

MHLS Report to Member Library Directors | September 2025

The format of this report is based on the MHLS service priorities as determined by MHLS stakeholders.

a. Delivery Services

- a. **Tom Finnigan, Delivery Operations Manager, retired on September 1st. Chris Herron, the current MHLS Facilities & Assistant Delivery Operations Manager, has been promoted to a new position of Operations Manager, overseeing both delivery operations and MHLS facilities.** Chris has worked at MHLS since 1995 in various positions, including delivery driver, and knows the service inside and out due to over two decades of experience and close collaboration with Tom managing Delivery Operations. We are confident that this strong past working relationship will ensure a seamless and smooth transition as Chris begins his new role managing the service. Chris will be assisted in his new position by Dave Haspel, current Delivery Operations and Facilities Associate, who has been promoted to the newly created Assistant Operations Manager position. Dave joined the MHLS team in January 2022, has expanded his knowledge and experience in both facilities and delivery, and continues to be an asset to MHLS.
- b. **A Request for Proposal (RFP) for the MHLS Delivery Service** was sent out in July seeking responses on two delivery models; 1) Current delivery routes which run through December 31, 2025, and 2) Revised delivery routes with 20 stops removed. Nine proposals were received and evaluated with the best interests of MHLS and member libraries taken into consideration. The MHLS Board of Trustees will meet on September 12th to receive recommendation of the preferred vendor and approve funding for the Delivery Service Agreement. Member libraries will be updated in September regarding the outcome of this process.
- c. **Mitigating Service Interruptions / Temporary Storage:** MHLS Delivery staff along with the MHLS Technology Operations team are working with the Woodstock Library with material workflow and storage as they are currently moving to their new location over the next month. Also, the department assisted the Pawling Library with a hold on delivery during the last week of August and provided storage of their materials.
 - i. Please let MHLS Delivery Services know if you have or need any special delivery requests during renovations, construction, or emergencies as we have assisted many member libraries during these situations.
- d. Delivery logistics are currently being established with Olive Library staff at their **new branch location**, the Shokan Branch, with the goal of launching delivery service by the end of September.
- e. If any **extra delivery bins** have accumulated in your library over the summer and after the Labor Day holiday, please place them next to your regular outgoing bins for the drivers to pick up.
- f. **Tom Finnigan would like to thank directors and staff for the well wishes and video received prior to his retirement.** *"Members' partnership and support over the years made my time at MHLS very rewarding,"* said Tom, *"I am grateful to have worked with such talented and dedicated groups of member directors and staff."*

b. Integrated Library System & Cataloging Services

- a. **New Telephone Notification System is being deployed:** For the libraries who subscribe to Telephone Notifications we will be transitioning to a new platform. There is no action for the library to take in this process, and we will inform you of the cutover date when we know when it will be. Libraries who do not subscribe to telephone notifications can add it to their service at any time. There is an annual fee which is based on your service area population. The shared cost covers the addition of the service from Innovative in our contract and the telecommunication costs. The notification makes phone calls to patrons to alert them of items on the holdshelf and items that are overdue and need to be returned. Each library has a recorded message with their name and phone number included in the message, and patrons are addressed by name in the message.
 - i. Patrons will note a new phone number will be used for this service
 - ii. Messages will include the library phone number along with the usual message content

b. The launch of Patron Mobile is officially complete!

Support for the app will be ongoing, of course and we will keep you updated with release notes and notes and updates on features. We expect the next release in mid September which will fix the issue with links included in push notifications. Currently patrons routed back to the app to get an embedded link. In the next release when a link is provided in a notification, it will open the embedded link URL instead of returning to the app.

