



MICHIGAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

MLA ADVOCACY AND LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE FY2026 ACTION PLAN

The Michigan Library Association leads, educates and advocates for the advancement of the Michigan library community. MLA is the collective voice for Michigan libraries, and we prioritize support for public, school and academic libraries through grassroots advocacy, lobbying and statewide publicity. We advocate for and protect library funding and monitor and respond to challenges and issues that impact our libraries' ability to serve our communities. MLA will place the three key categories below at a high priority in the work plan for FY2026:

Funding

- Property Taxes: Monitor property tax and local income tax funding structures for libraries.
 - Monitor and react to legislation that ensures the elimination of existing and new automatic tax captures.
 - Proactively provide legislators and libraries with information about library funding sources.
 - Work in partnership with MML, MTA, MAC and others to restore libraries' abilities under Headlee to roll up their millage rates to the amounts originally authorized by a vote of the people.
 - Maintain the ability to hold millage elections in key months of May, August and November.
- Penal Fines: Monitor, protect and reverse any efforts to provide legislation for parallel ordinances and other methods to siphon this funding, where appropriate.
 - Educate all parties (legislators, county treasurers, librarians, boards) on how this system works.
 - Promote transparency and consistency in reporting methods to libraries by the state and county treasurers.
 - Explore alternative sources of funding that move away from penal fines (must be stable, predictable, secure and equitable).
- State Aid: Protect and increase State Aid to Libraries in the FY2026 Appropriations
 - Prepare information for Appropriation Chairs and for testimony at budget hearings.
 - Set up individual meetings with key legislative leadership in March 2026.

Access to Information

- Intellectual Freedom: Protect intellectual freedom and the right to read. Continue to react and provide support for libraries experiencing censorship, election challenges and book bans. Codify the Freedom to Read legislation.
- Protect Privacy: Monitor and respond to any challenges to library users' privacy.
- Michigan eLibrary: Protect and advocate for continued federal funding support for the Michigan eLibrary (MeL) and Michigan eLibrary Catalog (MeLCat). Provide supporting resources to libraries to educate patrons on how MeL and MeLCat are funded.
- Universal Access to Broadband: Raise awareness of the digital divide and support rural broadband initiatives by expanding Broadband/Wi-Fi Access for libraries and identify funding opportunities. Seek out state and regional opportunities for partnership.
- Net Neutrality: Oppose legislation that would encumber the internet allowing inequity of speed and influence of content.
- K-12 Libraries: Support the Michigan Association of School Librarians' efforts to ensure libraries in K-12 schools are staffed by certified school librarians/media specialists.
- Literacy/Early Childhood Education: Explore options to promote and secure funding for libraries' participation in early childhood education, digital literacy and digital citizenship.
- Digital Content: Advocate against e-book publishing practices that restrict libraries from access to new releases and price gouging.
- Open Meetings Act: Support legislation that will allow library and cooperative boards to attend and participate in meetings on a virtual basis.

Member Advocacy Development

- Facilitate Member Advocacy: Host a statewide Advocacy Day for library personnel and legislators.
 - Provide advocacy training and talking points for legislative visits.
 - Provide post-Advocacy Day opportunities for further engagement between libraries and legislators.
 - Encourage library workers to invite legislators to office hours, library tours, summer reading kickoff programs and to read a book during March is Reading Month.