

Florida Libraries Are Critical to Recovery

Florida Library Association 2022 Legislative Platform and Priorities

Economic Recovery

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

- Providing digital resources and internet access for small business and entrepreneurs
- Offering guidance, information, and support for local business
- Connecting citizens with reemployment and job seeking opportunities
- Providing computer skills training beyond the basics, including workforce development skills
- Extending 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 in a variety of needed formats
- Digital connectivity and access for all
- Study space and collaborative areas
- Homework and research assistance
- Early literacy programs & emphasis on grade level reading
- Support for virtual lifelong learning
- Enriching activities for students and early learners
- Inspiring and nurturing the love of reading for both children and parents

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)

✓ **Public Library Construction Grants:**

Appropriate funding of \$14,600,000 to support all eligible applications (F.S. 257.191)

✓ **Career Online High School:** Appropriate to \$750,000

✓ **Library Cooperative Grant Program:**

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

✓ **Colleges' and Universities' Essential Library and Distance**

Learning Services: Support recurring \$20,900,000 to FLVC/FPALN for State University and College Libraries, Distance Learning, and Student Services



Funding Overview

State Aid to Public Libraries Grant Program - Restore 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 recurring State Aid funding levels to at least \$23,000,000, which would begin to restore the State's support for library services back to prior recent years.

Appropriate funding of \$14,600,000 to Public Library Construction Grants (F.S. 257.191)

Thirty-one applications have been reviewed and deemed eligible for Public Library Construction Grant funding in 2022-2023. 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 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. Since 2016, more than 914 students have graduated and an additional 120 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.

Support 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.

Support recurring \$20,900,000 to FLVC/FPALN for State University and College Libraries

Academic libraries are essential for student success, faculty research, and accreditation. The Florida Virtual Campus (FLVC/FPALN) 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.