WHAT IS A PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM?

New York State's 23 public library systems are State-funded consortia that support over 1,000 public library outlets.

Public Library Systems provide cooperative programs and services that help local public libraries offer cost-effective information services to residents.

Public Library Systems facilitate resource sharing among their member public libraries.

TYPES OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEMS:

There are three types of public library systems in New York State:

CONSOLIDATED SYSTEMS: (3) Chartered as a single entity under a board of trustees (Brooklyn, The New York Public Library, and Queens Borough Public Library).

FEDERATED SYSTEMS: (4) Created by action of the board or boards of supervisors or legislature of the county or counties involved while member libraries retain their own charters (Buffalo & Erie, Clinton-Essex-Franklin, Monroe, and Onondaga).

COOPERATIVE SYSTEMS: (16) An association created by agreement of boards of chartered member libraries, which retain their autonomy.

Systems qualify for State aid based on an approved five-year Plan of Service, annual budgets and annual reports. A portion of the State Aid is direct aid for member libraries.

NEW YORK STATE'S PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEMS

- Brooklyn Public Library **(718) 230-2403**
- Buffalo & Erie County Public Library **(716) 858-8900**
- Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System **(716) 484-7135**
- Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System **(518) 563-5190**
- Finger Lakes Library System **(607) 273-4074**
- Four County Library System **(607) 723-8236**
- Mid-Hudson Library System **(845) 471-6060**
- Mid-York Library System **(315) 735-8328**
- Mohawk Valley Library System **(518) 355-2010**
- Monroe County Library System **(585) 428-8046**
- Nassau Library System **(516) 292-8920**
- The New York Public Library **(212) 930-0674**
- Nioga Library System **(716) 434-6167**
- North Country Library System **(315) 782-5540**
- Onondaga County Public Library **(315) 435-1800**
- Pioneer Library System **(585) 394-8260**
- Queens Borough Public Library **(718) 990-0700**
- Ramapo Catskill Library System **(845) 343-1131**
- Southern Adirondack Library System **(518) 584-7300**
- Southern Tier Library System **(607) 962-3141**
- Suffolk Cooperative Library System **(631) 286-1600**
- Upper Hudson Library System **(518) 437-9880**
- Westchester Library System **(914) 674-3600**

Public Library Systems promote literacy and provide services to 19 million people statewide.

Public library systems facilitate sharing of library resources so all New Yorkers have access to information and library services that advance and enhance their lives as workers, citizens, family members, and lifelong learners. Systems provide cooperative programs and services that help local communities take advantage of economies of scale. System staff provide professional expertise that helps local libraries achieve their full potential.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In the late 1950s, the State Legislature and Governor authorized the establishment of Public Library Systems in Education Law. Governance and function are established in the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. Each Public Library System is governed by a board of trustees.

The State created library systems to expand the resources of all local libraries enabling them to buy services and share resources cooperatively. Most of the 23 public library systems are supported entirely by State Aid. Systems qualify for aid based on an approved five-year plan of service and annual budgets and reports. A portion of the State Aid is direct aid for member libraries. For more information on state aid programs for systems visit: www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/stateaid/

PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEMS SERVICES:

Public Library Systems provide a wide range of direct support services to public libraries and branches:

- Computer networks for managing circulation and accessing online catalogs
- Interlibrary loan and frequent deliveries of resources
- Free direct access to resources in various formats
- Latest technology services, telecommunication services, and access to commercial databases including the New York Online Virtual Electronic Library (NOVELNY)
- Central Library that provides extended hours, and research and reference collections
- Outreach and literacy services for individuals and groups in need of services such as job and educational information, educational programs, adaptations for people who are disabled, aged, incarcerated or residing in institutions.
- Access to books and print library materials in large print and non-print formats; assistance with registration and service from the NYS Talking Book & Braille Library (Upstate); The New York Public Library's Andrew Heiskell Braille & Talking Book Library or the Long Island Talking Book Library (NYC and Long Island).
- Staff expertise in areas such as library law, library budgeting and management, technology, collection development, youth services and outreach
- Professional development and training for library staff and trustees
- Annual Statewide Summer Reading Program in coordination with the New York State Library

FACTS ABOUT PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEMS:

- Serve over 19 million people statewide.
- Serve 755 public libraries.
- Operate 144 bookmobiles, reading centers and other community outlets extending services to people in correctional facilities, nursing homes, urban and rural areas.
- Facilitate more than 3 million inter-library loan and resource-sharing requests annually.
- Provide access to NOVELny, other electronic information databases and e-books.
- Provide professional development and training opportunities for library staff and trustees.
- Connect with the New York State Library, school library systems, reference and research library resource councils, and school, academic and special libraries for access to specialized resources.
- For every $1 in state funding at the system, library systems generate $13 in services for the public
- Libraries and library systems are a $1.6 billion industry in New York State, generating another $3 billion in economic activity

For more information on Public Library Systems and public libraries:

Visit the New York State Library website at:
www.nysl.nysed.gov

Find your public library's web site at:
www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/libs/publibs

Call the Division of Library Development at the New York State Library: **(518) 474-7890**

or Contact Your Local Public Library System

NOVELNY
New York Online Virtual Electronic Library

Visit the NOVELny web site at:
novelnewyork.org

NEW YORK STATE'S PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEMS

Improving information literacy, educational achievement, economic development, and quality of life for all New Yorkers.

NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY

The University of the State of New York
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
New York State Library · Division of Library Development
Albany, NY 12230 · www.nysl.nysed.gov
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