of the anticipated impact on resident and non-resident<sup>17</sup> borrowers after modifications are approved and implemented;
  - d) Provision of a time frame for the beginning and end of such restrictions and modifications to the FDAP.

**7. Describe how the system will assure that member libraries are complying with the system free direct access plan approved by a majority of member libraries.**

- A. Based on the recommendation of the MHLS Directors Association, the adoption by the MHLS Board of Trustees, and the approval by the Commissioner of Education, the FDAP will be distributed to all member libraries and posted on the MHLS website. MHLS will lead a discussion on the approved

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<sup>17</sup> CR 90.3 (a) - 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 Education Law and who is a library cardholder at that library or at another member library system or who is a system cardholder.



FDAP at a regular meeting of the MHLS Directors Association to review the plan in detail and reinforce the importance of compliance with the plan. MHLS staff will be responsive to any queries or concerns regarding the FDAP.

- B. MHLS member libraries, Board of Trustees, and staff recognize the MHLS Plan of Service, of which this FDAP is a part, is an agreement between MHLS and the State Education Department and is required by Commissioner's Regulations 90.3 (a) through (d)(4).

**8. Describe how the system obtained member library input to the plan for free direct access.**

- A. The first draft of the FDAP was reviewed and discussed at the MHLS Directors Association meeting on June 2, 2016.
- B. Focus group sessions for member library directors to review and discuss the FDAP were held on June 3, 2016 and June 7, 2016.
- C. The Dutchess County Library Directors reviewed and discussed the FDAP at their meeting on June 8, 2016.
- D. The second draft of the FDAP was reviewed by the MHLS Board of Trustees, with comments collected by the MHLS Personnel & Planning Committee, during the period of June 9-23, 2016.
- E. Focus group sessions for member library directors to review and discuss the FDAP were held on July 6, 2016.
- F. The third draft of the FDAP was reviewed and discussed at the Directors Association meeting on July 12, 2016.
- G. The third draft of the FDAP was reviewed and discussed at the MHLS Board meeting on July 13, 2016.
- H. Focus group sessions for member library directors to review and discuss the FDAP were held on August 4, 2016 (10 AM) and August 10, 2016 (2 PM).
- I. The final draft of the FDAP was reviewed and approved by Personnel & Planning Committee in August 2016.
- J. The final draft of the FDAP was reviewed and approved at the Directors Association meeting on September 7, 2016.
- K. The final draft of the FDAP was reviewed and approved at the MHLS Board meeting on September 14, 2016.

**Approved by the MHLS Board of Trustees – September 14, 2016**

**Approved by the New York State Library – November 7, 2016**

# Mid-Hudson Library System Service Area

## Greene County

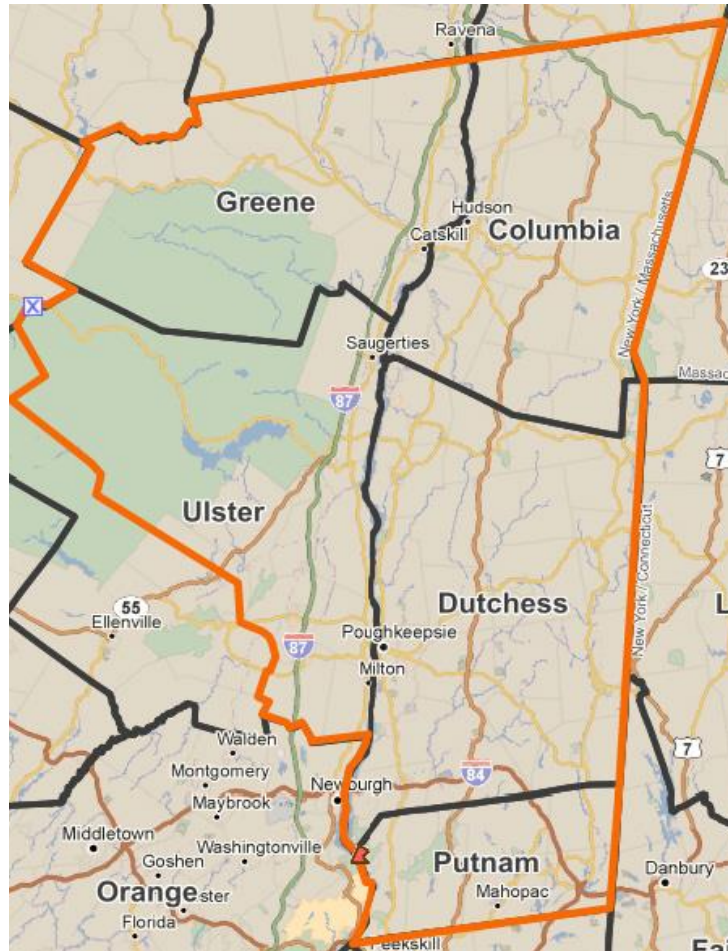
- D.R. Evarts Library (Athens)
- Cairo Public Library
- Catskill Public Library & Palenville Branch Library
- Heermance Memorial Library (Coxsackie)
- Greenville Public Library
- Mountain Top Library (Tannersville)
- Hunter Public Library
- Windham Public Library

