

# MHLS Report to Member Library Directors | September 2024

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

## 1. Delivery Services

- a. Bright Benyi is a **new substitute driver** for MHLS delivery vendor, Valley Courier. Member library staff may have met Bright already as he has been covering route #2 for the past few weeks while primary driver Rony Cantarero was on vacation.
- b. **Mitigating Service Interruptions / Temporary Storage:** MHLS Delivery Operations recently worked with the D.R. Evarts Library in Athens with a temporary delivery location as they completed a construction project. Also, the department assisted the Howland Public Library in Beacon with a hold on delivery and storage of their materials during a painting project. Let us know if you have or need any special delivery requests during renovations, construction, or emergency situations.
- c. 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.
- d. **A Better World Books (BWB) drop box** has been in operation at MHLS since 2016 to assist member libraries and the public with re-purposing their materials. Better World Books accepts all books in readable condition and is a self-sustaining, for-profit social venture whose mission is to capitalize on the value of the book to fund literacy initiatives locally, nationally and around the world. BWB partners with nearly 3,100 libraries and over 1,800 college campuses across the U.S. and Canada, collecting unwanted textbooks and library discards in support of non-profit literacy programs. More information about BWB and their general acceptance guidelines as well as hosting a drop box can be found at: <http://www.betterworldbooks.com/>

## 2. Integrated Library System & Cataloging Services

- a. **Ecommerce in Discover:** As reported previously, in the months after launching Discover, we became aware of some occasional errors in our credit card transactions. Some payments made were not posted to Sierra and other payments were paid in duplicate and even triplicate! MHLS began the task of monitoring the transactions in a reconciliation process between PayPal payments and Sierra's Fines Paid report. Where payments had not posted to the patron record, we manually posted. Where duplicate payments were made refunds were given. In each case of refund the library was notified to inform the patron. The error rate was quite low, a handful each month.

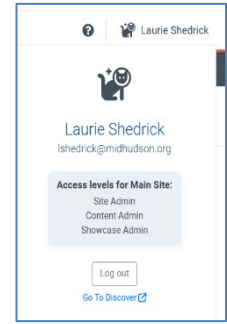
We continued to report the errors to Innovative and worked closely with them to run tests on changes to the APIs in Sierra and Paypal. In July Innovative solved the issue and we were patched with a fix that would eventually become part of the next release. We will continue the process of reconciliation for a few more months, just to be sure, but at this time we have not seen a recurrence since the fix was applied to our site.

- b. **New things to discover in Discover!** The Discover catalog continues to evolve with fixes, updates and enhancements each week. It's a lot! The best way to stay on top of what has happened, what is happening and what will happen is to check the Vega [Discover product roadmap](#).

- Advanced Search:** The actual advanced search did not match the description and is disappointing. The search is merely a prompt to insert AND and NOT within your search to either join keywords that must be included or excluded. There is also a suggestion to make use of facets to further filter.

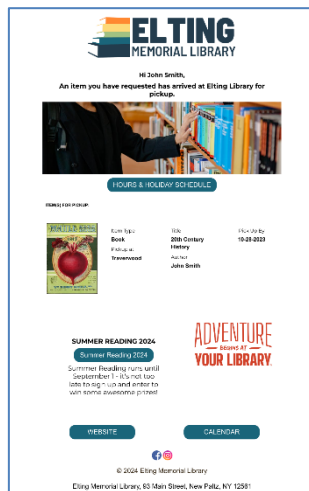


- Staff Access with Defined User Roles:** We are in the early stages and there are some wrinkles that have yet to be ironed, but we can now offer designated staff access to manage areas of service within LX Starter and Discover. Initially staff accounts were tied to a patron account in the ILS, which was weird. Now users have a unique login that uses their name and email address and a self managed password. Each account is assigned roles which have specific access within the platforms.



- Scheduling is available!** MHLS is an early adopter for a very exciting feature of Discover Homepage custom design. In our most recent update, the ability to create and schedule updates to the homepages was added. This means staff can go in and create up to 10 future versions of their homepage to be published at a later date. You can set your seasonal edits to go live in on a future date and time.

- c. **LX Starter has Launched!** Our number pilot libraries has reached a tipping point, and so far the feedback from staff using the platform is fairly positive. We now have 22 libraries trained and working in the platform, and 3 more scheduled to come onboard. Of the 22 sites 8 have published their templates and are actively using the notices. [\(See the published notices here!\)](#) Libraries who use LX Starter get more than a more engaging notification, they get real data back about the notices that are sent. Here is a look at the performance report from one of the publishing libraries. This is Elting Memorial Library's (New Paltz) OverDue notice.