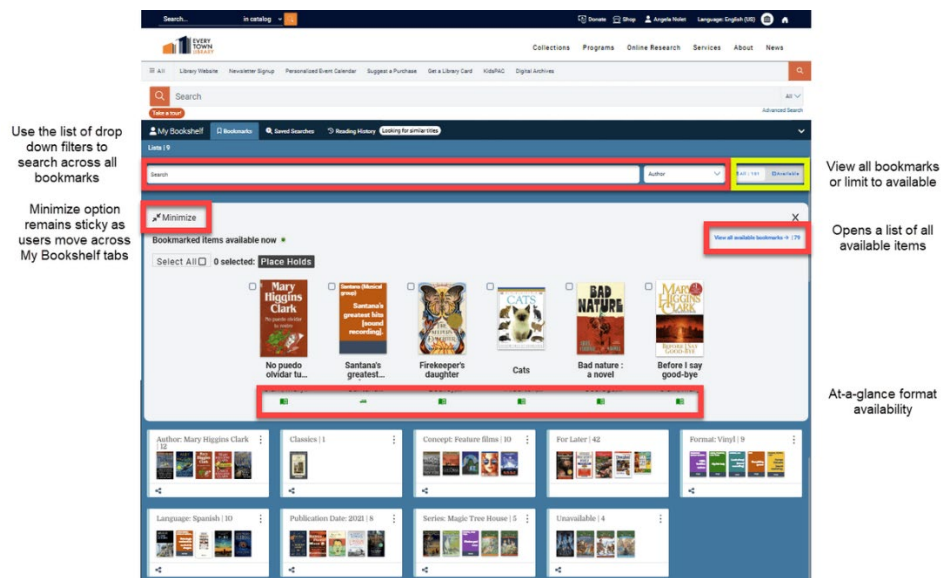
Launch Accomplishments:

- Trained 62 of 66 members in online webinars
- Published 12 Training on Demand tutorials
- 13 weekly emailed feature teasers (June-August)
- 3600 users & 51,800 launches (end of July stats)

c. New in Discover

- i. **Sort by Title & Author Ascending and Descending:** The Sorted by menu in search results has been enhanced with 4 new options and all options have been organized in alphabetical order. Author A-Z, Author Z-A, Title A-Z, and Title Z-A are the new sorting options and will reorganize the current search results based on the Author or Title data.
- ii. **My Bookmarks Availability:** This feature is designed to make managing lists easier, more enjoyable, and more personalized.
 - Search lists by Author (default), Format, Language, Location, Title, Publication date or Series.
 - Filter by “Available Now” or “All items”

- See a combined view of available items in all lists.



- d. **Vega Donate:** MHLS is a development partner for Vega Donate, a new offering in the Vega product line. This doesn't mean we are required to implement; we have simply joined the conversation to ensure the product keeps consortia in mind and will work in the environments we use. It also includes online point-of-sale and an online store feature. There is a subscription cost to adopt the product

What is Vega Donate?

Donation page

- Easy customization of the donation Page and form
- Offer one-time or recurring donations
- Secure payments accepted in different forms
- Automated communications and reports

Inspire community support

What is Vega Donate?

Online Shop

- Easy customization of the shop and product pages
- Utilize drop shipping, your own inventory items, or both
- Secure payments accepted in different forms
- Automated communications and reports

Strengthen community bonds

What do I get with my subscription?

DESIGN	BUSINESS	MARKETING	SECURITY
Accessible Page Templates	Multilingual Content Display	Custom Domain Support	HTTPS and SSL
Drag and Drop Editor	Inventory Management	Automated Communications	99.99% Uptime SLA
Accessible & Responsive	Protected Payment Integration	Donate/Shop Reports	
Concurrent Editing	Unlimited Media Storage	AI Content Generator	

- e. **ReShare Testing:** We have been invited as a test partner for [Project ReShare](#), as they begin to develop strategies for connecting libraries for resource sharing. Currently their partners consist of academic libraries including SUNY. SENYLRC is interested in this as a possible replacement for SEAL, and so we have an interest in understanding if it is a fit. MHLS is providing their first public consortia testing ground and their first Sierra ILS. RCLS, the other public library system in SEAL, is not yet participating. At this time, we have only shared a file of bibliographic records and are merely exploring possibilities. The dream would be to have an integration with our ILS, that would include SEAL and other regional

lenders in a streamlined process that uses policies to ensure efficiency and cost effectiveness for interlibrary loan.

