

LIBRARY OPERATING AID

REQUEST: \$176.8M

What is Library Operating Aid?

Statutory funding for use by each library type and system. State aid is leveraged by regional library systems to support eBook access, interlibrary loan, delivery, continuing education, coordination of collection development, automation, and other resource sharing activities.

Why is it Important?

New York's library systems are almost wholly funded by state aid. Without adequate aid, systems will be unable to provide member libraries with the shared resources they rely on to deliver consistent patron experiences. Without these resources, many of our state's libraries would be incapable of independent operation.

Where Are We Now?

- For FY 2026, Ed Law requires at least \$104.6M in State Aid for Libraries. New York has not met the formula-specified requirement since FY 2009.
- **More than \$155M in statutory State Library Aid has been withheld since FY 2007-2008, with over \$200M withheld since the formula's introduction in FY 1991-1992.**
- Persistent underfunding has disenfranchised millions of vulnerable New Yorkers who lack access to information resources and trusted, community-based information professionals..
- Operational costs and patron needs for new services are growing far faster than existing budgets can accommodate – stagnant or reduced funding will render the ability of libraries and systems to serve their patrons at current levels virtually impossible

Where Should We Be?

\$176.8 million in State Aid for Libraries to shore-up existing operations, expand collections via subscriptions and e-titles, retain new staff, and create comprehensive programming for beginners and advanced learners during a time of uncertainty for federal library funding that our State Library relies on.

If fully funded, libraries and their staff can expand their reach to ensure that library materials, programs, and services match the rapidly evolving needs of New Yorkers and their communities.