## Ulster County

- Town of Esopus Library
- Highland Public Library & Clintondale Branch Library
- Hurley Library
- Kingston Library
- Kingston Library
- Marlboro Free Library
- Sarah Hull Hallock Free Library (Milton)
- Elting Memorial Library (New Paltz)
- Olive Free Library Association
- Phoenicia Library
- Morton Memorial (Pine Hill)
- Plattekill Library
- Rosendale Library
- Saugerties Public Library
- Stone Ridge Library
- Town of Ulster Public Library
- West Hurley Public Library
- Woodstock Public Library District

## Putnam County

- Reed Memorial Library (Carmel)
- Julia L. Butterfield Memorial Library (Cold Spring)
- Brewster Public Library
- Desmond/Fish Library (Garrison)
- Kent Public Library
- Mahopac Public Library
- Patterson Library
- Putnam Valley Free Library



## Columbia County

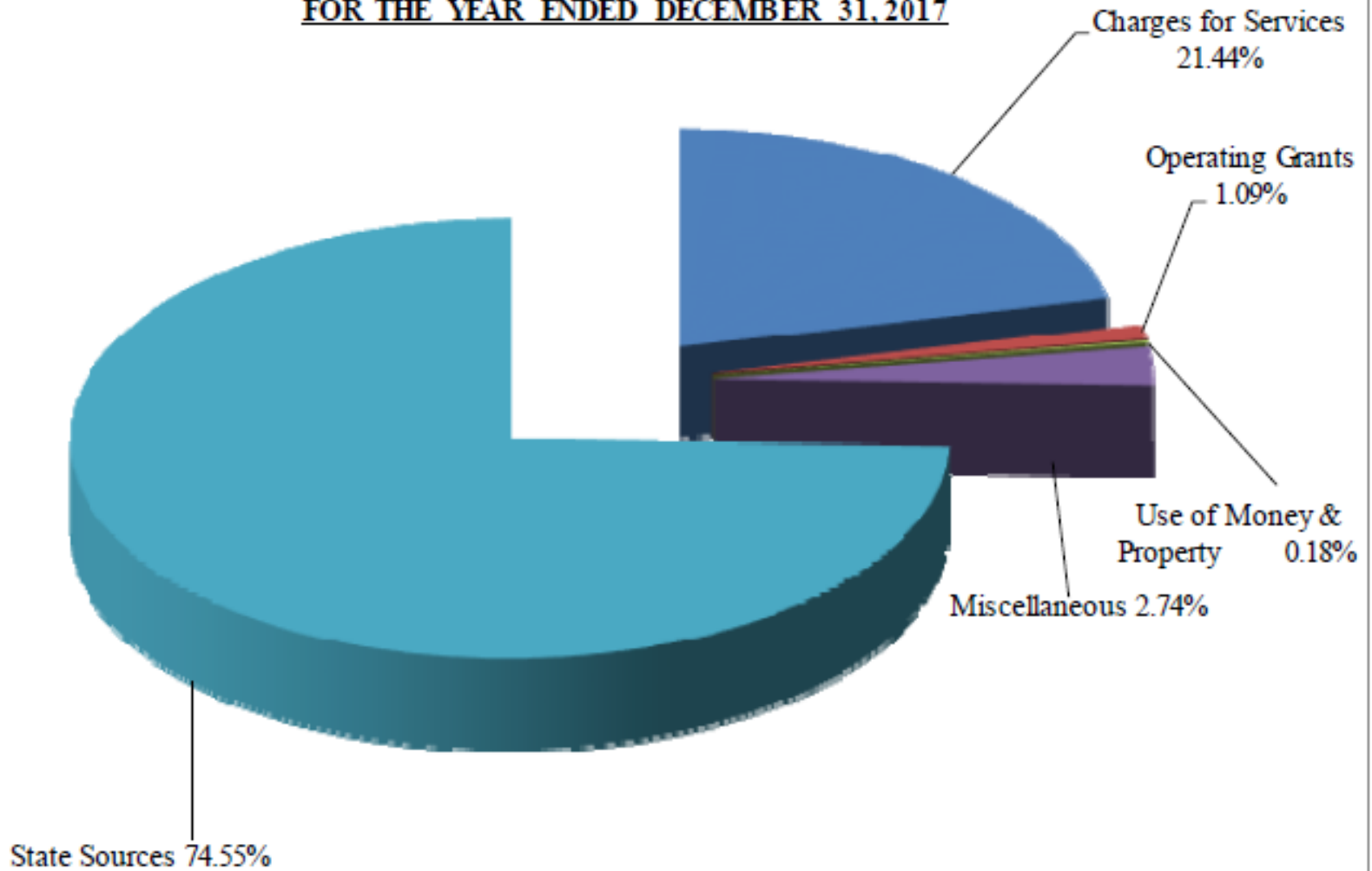
- Chatham Public Library & Canaan Branch
- Claverack Free Library
- Germantown Library
- Roeliff Jansen Community Library
- Hudson Area Association Library
- Kinderhook Memorial Library
- Livingston Free Library
- New Lebanon Library
- North Chatham Free Library
- Philmont Public Library
- Valatie Free Library

