

To: Library Directors, Board Presidents
From: Ristiina Wigg, Executive Director
Date: April 16, 2003
RE: STLS Budget and Service Reductions

Governor Pataki has proposed a 15 percent reduction in state aid to libraries; in the Southern Tier region this would mean \$18,000 less in aid to local libraries, \$26,000 less in central library funding and \$167,000 less for services provided by the System. Library funding has been flat since 1998; a 15 percent reduction would put funding back to levels last seen in the early 1990's, before libraries had computers and patrons were using the Internet.

Original 2003 Budget: We are struggling to do our best with the budget allowed, but reduced service is inevitable under the circumstances. With costs rising every year, STLS has operated at a deficit budget for the last four years. Even before this proposed reduction, STLS had already reduced services for 2003. By November 2003 retirements will reduce the Technical Services Department by half—there were no funds in the original budget to hire new staff. Last fall, in meetings with library directors, we decided that beginning in 2003 member libraries would order their own materials, but STLS would continue to provide cataloging and processing. With reduced staff, it will take longer to process materials for member libraries.

Reductions incorporated in original 2003 Budget

- 2003 Retirements/Departures in Technical Services Department
4 full-time/2 part-time employees not replaced.
Beginning January 1, 2003, member libraries will order their own materials.
Beginning January 1, 2004, Chemung county and non-automated libraries will barcode their own materials.
- \$41,000 Shift in maintenance hardware/software to migration grant
- \$ 3,000 Drop TIPS ordering list
- \$ 3,000 Drop subscription to Books in Print
- \$ 1,200 Reduce Vehicle Insurance
- \$ 1,500 Reduce Vehicle Maintenance
- \$ 6,500 Reduce Library Supplies—Technical Services
- \$ 6,000 Reduce continuing education/conference attendance
- \$20,000 Reduce funding for Chemung County Bookmobile

***The Governor's budget proposal may not stand; why reduce the budget further now?
Why not wait until the legislature passes the budget?***

The STLS budget year is a calendar year; each year state aid for libraries is approved as part of the state budget. This means that in any year from 25% to 50% of the STLS budget is spent before the state budget is passed and we know how much is allocated. STLS cannot afford to overspend; therefore in anticipation of the 15% reduction we have already moved to reduce spending and defer purchases.

Reductions in anticipation of 15% budget cut

- Leave full-time delivery driver position open after September 30 retirement.
- \$25,000 Shift parts of wide-area network to cable virtual private network.
(System subsidizes costs of data circuits for members.)
- \$16,000 Defer purchase of delivery truck to replace truck with over 200,000 miles
- \$21,000 Defer purchase of PIX firewall, replacement computers for staff
- \$25,000 Cancel interlibrary loan arrangement with Central Library; provide service with existing System staff
- \$14,000 Further reduce support for Chemung County Bookmobile
- \$5,000 Consider reduction of full OCLC membership to GAC membership for interlibrary loan searching
- \$6,000 Reduce spending for rotating large-print, audio and video collections
- \$10,000 Reduce continuing education/conference attendance almost entirely
- Eliminate purchases for professional collection; reduce professional periodical subscriptions by 75%
- \$2,000 Shift funds for creating more kits into salaries
- Reduce building cleaning from 3/days/week to 2/days/week.
- Eliminate 3 half-time positions in Adult, Technical, Outreach

What will these changes mean to member libraries?

It will take a while for us to work through the changes and understand completely how they affect services. Here is a preliminary description; this may change over the next months:

Adult:

- Reduced consultant assistance
- Eliminate Adult Services newsletter; instead of compiling information, forward it electronically to libraries as it is received
- No Gift and Exchange lists; materials weeded from collections will be distributed at meetings with the remainder donated to prisons

Delivery:

- As of October 1, the number of delivery stops will be reduced by 50%. Libraries receiving two deliveries per week will receive one, libraries receiving three or more deliveries per week will receive two, except for Corning, Horseheads, and Steele.
This means slower delivery for items requested by library patrons, items sent to STLS for processing, processed items returned to member libraries, rotating collections.

Interlibrary Loan:

- STLS staff member Lorie Brown (stl_lorie@stls.org) began coordinating interlibrary loan services for materials from libraries outside the system's boundaries as of April 1, 2003.
- Requests for materials that cannot be found within the system will be sent to STLS.
- Service will be provided with fewer staff with multiple responsibilities, so ILL materials may take longer to request and receive.

Information Technology:

- Speed up the transfer of library Internet access from data circuits to cable (in communities where cable is available). *This reduces telecommunications costs and will enable libraries to circulate securely over cable virtual private networks.*
- No funding for upgrading or maintaining the two mobile computer lap-top labs which are loaned extensively to member libraries.

Outreach:

- Reduced consultant assistance
Inquiries for outreach consultant assistance, outreach mini-kits, adaptive computer equipment, outreach mini-grants, etc. should be directed to Mary Passage (stl_Mary or 607-962-3141 ext. 208)
- Rotating Collections
 - Audio, Video, Popular Reading, and Large Print rotating collections will be rotated every four months instead of every three months, (currently 2 months in the case of the video collections). Distribution of forms, reminders, collection lists and recommended lists will be reduced or eliminated.
 - With the exception of the audio collections, where standing orders are paid through 2004, no new titles are currently being ordered. Once there is a state budget, there will be funding available for ordering a reduced number of new titles.
 - Collections will be updated at STLS less frequently.
 - Collections and kits for adult care facilities will be delivered to their local library and the facilities will be responsible for picking them up.

Technical Services

- Most “rush” library materials, including best sellers, are currently being processed within a few days; other materials are being processed within two weeks.
- After two staffers retire on June 30, processing will slow down.
- Processing will slow further after October 30 when two more staffers retire.
- Investigating less expensive options for processing (labels, cassette boxes, etc.)

Youth Services:

- Reduced consultant assistance; answers will take longer to come to you.
- Changes in the format and ease of use in materials selection lists. (Previously Books in Print was used to compile the lists.)
- Youth collections will be rotated every four months instead of every three. Distribution of forms, reminders, collection lists and recommended lists will be reduced or eliminated. Collections will be updated at STLS less frequently.
- Subscriptions to programming periodicals will NOT be renewed. Libraries sharing these journals will no longer receive them.
- The Youth Services newsletter will be reduced to 2 issues per year, from 4.
- Updating of the Kids Corner and Youth Services web sites will be reduced.

Other:

- STLS membership directory will be revised annually instead of on an on-going basis.

Will these reductions result in a balanced STLS budget?

If the proposed 15% reduction in state aid stands, further reductions will have to be made.