c. Coordinated IT Services

- a. **THANK YOU!** Thank you all for being so patient and understanding as we navigate a difficult and unexpected staffing challenges this summer. The MHLS Technology Operations Team rose to the occasion, and with only a few exceptions, maintained our very high standard for ticket turnaround time. If you have any outstanding issues, please bring them to the attention of Technology Operations Manager, Laurie Shedrick or Executive Director, Rebekkah Smith Aldrich.
- b. **ARPA Access Point Devices Replacement:** Access Points purchased with ARPA grant money in 2019 included a 5-year license, which expires in 2026. After reaching out to our vendor we have learned that newer models of the access points are in place with higher specs and the old units are phasing out in 2026. This means that to continue service the library will need to purchase a unit and the license to go with it. We have recently ordered the new unit with a 3-year license for about \$1,200. Libraries who wish to continue having the Access Point service will need to budget for replacement and we are recommending \$1,450 which should cover the unit and service for 3 years. When we approach the expiration date (October 2026) we will complete a group buy, which should give us some leverage to reduce the cost, but with tariffs looming, particularly for technology, it would be prudent to aim at the higher mark with your budgeting. You can expect more information in the summer of 2026 in the form of an action memo for participation, which will include an actual price for your approval.
- c. **Technology equipment orders through MHLS must be in by October 31!** New orders must be submitted by October 31st, 2025. Our business office must close purchasing in time for all orders to be filled, invoiced and processed for payment by the end of the year. This is a firm deadline!

d. Professional Development & Continuing Education

- a. **Worlds Collide!** This year we have done a focused series on **Collection Management & Development and one on Sustainable Funding** – three events in October come under the heading of both:
 - i. [The Collection Life Cycle: Collection Management in Action](#) – Friday, October 3 at 2pm, online with guest speaker **Kristi Chadwick, Director at the Ballston Community Public Library in Burnt Hills, NY**. Kristi spent the last two decades working for Massachusetts libraries, most recently as a consultant for the Massachusetts Library System, a state-funded non-profit supporting libraries across the Commonwealth. She is also adjunct faculty for Simmons University School of Library Information and Science, teaching about collection management, and the Science Fiction & Fantasy columnist for Library Journal.
 - ii. [Budgeting for the Future of Physical & Digital Collections](#) – Friday, October 10 at 10am, online with guest panelists:
 - 1. Dee Ann Campbell, Director, Pine Plains Library
 - 2. Stephanie Harrison, Director, Patterson Library & Chair of the Ad Hoc OverDrive Committee
 - 3. Daniela Pulice, Director, Pleasant Valley Library & Chair of the Central Library/Collection Development Advisory Committee
 - iii. [Introduction to Weeding Your Collection](#) – Tuesday, October 7 at 10am, online

- b. **Upcoming Trustee Education Offerings** – *please note, directors are always welcome to attend!*
- i. Seven Habits of Highly Effective Boards
 1. [Tuesday, September 16 at 6pm at the Mahopac Library](#), offered in partnership between MHLS and the Putnam County Library Association
 2. [Thursday, October 9 at 5:30pm at the Philmont Public Library](#), offered in partnership between MHLS and the Columbia County Library Association
 - ii. [Trustee Essentials](#) – Wednesday, September 24 at 5pm, online
 - iii. [Board Development: Recruitment, Orientation, Education, and Evaluation](#) – Thursday, September 25 at 6pm at the Beekman Library, offered in partnership between MHLS and the Dutchess County Library Association
 - iv. [Policies 101](#) – Tuesday, September 30, online
 - v. [Legal Basics for Trustees](#) – Thursday, October 16 at 5:30pm at the Hunter Public Library, offered in partnership between MHLS and the Greene County Library Association
 - vi. [Next Level Trusteeship: Building an Effective and Impactful Board Culture with Dr. Terry Kirchner \(Trustee Handbook Book Club Series\)](#) – Tuesday, November 18 at 5pm, online
- c. **Records Retention and LGS-1 for Libraries | Thursday, September 18 | 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM | [REGISTER](#)**
- Monica Hauck-Whealton, New York State Archives’ Records Advisory Officer, will provide an introduction to retention of records created, received, and maintained by libraries, including:
- How to identify records
 - Determining how long each record type needs to be kept
 - Proper disposal of records once retention is no longer necessary
 - We’ll also discuss services and resources available from the State Archives, including grant programs for public and association libraries
- [SUBMIT A QUESTION FOR THE PRESENTER](#)
- d. Last April, the regulations for **Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** were updated to include specific requirements about how to ensure that web content and mobile applications are accessible to people with disabilities. These requirements apply to state and local governments, including libraries*. To help libraries get up to speed with these requirements Sarah McFadden, **Senior Librarian in the NYS Library’s Digital Services Unit at the NYS Division of Library Development (DLD)**, will be providing a series of online workshops for member libraries on web accessibility. Sarah McFadden works to support accessible content creation for the New York State Library’s website and other online platforms.
- i. **Web Accessibility Overview: Web Content Accessibility Guidelines & ADA Title II | Thursday, September 18 | 10:00 – 11:00 AM | [REGISTER](#)**
- Includes a brief overview of the relevant laws, rules, and guidelines that impact library accessibility (ADA Title II, DOJ rule, WCAG 2.1). Briefly explains how to use the WCAG 2.1 Level AA guidelines to ensure an accessible web presence. The second half of the presentation focuses on the broad goals of the WCAG guidelines (that content be Perceivable, Operable, Understandable, and Robust) and suggests simple strategies to begin implementing these goals for all users. Includes recommended resources for additional learning.