## Dutchess County

- Amenia Free Library
- Howland Public Library (Beacon)
- Beekman Library
- Clinton Community Library
- Dover Plains Library
- East Fishkill Community Library
- Blodgett Memorial Library (Fishkill)
- Hyde Park Public Library District
- LaGrange Association Library
- Millbrook Library
- Northeast-Millerton Library
- Pawling Free Library
- Pine Plains Free Library
- Pleasant Valley Library
- Poughkeepsie Public Library District: Adriaance & Boardman Rd.
- Red Hook Public Library
- Starr Library (Rhinebeck)
- Morton Memorial Library and Community House (Rhinecliff)
- Staatsburg Library
- Stanford Free Library
- Tivoli Free Library
- Grinnell Public Library District (Wappingers Falls)



**SOURCES OF REVENUES  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017**



Source: MHLS 2017 Audit [<http://board.midhudson.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/2017-12-31-Audit.pdf>]

# Mid-Hudson Library System Billing Explained

## Funds Paid to MHLS

MHLS is a cooperative library system in which its members invest local dollars to support the System services they rely on to provide quality library service to their communities and participate in group purchasing opportunities. MHLS also bills libraries for elective, fee-for-services such as web site hosting and tech support contracts.

- **Assessment Fees** (billed bi-monthly)
  - January, March, May, July, September, November
  - The links to the Member Assessment Table and E-Resources cost Shares are available at: <https://da.midhudson.org/>
  
- **Databases & Elective Services**
  - January
    - (if applicable) Web Hosting
    - (if applicable) Tech Support contracts
  
  - March or April: (if applicable) TitleSource
  
  - July
    - Mango Languages
    - (if applicable) SAM – public terminal management software
  
  - October: (if applicable) Teleforms (automated patron notices via phone)
  
  - November: TumbleBooks (ebooks for children)

## 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:

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## **Mid-Hudson Library System Plan of Service 2017-2021** **Central Library Plan**

The Central Library Plan describes the services funded by the state aid programs Central Library Development Aid (CLDA) and Central Book Aid (CBA).

The Poughkeepsie Public Library District's Adriance Memorial Library is the Central Library for the Mid-Hudson Library System. As such, the Library's staff provides a variety of supplemental reference and training services as well as circulating non-fiction collections to the member libraries and the correctional facilities.

