

MMLL Director's Report

January 27, 2011

State Aid, FY2010-2011 (Current Year)

As you are aware, State Aid payments were in a holding pattern until the state learned the fate of their request for a stay in the court ruling against the rules. The stay would have allowed the Library of Michigan to keep using the State Aid Rules until the Court of Appeals makes their ruling on the actual case. Since our last meeting the Court of Appeals has denied the motion for a stay and no date has been set yet to hear the case. Therefore, the state library has developed an alternative method for payment of state aid. Nancy Robertson sent out a memo of explanation and the new temporary standards. The Library of Michigan has indicated that the state will start processing the payments again based on the order in which libraries filed their annual reports to the state. All reports to the state are due by February 1. .

Form to Receive Supplemental State Aid Mailed Out and Returned

At the December 18, Cooperative Directors meeting we were asked by the State Librarian to send a form to each of our members, have them sign it and return it the cooperatives for mailing to the state in one or two mailings. We did this and all of our members that were eligible for this state aid signed the form and returned it us in a timely fashion. We now are awaiting payment of this money, which should be coming soon.

The MMLL Showcase Held January 13th.

The MMLL showcase of talent for library programs was held at the Fox Hill Event Center in Cadillac on January 13th in conjunction with the Advisory Council. We had a very good turn-out of 27 attendees and 9 acts. The morning session was geared to younger audiences and the afternoon session was more geared to older kids. We have a calendar on the website that we have started to enter when and where performers will be. Additional editing will be required. It should help libraries coordinate.

MMLL has health and dental insurance

As provided for in the MMLL manual, MMLL contracted with Priority Health for health insurance. MMLL joined the local Cadillac Area Chamber of Commerce to get

their group rate for health insurance. However, MMLL is now paying for dental insurance through Blue Cross Blue Shield on an individual policy basis. MMLL did not qualify for a group rate on dental coverage. Article 8.3 of the MMLL Policy Manual on Vision Insurance calls for providing coverage. This insurance has proved to be expensive and not particularly good coverage. I have added to the Board's agenda today consideration of modifying the language to allow for direct reimbursement for costs up to a set dollar amount as a better way to go.

USF E-rate Window for application is now open

On January 11, the USF opened the window for application for USF funds under what is called the e-rate program. Also, they have a new Form 470 form to use for applications; it is somewhat simpler than past years. MMLL submitted its application yesterday. The Coops are being designated as contact point to relay questions about USF applications to the state's consultant.

Letters to new legislators?

Lakeland Library Cooperative has sent letters to all of their new legislators to advocate for library support. They have sent samples of the letters to us and I have them here for your inspection. The Board has directed me to send letters to our legislators in a similar vein to promote our libraries.

New Savings Account at Fifth Third Bank

Fifth Third Bank switched us to a new savings account with 4 times the interest rate and overdraft protection. It seems many businesses (including MMLL) were objecting to having overdraft protection tied to a credit card as many organizations and businesses do not want a true credit card on their account. We will see what the interest rate turns out to be.

Other matters & Miscellaneous

1. Library of Michigan will be holding a Plinkits Webpage design session on August 4th in the MMLL offices. Attendees are already booked through the Library of Michigan.

2. Discussions and reviews of the proposed revision of PA-164 for city, village & township libraries are being planned for around the state. The first such meeting is scheduled for March 3, 2011 in Lakeview, MI. It is thought that each coop will host a meeting.

Respectfully submitted by

James W. Lawrence, Director,