ii. **Creating Accessible Documents and PDFs | Thursday, October 16 | 10:00 – 11:00 AM |**

[REGISTER](#)

Reviews the basic requirements of WCAG 2.1 especially as they relate to documents, reports, and other PDFs. Includes specific instruction on heading structure and styles, accessible hyperlinks, formatting lists and tables, and providing alternative text for images, including charts and graphs. Includes recommended tools and resources for additional support.

iii. **Web Accessibility for Social Media and Multimedia Content | Thursday, November 13th | 10:00 – 11:00 AM |** [REGISTER](#)

Addresses requirements for creating inclusive multimedia content according to the DOJ rule/WCAG 2.1 Level AA. Includes information on planning and delivering accessible recorded video, as well as strategies for sharing accessible content on social media platforms. Specific topics include video captions, audio description, and text alternatives.

As July 26, 2025 marks the 35th anniversary of the ADA, the [New York State Library Blog](#) will be posting tips each month to address best practices around digital accessibility — in the spirit of this landmark civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in all areas of public life, including employment, education, transportation, and access to public services and spaces.

For member websites managed by MHLS, MHLS will ensure that website theme and display features are up to date with accessibility requirements. Member libraries are responsible for providing the appropriate tags & following the basic requirements of WCAG 2.1 on content submitted for upload to their websites. Learn about these requirements in the session on Creating Accessible Documents and PDFs on Thursday, October 16th.

This series was developed by a statewide working group designed to share information, experience, and resources to help systems and libraries make sense of and provide guidance on website accessibility. Members: Gerry Formby, Mid-Hudson Library System, Jack Scott, Southern Adirondack Library System, Brian Lee, Four County Library System, Heidi Eckerson, Finger Lakes Library System, James McHugh, Nassau Library System, Mary Carrier, Mohawk Valley Library System, Jacob Rachwal, Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, Judith Wines, Upper Hudson Library System, Robert Sporing, Mid York Library System, Erika Jenns and Kendyl Litwiller-Sutherby, Southern Tier Library System

- e. **Path To Belonging Introductory Webinars:** Libraries have long enjoyed being popular third places and trusted community anchors. But how can library professionals take the next step, and create places of belonging, where everyone is not only welcome, but invested in the organization's success?

Attend a one-hour interactive webinar about the Path-to-Belonging initiative, designed for small and rural libraries to work with their communities to create a resilient, healthy future. Participants will learn about the Path-to-Belonging, have a chance to try one of its tools, and learn about an upcoming cohort.

There are two opportunities to participate:

- Wednesday, September 17 | 2:00 – 3:00 PM | [REGISTER](#)
- Tuesday, October 21 | 10:00- 11:00 AM | [REGISTER](#)

Due to the participatory nature of these webinars, they will not be recorded. [View the FLLS Code of Conduct for Programs](#). There is no cost to attend. Registration is required.

The Path to Belonging is a collaborative initiative between the Outreach Coordinators of eight New York library systems and the Division of Library Development.

