

Impact of Cuts on School Libraries

Gov. Christie's budget calls for a 74% decrease in funding for statewide library services. Although primarily targeted at public libraries, these cuts include the elimination of all statewide library programs and services. What does this mean to school libraries in NJ?

The following services available through school libraries to students and staff will be lost:

Online subscription databases, such as **EBSCO** that includes **Academic Search Premier, Points Of View, Student Resource Center, MasterFile Premier, ERIC, Biography Collection Complete, Literary Reference Center, Science Reference Center, Professional Development Collection, History Reference Center, TOPICsearch**, and more will cease on July 1, 2010. Students will not have access to these valuable and expensive databases that have been provided to all NJ school libraries at no cost.

Statewide interlibrary loan and delivery of library materials will cease on July 1, 2010. Students and staff will not be able to have books delivered from other NJ libraries.

The **Talking Book and Braille Center**, previously known as the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, will close on July 1, 2012. Visually-impaired students will not be able to get textbooks on tape.

Group contracts that are negotiated to lower the cost of other electronic resources purchased by libraries will cease on July 1, 2010.

QandANJ services may cease. Students will not be able to get 24/7 online reference assistance. Although this is a federally-funded program, it is administered through the Library Network System that has been zeroed out.

The **Audiobooks** program will cease. Downloadable audiobooks will not be offered to students.

Students may not have **access to public libraries** to supplement their research and study needs. Many public libraries will have to curtail services that will include an elimination of email, website, or Internet access by 2012. Public libraries will not have access to some of the most basic online subscription databases, will lose Federal funds or may even have to close their doors!

In addition, NJ libraries will **lose \$3 million in state aid and \$4.5 million in federal funds**.

At the same time the state is eliminating funding for library programs. Assemblyman John DiMaio has introduced bill **A2555, which eliminates the minimum local funding requirement for municipal public libraries**.

What can individuals do to stop this assault on NJ libraries? Here is what you need to know:

Students benefit from school librarians who can teach them how to locate and evaluate information, especially information found on the Internet.

Research proves that resource-rich school libraries that are staffed by state certified school librarians have a positive impact on student learning and achievement.

School libraries provide resources and learning opportunities beyond those found in the classroom.

Many school librarians partner with their local public librarians to provide programs to students beyond the school day.

School libraries facilitate independent learning. They are non-threatening safe havens.

School library services benefit the entire school community. The library programs eliminated from the Governor's budget represent little more than \$1 per capita (\$1.19 exactly) in state funds.

NJ library programs have been flat-funded for 20 years and yet have continued to do a yeoman job in providing essential services to all NJ residents, particularly those who have no access to technology, the middle-class and the underprivileged. They are providing basic services that help citizens survive in these harsh economic times.

Local library funding targeted in A2555 typically represents less than 3% of local property taxes.

What can you do?

Go to: www.savemyNJlibrary.org and get more information. Contact your legislators and ask them to restore funding to NJ libraries and oppose A2555 which is proposed to cut library programs further.

Support your school library program.

Go directly to Capwiz at <http://capwiz.com/ala/nj/home/> and send a message to your Senator and Assembly representatives opposing the elimination of statewide library programs and A2555. Become a Library Champion at <http://www.ilovenjlibraries.org/>

Join the Facebook group - Save NJ Libraries and check for updates on restoration efforts.

Call or send a message to the Governor at 609-292-6000 opposing these cuts and A2555.