



## FY 2025 – 2027 State Budget Priorities *State Aid to Public Library Systems*

In 1971, Senate Bill 47 was signed into law enabling the establishment and state funding of regional public library systems in Wisconsin *“to provide maximum opportunities for cooperation among all types of libraries in order to encourage the most effective use of the library resources in this state.”* It created the primary state mechanism that supports Wisconsin public library services. Prior to its enactment, many Wisconsin residents had no access to any public library; many more only had access to substandard library service. The new law addressed the limitations of relying solely on local support and facilitated statewide access to the high-quality library service necessary to meet personal, workforce, educational, and community goals.

The creation of public library systems fostered the establishment of a strong network of resource sharing and mutually beneficial interdependence among 381 community public libraries. Wisconsin's 15 public library systems developed in distinct ways in response to the needs of their member libraries and area residents. Each one delivers a wide range of primarily state-funded inter-library loan delivery infrastructure, marketing, consultant, and continuing education assistance. This relationship provides all Wisconsin residents with enhanced local library service, as well as the ability to use whatever library or libraries best meets their needs.

- **Library systems continue to collaborate, evolve and respond** as changes in society, resources, and technology create new demands and opportunities.
- **State library system aid supports communal information technology infrastructure** enabling statewide resource sharing and expanded delivery of both print and digital materials.
- **State dollars leverage cost efficiencies and partnerships that enable innovative local libraries to expand community engagement** beyond delivery of essential services, programs, and collections.
- **Every dollar invested in library system infrastructure frees up local library funding that directly impacts residents in three key areas:** 1) workforce and economic development, 2) technology access, and 3) reading proficiency and lifelong learning for all ages.
- **Among their goals for 2025-2027 state aid,** library system directors have identified expanded literacy support (for pre-K, homeschooling, STEAM, language proficiency and cognitive support programs such as Memory Cafes), cybersecurity and other technology upgrades, subscriptions to online learning platforms and databases, library facility improvement mini-grants, local history digitization projects, and training for member library staff and trustees.

### Public Library System Aid Request (2025-2027)

This budget request increases the ability of public library systems to efficiently distribute targeted resources enabling local libraries to best meet the unique needs of their communities.

	2025-26 Request	2026-27 Request
Requested Funding	\$26,013,100	\$28,013,100
Less Base	\$24,013,100	\$24,013,100
<b>Requested Change</b>	<b>\$2,000,000</b>	<b>\$4,000,000</b>