- Anja Bouchard: Clinton Essex Franklin Library System
- Keturah Cappadonia: Southern Tier Library System
- Kerstin Cruger: Mid-Hudson Library System
- Erica Freudenberger: Division of Library Development, New York State Library
- LJ Martin: Chautauqua Cattaraugus County Library System
- Jack Scott: Southern Adirondack Library System
- Jenny Shonk: Finger Lakes Library System
- Katie St. Laurent: North Country Library System
- Judith Wines: Upper Hudson Library System

f. Safe Zone Training | September 25 | 9:30 am – 12:30 pm | MHLS Auditorium | [Register](#)

Safe Zone trainings are opportunities to learn about LGBTQIA+ identities and examine prejudice, assumptions, and privilege to help create inclusive and supportive environments for LGBTQIA+ individuals and their allies by promoting understanding, raising awareness, and providing resources. This training is a three-hour interactive, in-person session. There are limited seats for this event. The curriculum for this workshop is provided by the Safe Zone Project and facilitated by MHLS Outreach & EDI Specialist, Kerstin Cruger.

g. MHLS Member Library Friends Groups Forum | September 26 | 2:00 – 4:00 pm | Mahopac Public Library | [Register](#)

Join Mid-Hudson Library System member library Friends Groups for sharing and discussion at the Mahopac Public Library. All MHLS member library Friends Groups interested in sharing their experiences, questions, and concerns for building and sustaining a Friends Group are welcome to attend. Bring your best ideas and questions!

h. MHLS Programmers Forum | September 30 | 9:30 am – 11:30 am | MHLS Auditorium | [Register](#)

This event is open to all MHLS member library staff who work on programming for all age groups. This two-hour in-person event will start with a 30-minute presentation on evaluating programs followed by 90 minutes of sharing and discussion by attendees. Come with your questions and get ready to share with your peers about all things programming in your library!

i. Youth Services Basics - FREE COURSE: Sponsored by New York State Library & Ready to Read at New York Libraries. Fully Asynchronous, Self-Paced Course Available on Moodle.* Appropriate for new Youth Services staff or anyone looking for a refresher.

This course is designed as an introduction to library services for public library staff working with youth. Whether you are already working in a library or just starting out in a new youth services position, this content will help you consider why library services focusing specifically on youth are important, how to

collect appropriate materials, the types of services and programs you can provide to your patrons, and the importance of outreach services.

The course consists of four sections:

- Youth Services Basics Overview - general information all youth services staff should be familiar with
- Early Childhood - focuses on services for birth through preschool
- School-Age Children - focuses on services to elementary school aged children
- Tweens and Teens - focuses on services to tweens and teens Participants may earn Certificates for each section they complete. You may focus on one or more sections, or complete all four, the choice is up to you! To register please fill out this form.

*Moodle account creation is processed by NYS in batches. You will be emailed your Moodle login and password a few days after you initially register. Questions about this program should be directed to nyslyouth@nysed.gov.

- j. **From Application to Approval: A Guide to Library Construction Aid Success. | Online Monday, October 27 | 1:30-2:30PM | [Register](#)** [see description in Construction Program Services Section].

e. Consulting & Development

- a. **Vote Transparency Law:** A new law will go into effect April 2026 that requires all entities with a public vote to report their vote and voter data (e.g. voter turnout, vote results) to the State Board of Elections (BOE). We are working with the State Library and State BOE to ensure the BOE understands the nature of library votes – types of libraries/types of votes; who runs them and therefore should be held accountable for reporting; and how to ensure libraries that do not hold a vote are not penalized for what may seem like underreporting. We will report back once the process for this has been established.
- b. **Friends Census 2025:** The second part of the 2025 Friends Census was emailed to Friends Board Presidents the first week in September. This survey is to gather information about the group and potential meeting dates and topics. Questions from the Presidents survey was sent to library directors to view. Questions? Please contact Kerstin Cruger, MHLS Outreach & Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Specialist.

f. Cooperative Collection Development & Digital Collection Access

- a. **Inspire Me** is a new feature that encourages Libby users to explore the digital collection for their next read. This engaging experience uses artificial intelligence to suggest creative book "inspirations" that lead readers to matching book recommendations at your library.

Check out a [short preview video of Inspire Me](#).

- b. **Hold Suspension Changes:** After hearing feedback from users, OverDrive has decided to change how hold suspensions work. Users will no longer select an end date for their suspension, they will only “suspend” the request until they are ready to activate it again. The suspensions will press users to be more intentional about receiving held items and also eliminate the 3-day holding pattern as patrons are notified that their suspended hold. This change is expected to be implemented in September.

What that looks like for patrons:

- Users no longer schedule an end date for hold suspensions. They simply select **Suspend**.
- When the user is ready to receive a suspended hold, they manually select **Unsuspend**.
- If the user misses their hold on its first delivery, it is suspended until they unsuspend it. It no longer unsuspends 7 days later.
- Holds are automatically cancelled if they're suspended for 365 consecutive days.

