

**Guidelines for the Distribution of State Aid
By Pennsylvania Public Library Systems**
Governor's Advisory Council on Library Development
Approved March 9, 2010

The majority of the residents of Pennsylvania receive public library service through a federated library system. Library systems play a major role in assuring the delivery of quality library service to the majority of Pennsylvania residents. Not surprisingly, the majority of the State Aid to Public Library subsidy is paid to systems on behalf of their member libraries.

Because of the significant dollar amount that is paid out to systems, the Office of Commonwealth Libraries recognizes the need for increased accountability to the legislature in the disbursement of these funds. The Office of Commonwealth Libraries will achieve that goal by exercising oversight and approval of locally developed funding formulas. It is the responsibility of the system board of directors to maximize the use of State Aid to the benefit of all residents served by the system member libraries, taking into account the capacity and needs of the individual members. The following guidelines will assist system boards in executing their responsibility for the distribution of state aid to their member libraries.

- Public library system boards of directors are responsible for the distribution, expenditures and reporting of state aid earned on behalf of the system member libraries and the overall system population they serve.
- The formula used to distribute state aid earned at the system level will be developed by and formally adopted by the system board of directors
- The system board of directors will seek system member library input in the development of the formula and criteria used to distribute state aid earned on behalf of the system.
- System level distribution formulas will be fair and reasonable in addressing system wide needs as well as individual member library needs
- Beginning in 2009-10, systems will place on file with the Office of Commonwealth Libraries, Bureau of Library Development, a copy of the system distribution formula
- Beginning in 2010-11, system boards will
 - With the participation of the Office of Commonwealth Libraries, review the distribution formulas for a period of no less than 3 years and no more than 5 years or if there is a more than 10% change in state aid formula effecting the review period, and report documentation of that review process to the Office of Commonwealth Libraries
 - File a description of system member involvement in the development of the formula;
 - File documentation of the system board's approval of the formula.
- System boards are required to report changes in the distribution formula to the Office of Commonwealth Libraries, Bureau of Library Development
- The Office of Commonwealth Libraries shall hear appeals in regard to disputes arising from decisions by the system board of directors regarding the system distribution of state aid formula that cannot first be resolved by the system board of directors
- The Commissioner for Libraries, in accordance with Section 304 of the Library code, approves the system distribution formula of State Aid to Public Libraries subsidy earned on behalf of the system.