Performance		Languages (1)	Settings	
<b>Scheduled to Send</b>	<b>Delivery Rate</b>	<b>Open Rate</b>	<b>Link Click Rate</b>	
0	100%	76%	3%	
<a href="#">0 scheduled</a>	<a href="#">324 delivered</a>	245 opens	10 link clicks	
<b>Bounce Rate</b>	<b>Fail Rate</b>	<b>Spam Rate</b>		
0%	0%	0%		
<a href="#">0 bounces</a>	<a href="#">0 failed to send</a>	<a href="#">0 marked as spam</a>		
<b>Links</b>		<b>People</b>	<b>Clicks</b>	
<a href="https://discover.midhudsonlibraries.org/search/card?recordId=2334...">https://discover.midhudsonlibraries.org/search/card?recordId=2334...</a>		1	1	
<a href="https://discover.midhudsonlibraries.org/search/card?recordId=3276...">https://discover.midhudsonlibraries.org/search/card?recordId=3276...</a>		1	1	
<a href="https://discover.midhudsonlibraries.org/search/card?recordId=4825...">https://discover.midhudsonlibraries.org/search/card?recordId=4825...</a>		1	1	
<a href="https://www.ellinglibrary.org">https://www.ellinglibrary.org</a>		3	3	
<a href="https://www.ellinglibrary.org/">https://www.ellinglibrary.org/</a>		1	1	
<a href="https://www.ellinglibrary.org/summer-reading">https://www.ellinglibrary.org/summer-reading</a>		3	3	

- Discover Custom Homepages for your Collection Sites and Kiosks:** Each library has been set up with a custom Kiosk and Collection site. These sites are ready for you to begin editing,

once designated staff have been trained for access.

**Collection sites:** allow the catalog to be customized to a particular library (or group of libraries, such as a branch system) without the patron needing to be logged in

**Kiosk sites:** are designed for in-library use, prioritizing giving patrons information about the items that are available to them physically then and there without needing to be logged in. You can configure kiosk sites for each branch if your library has multiple branches.

These sites can have your own logo and colors, display local call numbers and site info with priority and have a homepage customized with your own content. Library staff can be trained to manage these sites with local content.

- **Patron Mobile App:** We are looking for more libraries who would like to have earlier access to the Patron Mobile App by being pilot test libraries. At this time, we have PPLD in place and in the process of customizing with Mahopac and Marlboro soon to follow. Once customized by the library, the app can be placed in both the Apple and Android stores for patrons to download. More information about the patron mobile app can be found on our Knowledge Base with screen captures and examples of customization.

<https://kb.midhudson.org/patron-mobile-app/>

### 3. Coordinated IT Services

- a. **Schools and Libraries Cyber Security Pilot Program:** The FCC is launching a new 3-year pilot program, available to Schools and Libraries, to help the FCC both understand and counter the recent threats of cyber-attacks on both schools and libraries.

- *All MHLS libraries meet the eligibility requirements.*
- You can apply for the program and not apply for E-Rate.
- You cannot request reimbursement for the same items in both programs.
- Not used for staff or labor costs.
- 3-year commitment
- Requires E-Rate competitive bidding process

\$200 million dollars will be spent over three years. The selection criteria for participation will use risk factors and economic need to award access to the program. A diverse group will be selected and there are no specific amounts set for distribution by state. There is a 3-year maximum allocation of \$45,000 for an individual library or site. The program provides reimbursement/discount at the same rate as E-Rate's category 1. The library is required to cover the non-discounted portion of the costs.

The program can subsidize a wide variety of items including advanced next generation firewalls, endpoint protections, identity protection and authentication, monitoring, detection and response costs, as well as training. ([see a detailed list](#)). Many local vendors (Crown Castle, Verizon, Spectrum) are already reaching out to potential participants, to discuss services that can be covered with this program.

The application process starts with FCC form 484 Part 1. Information in that form will be used as a selection criterion. There will be a window for filing. The opening has not yet been announced beyond "in the fall" and no information is available about how long the window is. You will need a current FCC

Registration number, a SAM.gov registration and you must also have completed the FCC Form 498. Successful applicants will then complete FCC form 484 part 2, and from looks exactly like E-Rate with a 28 day bidding process (form 470), request for equipment and services (form 471). A Funding Commitment Decision Letter is provided by USAC, and once services start you can submit a request for reimbursement (SPI or BEAR method).

What can you do to be ready?

- Set goals and objectives – can you clearly talk about what you might achieve
- Identify your risks – Review the [see a detailed list](#) to get ideas
- What is the current state of your cybersecurity and how is it experienced by staff and the public
- Who at your library manages cybersecurity? What processes have you identified?
- What do you need to complete or improve your current cybersecurity (Services & Equipment)?