What Marketplace users can expect:

- Suspended holds will be excluded when calculating a user's estimated wait time.
 - In Marketplace, the current average wait period will be calculated based on the date a hold was last unsuspended, instead of the entire hold period. In effect, only the time the user was actively waiting is counted, giving a truer reflection of time spent waiting.
- [FAQ on the Resource Center](#) about the hold updates.

g. Awareness & Advocacy Services

a. New York State:

- i. Thank you to all who helped with our Postcard Party campaign! This campaign was targeting state legislators and the Governor to ensure the message "libraries are essential" is heard loud and clear going into budget planning season.
- ii. There is no sign of the legislature being called back into session early, which is a good sign there will not be "mid-year" cuts to the MHLS budget.
- iii. NYLA is hard at work advocating with the Governor's staff and Division of Budget as they begin the work to craft next year's Executive Budget.
- iv. **SAVE THE DATE: Tuesday, February 3, 2026 is NYLA Library Advocacy Day in Albany**
 1. Our goals for next year:
 - a. State Aid for Libraries: \$181.32 million
 - b. State Aid for Library Construction: \$175 million
 - c. Library Materials Aid: \$11.33/pupil
 - d. NOVELny: \$3.1 million
 - e. Cultural Education Fee: \$15 Increase (to \$30/transaction)

b. Federal:

- i. Now is the time to urge federal legislators to include **funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)** in the next budget. The next budget bill will be voted on in October and the Appropriations Committees of both houses are currently discussing their proposals.
- c. MHLS: A MHLS Action Memo will be issued to all member library directors to indicate who will serve as your board's Advocacy Ambassador and who you think are good candidates to be added to our new Advocates email list:
- i. **Advocacy Ambassadors Program** – This program seeks to expand the number of knowledgeable advocates in your organization through the appointment of at least one member of your board as the designee. Ambassadors will receive training and regular updates to help you keep your board and Friends up-to-date and activated when calls to action are issued.

- ii. **Advocates email List** – this new list is designed to keep folks that are outside of our day-to-day communication structures but who are passionate about the future of libraries “in the know” about advocacy issues. Likely candidates could be former directors, former trustees and Friends, as well as community allies who are aligned with the core value of libraries in the community.
- d. **The Great Give Back** will take place on October 18, 2025. The Great Give Back is a day for libraries to provide opportunities for their patrons to participate in meaningful, service-oriented experiences, and shine a light on the great work libraries are doing in their evolving roles as community hubs and connectors

The program information form will be emailed directly to those libraries who completed the participation form in August.

Learn more about this community-based program:

- [View The Great Give Back Guide](#),
 - [Visit The Great Give Back website](#) or
 - Contact [Kerstin Cruger](#), MHLS Outreach & EDI Specialist.
- e. **Road Trip Update:** Program promotion has included coverage in local print, online outlets & regional podcast, including Hudson Valley Magazine, HV Vibes, Macaroni Kids, Mid Hudson Valley Patch, Q92, Cidiot, and Walsh Wednesdays.

We are halfway through, and the numbers are impressive:

- **2586** Maps distributed to the public
- **537** participants have visited at least 10 libraries
- **394** have visited all the libraries in a single county
- **239** have visited at least 35 locations
- **72 have completed the challenge**, visiting all 70 locations!

Supplies: We anticipate having enough maps to cover program interest, so in this last half of the program **feel free to make maps more freely available**. We have a few **extra posters** if your library’s poster looks worn or you’d like an extra to display. We also have a few **extra artifacts**, if yours has gone missing or needs replacement. Email us at enagage@midhudson.org to request replacements.

f. **Interlibrary Loan Services**

i. **SEAL 101 Webinar November 12 from 1-2:30**

SEAL 101 with Kelsey Milner from the Southeastern NY Library Resources Council. This webinar will provide basic training on all aspects of the SEAL resource sharing system, managed by Southeastern NY Library Resources Council. SEAL connects libraries of all types in the Southeastern region (covering Columbia, Greene, Ulster, Dutchess, Orange, Sullivan, Putnam, and Rockland counties) and allows them to easily share books, DVDs, and other resources.