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

1. Goal Statement: The Central Library will assist in the provision of a system-wide digital collection will be developed in response to member library needs.
2. Intended Result(s):
  - Member libraries and their patrons will have access to non-fiction adult system-wide digital collections and content that are affordable and cost effective.
  - Member libraries will have coordinated training and promotional opportunities designed to increase usage of database collections and content 3% - 5%, on average, each year.
3. Evaluation Methods:
  - The Central Library in collaboration with the Central Library & Collection Development Advisory Committee will annually review and revise its recommendations for digital collections and content.
  - The Central Library will work with MHLS staff (and/or collections and content vendors) to develop accurate usage statistics.
  - To the extent practical, the Central Library will use PLA's Project Outcome tools to determine patron perspectives on digital collections and content provided with Central Library funds.
  - The average wait time for accessing digital collections and content shall not exceed that for print materials with the goal to be a shorter wait time. The number of maximum holds, determined by the holds ratio, will be reviewed and revised annually.

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

1. Goal Statement: The Central Library will provide best practices training in targeted areas of collection development and reference services.
2. Intended Result(s):
  - Through Central Library training and education, member library staff will have the skills and understanding to provide effective reference service to patrons.
  - Through Central Library training and education, member libraries will employ best practices in developing their collections.
3. Evaluation Methods:
  - The Central Library will publish weekly Tuesday's Tips (or similar reference tip sheets) for member library staff.
  - The Central Library, in collaboration with the Central Library & Collection Development Advisory Committee, will provide county-level training opportunities at least annually which relate to an element related to professional services focusing on reference and collection development.



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

1. Goal Statement: The Central Library will provide training and tools for collection analysis.
  - Intended Result(s): Member libraries will learn about managing library collections.
  - Member libraries will be provided with data-driven use analysis of collections.
2. Evaluation Methods:
  - The Central Library, in collaboration with MHLS staff and the Central Library & Collection Development Advisory Committee, will create and outcomes-based survey which will be provided to every library engaged in either individual or group collection analysis. Feedback will provide guidance to the Central Library on areas of success, necessary improvements, and overall relevance of the service.

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

1. Goal Statement: The Central Library will provide supplemental reference support through third-party OPAC enhancements.
2. Intended Result(s): Member libraries will have expanded resources and services to assist member library patrons in the use of the online catalog (OPAC).
3. Evaluation Methods:
  - The Central Library, in collaboration with the Central Library & Collection Development Advisory Committee, will provide supplemental content to the OPAC designed to improve the patron discovery experience.

### **Element 5 – Delivery**

1. Goal Statement: The Central Library will assist in access to local and regional collections through coordinated delivery services.
2. Intended Result(s):
  - Member libraries patrons will received affordable access to materials outside of their libraries.
3. Evaluation Method:
  - Delivery of requested and available items will be, on average, within three (3) days of request.

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

1. Goal Statement: The Central Library will provide adult non-fiction materials that supplement member library collections.
2. Intended Result(s):
  - Member libraries will have access to circulating non-fiction materials in high-demand and targeted subject areas not readily available at the local library. Areas of development will be based on a combination of aggregate age of collection area and popularity as determined by documented use.
3. Evaluation Method:
  - Central Library staff will annually prepare usage reports for CBA items purchased the prior year.
  - Central Library staff will annually recommend areas of the aggregate non-fiction collection that should be provided supplemental support by CBA funds.
  - The Central Library & Collection Development Advisory Committee will annually review areas of proposed collection development.

**Approved by the MHLS Board of Trustees – September 14, 2016**

**Approved by the New York State Library – November 7, 2016**

# Public Relations and Advocacy

*From the Handbook for Library Trustees of New York State, 2018 Edition*

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. It is important to keep in mind that residents are more likely to support programs they understand, value and use. As leaders in the community, trustees must be prepared to discuss the importance of the library at every opportunity.

**What's your "why"?** Personal connections and word-of-mouth are proven to be the most effective way to connect residents with the value of the library. How effectively do you speak not just about *what* the library offers but *why* the library offers the services and programs it does? Do you have a personal story of why the library is important to you or your family, or to another resident whose life was changed for the better? **Work to get very good at telling the story of why the library is important since this will truly resonate with your listeners.** Ensure you can deliver this "why statement" or "elevator/parking lot speech" concisely, so you will grab your audience's attention and effectively make your point...

...A critical aspect of public relations is **legislative advocacy**. Libraries can help elected officials understand the needs of a large portion of their constituents and should work proactively to invite legislators (local, county, state and federal) to the library. Elected officials 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 benefit from 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 advocacy through their **active membership** in the Library Trustees Association of New York State (LTA), the New York Library Association, and New Yorkers for Better Libraries.