To learn more about this program visit <https://www.usac.org/e-rate/cybersecurity-pilot-program/>

There are recordings of webinars available at <https://www.usac.org/e-rate/cybersecurity-pilot-program/learn/webinars/> . Recommended: **Schools and Libraries Pilot Program Overview Webinar – August 6, 2024**

- b. **Computer & Equipment Purchases through MHLS** must be submitted by October 31<sup>st</sup> 2024. 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!
- c. **Geo Blocking:** We have begun blocking access to Sierra and Discover products based on the country-based location of a user's IP address – sometimes referred to as geo blocking. As librarians this runs directly across our grain, but we have found it is necessary to reduce the number of bots and spiders that are crawling our web-based services, using up critical system resources. We hope this is a low impact step for the majority of our users, since most of our users live here in the Hudson Valley and travel to the country's that are blocked would be minimal, but we do understand that there may be some impact for our patrons who travel to these blocked countries. Patrons trying to log into Discover, OverDrive, Kanopy, Hoopla or any other resource that requires Sierra's APIs or Web Access management authentication, will find that their login fails.

Countries we are currently denying access to include: Russia, China, Singapore, Hong Kong, Burma/Myanmar, Democratic People's Republic of Korea/North Korea, Philippines, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand. Innovative provided the list of countries that have been identified within their cloud space. You can expect that this list will expand as we continue to monitor and identify more locations. To help prepare your patrons for travel we have added a [patron facing web page](#) that provides patrons with steps to take before traveling. If you have suggestions for this page, please send them to [ls hedrick@midhudson.org](mailto:ls hedrick@midhudson.org) (thank you!)

- d. Our **Digital Encryption Certification** for all ILS and Discover services will now be managed by Innovative through a certification authority (CA) called Let's Encrypt, a service of the Internet Security Research Group. Prior to this change MHLS was managing this process and passing the certificate to Innovative to apply. This change places the burden of renewal (and the cost) on Innovative as an internal process.

Rest assured, MHLS Tech Ops has our eye on this ball, we monitor the renewal process closely to assure it is initiated and completed in the correct windows.

- e. **Erate Cycle for funding Year 2024-25:** It is that time of year to begin the process of Erate. If you have never considered applying or are feeling a little overwhelmed, [MHLS has resources to help](#) and will work with you to guide you through the process. If nothing else you can significantly cover the cost of internet service to your building as a way of getting into the process for year 1. Please reach out to Laurie Shedrick with any questions or open a ticket by emailing [techsupport@midhudson.org](mailto:techsupport@midhudson.org) to open a ticket with Erate as the subject.

#### 4. Professional Development & Continuing Education

- a. Info for **Sierra Data Entry** series:

These sessions are independent of one another. You may sign up for one or both.

- **Sierra Data Entry: Items and Bibliographic Records** - Oct 29, 2024 02:00 PM

This webinar is intended for any staff who enter brief bibliographic or item records into Sierra. Nina Acosta, MHLS Data Operations Supervisor, will go over the information to include in each field, and how that information may differ depending on the type of material being cataloged. Registration link:

[https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_nMCLmSOzREKo\\_bySJouWJg](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_nMCLmSOzREKo_bySJouWJg)

- **Sierra Data Entry: Serials and Order Records** - Oct 30, 2024 02:00 PM

This webinar is for any staff responsible for adding magazine records or for receiving order records in Sierra. MHLS Data Operations Supervisor, Nina Acosta, will demonstrate the Sierra Serials module, as well as how to use the Receive function to add materials from vendors that provide on-order records.

Registration link:

[https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_I4ESMHHTCmCsf7USASsTw](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_I4ESMHHTCmCsf7USASsTw)

- **Sierra Interlibrary Loan** – October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024 11AM-12PM

17, 2024 This 1 hour workshop with ILL Specialist will cover....

Registration link:

[https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_MwcQHlqBQUSRv\\_pzi-mQVA](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_MwcQHlqBQUSRv_pzi-mQVA)

- b. **New Directors Forum: Project Management** – In Person, September 25th, 10:00 am - 12:00pm | [Learn more & register](#) | Location: Mid-Hudson Library System Auditorium, 105 Market St. Poughkeepsie 12601 Guest speaker: Ron Kirsop, Executive Director of the OWWL Library System, will speak about project management.
- c. **211 Information Session** – September 30 | 10:00 – 11:00 am | Online | [Learn more & register](#) | Lini Jacob, Chief Information and Referral Officer for 2-1-1 Hudson Valley will help us explore the types of community services available through this statewide platform, how to connect patrons to this service, and how to use the website to find important community resources to help your patrons and learn more about the resources available within your community.
- d. **Teen Services: Behavior, Programming, and Connection** | October 10 | 10:00 – 11:00 am | Online | [Register](#)

About 13% (42 million) of the American population is made up of adolescents. Teens aren't tall toddlers or tiny adults, and brain development and environmental factors play a large role in teen needs and behavior. Join Connecticut Children/YA Consultant Kym Powe, to learn about teen brain development and how it impacts teen connection to public libraries. Learn how we, as library workers, move forward working with teens as we program, offer services, and enforce library rules.