Topics covered in the training include:

- Creating and managing a SEAL Account
- Simple and advanced searching in the catalog
- Placing and managing borrowing requests

- Lending materials and managing lending requests
- Generating inter-library loan statistics
- Using the SEAL Directory
- A brief overview of the regional codes & procedures regulating SEAL usage

h. Construction Program Services

- a. Award announcements for FY2024-2025 are still pending
- b. **From Application to Approval: A Guide to Library Construction Aid Success | Online Monday, October 27 | 1:30-2:30PM | [Register](#)**

Thinking about applying for State Aid for Library Construction? Before you dive into paperwork and planning, join us for a candid conversation about what it really takes to submit a successful application. This session will break down the most common pitfalls that derail projects before they even get off the ground—and highlight the critical steps libraries need to take early in the process to strengthen their applications and maximize potential funding.

We'll cover why planning needs to start well before the application window opens, how to avoid preventable delays, and what successful applicants do differently. Whether you're a first-time applicant or looking to improve on past submissions, this workshop will help you navigate the process with clarity, strategy, and confidence.

i. Communications Among Member Libraries

- a. The deadline to submit job openings to be included in the MHLS Bulletin is Wednesday, 4:00 pm of the week prior to publication. The MHLS Bulletin is published every Tuesday. Please send job ads to bulletin@midhudson.org
- b. MHLS is always looking for member spotlights to share in the Bulletin. If you have a program, partnership, grant, collection, etc. that you would like to share with your peers, please let us know, bulletin@midhudson.org

j. Special Populations

- a. **Social Security Administration:** Due to the recent and frequent changes to Social Security we will update information as it becomes available. To access the latest information including partnerships, resources, locations and updates [please bookmark this document](#). All updated information in this document has been dated
- b. **Immigration Services: Know Your Rights Cards** provided by the NYSL have been shipped to all member libraries that put in a request. A second round of printing was offered by the NYSLMHLS put in a general order for the most requested languages and when we receive the order will offer cards to our members through an on-demand request form while supplies last. To access the latest information on immigration services for your community including partnerships, resources, and updates [please bookmark this document](#).

- c. **Mexican Consulate on Wheels September 17-19:** The Poughkeepsie Public Library District in partnership with the Mid-Hudson Library System and Revolution Radio Online bring the Consulate on Wheels to the Mid-Hudson Library System Auditorium (105 Market Street, Poughkeepsie) Wednesday, September 17th through Friday, September 19th

The Consulate General of Mexico provides its Consulate on Wheels in places where it may be difficult to travel to the consular headquarters in the United States, so that they can process important documents, such as passports and consular IDs.

We encourage all member libraries to advertise this opportunity to their local communities. [Access the image file](#) to create posts or add to newsletters or print and cut out [postcards to handout](#). All materials are in Spanish

All sessions are by appointment only between the times of 9:00 am – 1:00 pm. Appointments can be made by calling MiConsulado 1-424-309-0009

Appointments typically open two weeks prior to the date of the Consulate on Wheels visit.

- d. [Summer Reading Program Final Reports](#) will be due from each member library by **September 12, 2025**. [The online report form](#) is open for all member libraries to enter statistics from their 2025 Summer Reading Program (SRP).

Every member library is required to submit an online Summer Reading Program Final Report. This information is sent to the Division of Library Development and assists your library with needed statistics for the Member Library Annual Report. If your library did not hold a Summer Reading Program this year you will still need to fill out the first portion of the report.

One report per library. If you have branch buildings, information for all buildings should be included in one report.

Please share this information with your Summer Reading Program Coordinators.

e. Youth Services

- i. There are opportunities for MHLS members to attend/view sessions on the Science of Reading and Decodable Books offered by other public library systems
 1. **The Science of Reading: Perspectives & Possibilities for Public Libraries | September 24, 2025 | 1:30 -4:00 pm | Guilderland Public Library | \$25 per person | [Access the flyer](#)** for more information and the registration link. Registration closes September 19
 2. **Jump Into Reading - Decodable Books | October 16, 2025 | 3:00 – 4:00 pm | Online | [Please register through the MHLS calendar](#)**

Katie Eckert, Early Learning Specialist, and Lori Frumkin, Senior Project Manager, from Chicago Public Library discuss the Jump Into Reading initiative that focuses on supporting new and struggling readers and their caregivers as they transition from developing pre-literacy skills to becoming fluent readers. Through local partnerships,

collections focusing on decodable books, programs like beginner reader storytime, Grab and Go kits focused on phonological awareness and the creation of robust informational resources that outline the Science of Reading

