

# Florida Libraries Are Critical to Recovery

## Florida Library Association 2021 Legislative Platform and Priorities

---

### Economic Recovery

Libraries play a dynamic role in their communities as trusted locations to receive accurate information and support.

- Provide electronic resources and internet access for small business and entrepreneurs
- Local business incubators
- Assist with reemployment and job seeking opportunities
- Basic computer skills training
- Assistance with access to State benefit programs

### Supporting/Strengthening Education

Florida's Public and Academic Libraries are an essential component to economic recovery and restoring education.

- Free resources for Pre-K, K-12 & college students
  - Study space and collaborative areas
  - Homework and research assistance
  - Support for virtual lifelong learning
  - Enriching activities for students and early learners
  - Introduce children and parents to the love of reading
- 

### Funding Initiatives

To provide these essential services to our residents the Florida Library Association is asking legislators to support the following funding initiatives:

#### State Aid to Public Libraries Grant Program:

Restore funding to \$23,000,000 Legislative budget request by Department of State: \$17,304,072 (F.S. 257.17)

#### Library Cooperative Grant Program:

Appropriate recurring \$2,000,000 (F.S. 257.40-42)

#### Public Library Construction Grants:

Appropriate funding of \$16,800,000 to support all eligible applications (F.S. 257.191)

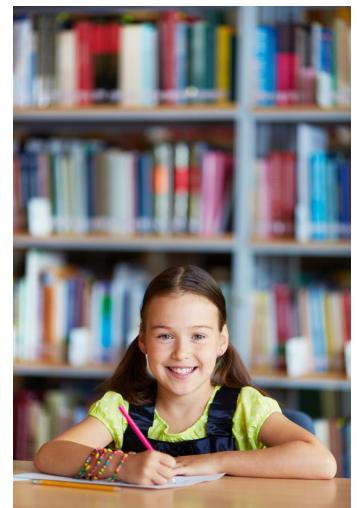
#### Restore funding for Colleges' and Universities' Essential Library and Distance Learning Services:

Appropriate to \$20,900,000

#### Career Online High School:

Appropriate to \$750,000

---



# Funding Overview

---

## **State Aid to Public Libraries Grant Program - Increase funding to \$23,000,000 (F.S. 257.17)**

Public Libraries that receive State Aid to Public Libraries funding invest approximately \$559 million annually in delivering library services to the public. This grant funding goes directly towards day to day operating expenses to ensure libraries doors remain open to the public. FLA seeks to restore State Aid funding levels to at least \$23,000,000, which would begin to bring the State's support for library services back to prior recent years.

## **Appropriate recurring \$2,000,000 - Library Cooperative Grant Program (F.S. 257.40-42)**

FLA supports state funding for the five (5) Multitype Library Cooperatives in Florida, administered by the Division of Library and Information Services, Department of State. MLC funds support bibliographic record enhancement, statewide delivery service support, union catalog support and development, reciprocal borrowing, cooperative cataloging, cooperative reference services, cooperative collection development, digitization, and implementation of or support for innovation in the use of technologies related to resource sharing.

## **Appropriate funding of \$16,800,000 to Public Library Construction Grants (F.S. 257.191)**

36 applications have been reviewed and deemed eligible for Public Library Construction Grant funding in 2021-2022. This locally matched funding helps generate economic development, while demonstrating local investment in our libraries by providing for new construction, renovations, and critical infrastructure improvements. This grant ensures the ongoing vitality of libraries in our communities.

## **Appropriate \$750,000 for Career Online High School**

FLA supports recurring funding for this program administered by the Division of Library and Information Services, Department of State that allows 19-and-older out of school adults to complete a private, accredited high school diploma and career certificate through participating public library systems. As of September 2019, more than 630 students have graduated and an additional 463 students are actively working on their coursework. This program makes a private high school diploma more accessible to Floridians and prepares them for success in the workforce.

## **Appropriate recurring \$20,900,000 to FLVC for State University and College Libraries**

Academic libraries are essential for student success, faculty research, and accreditation. The Florida Virtual Campus (FLVC) provides essential online library and distance learning resources and services to all State University System (SUS) and Florida College System (FCS) institutions. This funding provides the online library catalog and resource sharing platform used by all SUS and FCS students, essential academic e-resources, the statewide distance learning catalog, the transient student application platform, and other essential services for student success.