- e. **SAVE THE DATES! October 8 | 2:00 – 3:00 pm | Online | Creating a Culture of Accessibility in the Library** and **October 15 | 10:00 – 11:00 am | Online | How to Host Accessible Programs In-person and Online**. Presented by Lauren Kehoe, Accessibility and Accommodations Librarian at New York University Libraries.

## 5. Consulting & Development

- a. The NYS Department of Education issued a ruling on August 13, 2024 that defends the rights of library boards to use Education Law section 259 to place budget items on the school district ballot and once again clarifies that *only library boards* have the right to put a funding proposition on a ballot related to library funding ([Decision No. 18,466](#)). The library in question was the Roswell P. Flower Memorial Library in the Watertown School District. This specific issue had already been ruled upon through a lawsuit that found the petitioners case without merit (Matter of Eisenhower v Watertown City Sch. Dist., 208 AD3d 952, 955 [4<sup>th</sup> Dept 2022], *appeal dismissed*, 39 NY3d 944 [2022]). This aligns with a previous court ruling specific to 414 votes and the rights of library boards to be the sole entity allowed to place a funding proposition on the municipal ballot for library funding (Matter of George F. Johnson Mem. Lib. V Town Bd. Of Town of Union, (55 AD3d 1036, 1038 [3d Dept 2008], *lv denied* 12 NY3d 702 [2009]; *see* 1981 Opinions of the State Comptroller, No. 81-167 [1981 WL 16740]). This is very meaningful as more than half of MHLS member libraries rely on Education Law 259 to secure sustainable funding for their libraries either through the municipal ballot (414) or school district ballot (259). This is now a third high-level ruling that backs the rights of local library boards and defends against attempts to defund association and municipal public libraries. For more information on the sustainable funding options for your association or municipal public library please see the State Library's [Public Library District Toolkit: Strategies to Assure your Library's Legal and Financial Stability](#) or contact Laura or Rebekkah for a consultation on your options.

- b. **FY2025 Inflation and Allowable Levy Growth**

The Office of the State Comptroller has issued the Inflation Factor and Allowable Levy Growth Factor for FY2025 Tax Cap calculations for those of you with a calendar fiscal year (Jan 1 – Dec 31):

Inflation Factor: 3.30%

Allowable Levy Growth Factor: 1.0200

All libraries who have every had a public vote on their budget and have their own board of trustees must file the Property [Tax Cap Form](#) annually in November. (Yes, even if you are a 414 library that isn't have a vote this year!)

For more on this topic see : [NYS Property Tax Cap Answers to Frequently Asked Questions](#) in the NYSL's

Public Library District Toolkit the [OSC web site](#)

- c. **414 Vote Libraries Meetup**, September 26, 2:00-3:30PM | Online, [REGISTER](#)  
Library teams going for a 414 vote this year meet to share best practices and learn from their peers.

d. **Trustee Education**

- Online - **Trustee Essentials\***, Thursday, September 5: | Online, [REGISTER](#)
- Online - **Policies 101**, Monday, September 23: | Online, [REGISTER](#)
- Online - **Trustee Handbook Book Club: Governance Structure: The Role of Board Officers and Board Committees Tuesday**, October 15th, 5:00-6:30PM | Online, [REGISTER](#)
- In Person - **Sustainability: The Newest Core Value (MHLS Trustee Education Series)**, October 17, 5:30-7:30 | Location: Desmond-Fish Public Library, 472 NY-403 Garrison 10524 | [REGISTER](#)
- In Person - **MHLS Annual Meeting**, October 25th, 10:00am -12pm (0.5 credit hours)  
Registration Opening Soon. Keynote speaker: Lisa Varga, Executive Director of the Virginia Library Association & Library Journal's 2024 Librarian of the Year. Location: The Wallace Center at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library in Hyde Park.
- Online - **Financial Planning**, Tuesday, October 28, 5:00 pm – 6:30 pm | [REGISTER](#)
- In Person – **Seven Habits of Highly Effective Boards**, Thursday, December 12, 5:30-7:30pm, Heermance Memorial Library, Coxsackie | REGISTER

\* a coupon code for a free print copy of the *2023 Edition of the Handbook for Library Trustees of New York State* will be given to attendees of the **Trustee Essentials** workshop

- e. **The Great Give Back:** If your library is holding a program for The Great Give Back (Oct. 19th) this year, please complete [this form](#) with your library's program plans so we can populate the statewide site and help promote this event. If your library is featuring more than one program, fill out the form multiple times -- just follow the link that appears after you submit the survey.