This event is hosted by Buffalo & Erie County Public Library. The Mid-Hudson Library System has reserved 50 seats for our members. Registrants will receive a separate email with login information 24 hours before the event

3. **Science of Reading through the Public Library Lens** | [On Demand from Ramapo Catskill Library System](#)

- ii. New York State Public Library System Youth Services Consultants will be attending training at the end of September to review the updated Every Child Ready to Read (ECRR) digital toolkit. This will shape the Early Literacy training MHLS will provide to our members in 2026

k. **Cooperative Efforts with Other Library Systems**

- a. Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, MHLS Executive Director, is an inaugural member of the new **New York eBook Working Group**, which is made up of members of public library systems in New York State. This group is an offshoot of efforts by the advocacy group [Library Futures](#) to explore approaches to address concerns surrounding the current state of eBook/eAudioBook licensing and publishers' current approach to licensing content to libraries. The group will be surveying all public library systems in NYS to assess the purchasing power of libraries in NYS, usage trends, and other items that the group feel could be helpful in addressing this issue both legislatively and via negotiations with publishers
- b. The [Digital Navigators of the Hudson Valley](#) 2025 cohort began in August and will run through November. This cohort focused on attracting new navigators and has updated training and professional development opportunities. There were twelve available positions, and eight of the twelve spots were filled by MHLS member libraries. There will be two more cohorts available in this new cycle, winter 2025 and spring 2026. When applications open for the next round in winter 2025, we will share the information via the MHLS-Notice list and the weekly Bulletin. If you have questions about this program please contact Kerstin Cruger, MHLS Outreach & Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Specialist.
- c. **Banned Books Symposium:** The 2026 Symposium will take place on May 16, 2026. This half-day conference features presentations in all capacities of banned and challenged books and programs. The call for conference proposals will open in September 2025. This Symposium is in partnership with Southeastern New York Library Resources Council, Ramapo Catskill Library System, Mid-Hudson Library System, SUNY New Paltz and BOCES School Library Systems of Dutchess, Orange-Ulster, Rockland, Sullivan, and Ulster
- d. **Fall Into Books Conference:** [Registration is open](#) for the 26th annual children's and teen literature conference Fall Into Books. This year's conference will be held in-person on October 23rd from 9:00 am – 2:30 pm at The Venue Uptown in Kingston, NY. This collaborative event for library staff serving youth features book discussion sessions led by your peers ranging from picture books to young adult and guest speakers. This year's speakers are: Yaa Yaa Whaley-Williams and David Ezra Stein. Full details, including discussion groups and registration can be found on the [Fall Into Books website](#). Registration is

\$125 Registration closes on Wednesday, September 24, 2025.

- e. MHLS will be launching a new **Director's Handbook Book Club web series** in 2026 in partnership with the OWWL Library System and Southern Tier Library System. This will follow the model of the Trustee Handbook Book Club and be based on a new edition of the *Handbook for New Library Directors in New York State* which is anticipated to be released in November 2025.

I. Administrative

- a. Representatives from the Town of Prattsville in Greene County have reached out to inquire about starting a library. MHLS will be consulting with them at the request of the NYS Division of Library Development to educate them as to the legal and regulatory steps to charter a library and becoming a member of the Mid-Hudson Library System.
- b. MHLS will once again partner with the Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val-Kill for the **Bravery in Literature Awards**. This award celebrates authors whose voices have been banned and who are leaders in the fight for intellectual freedom.
 - i. The 2025 Ceremony will be held on Saturday, October 11th at the Bardavon in Poughkeepsie.
 - ii. To learn more and to register please visit <https://ervk.org/banned-books/>
- c. **The MHLS Annual Membership Meeting** is planned for Friday, October 24th at The Wallace Center at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library in Hyde Park. Our keynote speaker will be Sam Helmick, President of the American Library Association. Sam's keynote talk is called "Libraries at the Crossroads: Storytelling, Sustainability, and the Courage to Lead." All directors, member library staff, trustees, and Friends are welcome! In addition to the election of trustees and amendments to the MHLS Bylaws, vote, and awards, we will have the very first showing of the Mid-Hudson Libraries Tempest Collection! You can register [here](#) for this ticketed event.