



LEADING THE ADVANCEMENT OF ALL  
MICHIGAN LIBRARIES THROUGH ADVOCACY,  
EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

April 10, 2023

Michigan libraries need increased and secured funding to provide the innovative and indispensable services Michigan communities both need and demand.

In 1977, the State Aid to Public Libraries Act (Act 89 of 1977) was enacted “to provide for the establishment of cooperative libraries; to prescribe the powers and duties of the department of history, arts, and libraries; to provide state aid for public libraries participating in cooperative libraries; to prescribe the powers and duties of cooperative library boards; to provide an appropriation; and to repeal acts and parts of acts,” and funding for public libraries and cooperatives was set at \$0.50 per capita. Based on the rate of inflation, \$0.50 per capita in 1977 should be equivalent to approximately \$2.50 per capita in 2023. Yet, it has taken 46 years to reach \$0.50 per capita.

Each fiscal year, the state appropriation process establishes the amount for State Aid to Public Libraries (State Aid). The Library of Michigan, housed in the Department of Education (MDE), administers State Aid. The Statutory formula for State Aid grants is based mainly on the state’s population and paid based on per capita rates. Changes in the state’s population alter the appropriation necessary to fully fund grant awards which make up approximately 5-10% of a library’s revenue. One-third of the State Aid allocation goes directly to public libraries for staff salaries, programs, purchases, and other activities. Another third goes to the state’s 11 library cooperatives. The final third also goes to the cooperatives that use those funds for collaborative projects/purchases for their regional members. The FY23 amount of State Aid is \$15,567,700 Million and the Governor’s proposed budget for FY24 remains flat.

State Aid helps our library systems continue their mission to provide education, training, and resources to Michigan residents. Every Michigander needs convenient and timely access to the world of information – print, digital and electronic. We must continue to advocate for the resources that make our libraries innovative and essential in today’s world.

It is now time to increase the state’s financial investment to keep our 397 public library systems viable and strong in each of our Michigan communities.

Sincerely,

Deborah E. Mikula  
Executive Director, Michigan Library Association