

## **Document of Understanding Between the Mid-Hudson Library System and its Member Libraries**

This document sets forth the major responsibilities of the System and its member libraries and their mutual expectations in order to provide better service to the public. In general, libraries serve the public directly and the System serves the member libraries. Systems were created by New York State to provide a means of encouraging and enabling libraries to share resources. Historically, this has been accomplished through the development and sharing of a union catalog of holdings and by providing delivery to facilitate interlibrary loan service. Over time more services have been added such as printing, rotating collections, and training sessions on technology and library issues. By using the central facility for its collective buying power (e.g. for such purchases as electronic databases), economies can result for all participants.

The explosive growth in communications and computer technology, and the growing expectations of our libraries and their patrons have put a severe strain on library resources, both in personnel and costs. The pervasiveness of the Internet in all facets of information has also had an influence in the way libraries operate. To facilitate a better cooperative approach to meeting our mutual expectations for service, the following are understood by both the member libraries and the System. These are **Core** and **Shared** services.

**Core Services:** Essential or Required under State Education Law, and funded primarily by New York State funds directed to the System:

- The System will maintain and operate an online union catalog and a delivery service for the interlibrary and library System distribution of materials for the support of ILL service and other library materials as appropriate. The scheduling of deliveries will be done with input from the member libraries.
- The System will arrange training and consulting to member libraries on professional library issues and issues of computer and communications technology to encourage and enable member libraries to take advantage of the evolving information environment. The System will be available for consultation with member library board and staff members on professional library issues and issues pertaining to general management.
- The System will inform members of grant opportunities and will administer any grants received by the System for the benefit of members as well as provide support for appropriate programs.
- System will provide a means for the mutual exchange of ideas and plans for service, such as the Directors Association, joint committees, and the Listserv.
- The System will communicate directly with any member library or libraries wishing to discuss issues.
- The System will provide Outreach Services as mandated by section 90.4 of the Commissioner's Regulations.

- The System will support services to all age groups including Children, Young Adults, Adults and Senior Adults.
- The system will support library development, and provide guidance on national, state and regional issues.
- The System will support the Central Library as detailed under Section 90.4 of the Commissioner's Regulations.

**Shared Services:** Jointly supported, primarily elective, and may require a fee or charge to the using member(s) which might require a separate agreement or document of charges and services

- The System will provide centralized support for printing services, rotating collections, and advocacy for libraries in the region; and will serve as a repository of professional material for libraries.
- The System will provide access to an integrated online library system, which supports circulation and patron database management, public catalogs and other functions.
- The System will communicate to the members changes in the capabilities and use of the central system and provide written guidelines of the level and type of system support
- The System will try to make its facilities available to member libraries for appropriate functions, with a possible fee to cover the overhead costs.

**Shared Services | Member Libraries:**

- Member libraries are expected to participate in planning and financial support for the cost of such shared services as they use.
- Member libraries are expected to maintain and contribute to an up-to-date, appropriate catalog of their holdings for a union catalog.
- Member libraries are expected to provide borrowing privileges to patrons of other libraries in the System area as provided for in the System's Free Direct Access Plan.
- Member libraries are expected to participate in the Inter-library Loan service within the System area.
- Member libraries are expected to participate, to the extent possible, in the "Electronic Doorway Library" initiative of New York State.

- Member libraries are expected to provide, in a timely manner, the various reports required by the New York State Library.
- Member libraries are expected to encourage participation of their Director in Directors Association meetings and at least one System committee for the planning and improvement of System services.
- Member libraries are expected to keep their Trustees informed about events and services available from the System and to keep the System informed of the services they desire.

*-- Samuel K. Patton, MHLS Board, 2000*