



NYLA 2016 BUDGET PRIORITY – STATE LIBRARY AID

Increase State Library Aid Proportionally with Increases in Education Funding

Background:

- New York State Education Law requires Library Aid for FY 2016-2017 to be \$102.6M, based on the most recent census data. Total funding in last year's enacted budget was \$91.6M. This places library aid below year 2000 funding levels.
- In this year's Executive Budget, Governor Cuomo proposed a nearly \$1B increase in total education funding, but proposed flat funding for State Library Aid.

Messaging:

- **LIBRARIES ARE EDUCATION:** Libraries are a core component of our state's educational infrastructure, and state library aid should increase each year in proportion to increases in education funding
 - A January 2015 Siena Poll found that **94% of New Yorkers say their local library is an important part of our education system**, with **nearly half saying library aid should increase proportionately to increase in education funding**.
 - Libraries are chartered by the same Board of Regents that oversees schools, colleges, BOCES and other educational institutions, and library aid is administered through the NYS Department of Education. Libraries are the leading digital literacy educators in New York State. When schools close at the end of each day, each week and each school year, libraries remain open to New York's children and families.
 - According to New York Public Library, the most circulated book in The Bronx for 2015 was a test prep guide for the high school equivalency exam.
- **Library usage and demand for services are surging**
 - A January 2015 Siena Poll found library usage is up: 10% statewide, 15% among women respondents aged 18-34, nearly 15% among African-American respondents, 15% among Latino respondents, and among all income demographics, with usage up 20% for those households making less than \$50,000 annually.
- **Libraries are critical for access and equality**
 - The same January 2015 Siena poll found for nearly 33% of African-American and Latino respondents, and 25% of households making less than \$50,000 annually, the public library is their **primary source of internet access**;
 - Of the respondents who have used their local public library for job seeking or career building programs in the last six months, 53% were African-American, and 40% were households making less than \$50,000 annually
 - State Library Aid ensures that **every** community has access to the quality library services our children, families and seniors deserve
- **Libraries and library systems are models of shared services** and collaborative planning. According to the State Education Department, local communities realize \$7 in services for every \$1 allocated in state aid.