Social Media graphics that can be used by all participating libraries can be found at [bit.ly/ggbresources](https://bit.ly/ggbresources) in the Social Media Posts & Marketing folder. Don't forget to tag the Instagram account (@greatgiveback) and use the hashtags #librariesgiveback and #greatgiveback.

- f. Directors are always welcome to attend sessions scheduled as part of our Trustee Education Series but we wanted to be sure you saw there is a new training session added to the Trustee Education Series line-up coming up on Monday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> at 5pm: **Policies 101**. One of our goals at this event is to provide more clarity to the new ruling by the NYS Division of Library Development as to which policies must be in place to maintain your library's registration. Your state registration is what allows your library to legally receive local, county, state and federal tax dollars... To register: <https://midhudson.org/events/policies-101/> This will be recorded and added to the Training on Demand Platform.

- g. **Action Memo #24-04: Essential Documents Inventory Due Date: September 20<sup>th</sup>**

This year we are doing a fresh audit of each library's essential documents. We are requesting each library submit digital copies of all their essential documents and provide information on how required information can be accessed online. MHLS will use these files to create a complete and current

inventory for each member library. These files will aid in library development consultation, the development of best practices and identification of where assistance is needed through our continuing education program.

**Action:** Download a copy of the [MHLS Essential Documents Inventory Workbook](#). Use the workbook to help identify and log:

- Documents your board has approved and that are on file  
Use the External, Internal & Personnel tabs of the workbook to indicate the status of a policy (complete or in progress), the date it was last revised and any useful notes
- The documents your board needs to work on  
If a file doesn't exist, mark it as in progress, put them on your board's to do list, and enter the anticipated completion date in the note field. Prioritize any items color coded in pink, these are the ones needed to meet the Minimum Standards for Public Libraries.
- The availability (in print and online) of documents required to be publicly available  
Use the Publicly Available tab of the workbook to indicate listed items are available in print and online. Enter the URL for where the listed information is located online (in the future, this will act as a handy log to test for broken links)
- Use the items marked "No" to create a to do list for meeting Minimum Standard 11.

Upload to us:

1. A saved copy of the Library's completed workbook, AND
2. Copies of all your completed, board approved, essential document file(s)

You can submit them in one large file or multiple individual files. [Submit files here.](#)

For guidance and sample policies, consult the MHLS Policies page, <https://midhudson.org/topics/director-resources/policies/>

## 6. Cooperative Collection Development & Digital Collection Access

- a. NovelNY connects New Yorkers to electronic resources, providing full text access to thousands of journals, newspapers and reference databases for more than 20 years. In 2024 NovelNY was on the chopping block, but a groundswell of support has kept it in place for the immediate future.

All New Yorkers can access NOVELny directly by visiting <https://novelnewyork.org/> . While in New York State, you can click "Use Location" to login with a geo locator that uses your IP to identify your vicinity.

Access **NOVELny** resources by using one of the Login methods below

The image shows two side-by-side login interface panels. The left panel is titled "Location Detection" and features a blue header with a location pin icon. Below the header, it says "Login using your Current Location" and "Your personal information will not be shared or stored." It also includes a link to "Gale's privacy policy is available at https://www.cengage.com/privacy." and a blue "Use Location" button at the bottom. The right panel is titled "Login" and features a grey header with a key icon. Below the header, it says "Login using your library's password or barcode". It has a blue dropdown menu for "Enter your Library Name", a text input field for "Enter your Barcode or Password", and a "Show Password" checkbox. At the bottom is a dark grey "Login" button with a right-pointing arrow.

When you travel you can log in using you Driver or non-Driver state ID.

Libraries can also provide access to NOVELny directly from their own web sites. Each library has unique URLs for all databases that track the usage that takes place using the library link.



To get your library's Unique URLs visit <https://support.gale.com/novelny>

The site also has resources, marketing and training opportunities.

Here is the [current list of NOVELny titles for 2024/25](#).

These subscriptions are subject to change year to year.

- b. Our centrally supported **Universal Class** account will be ending at the end of September. After learning of a double-the-cost price increase, the Central Library/Collection Development Advisory Committee decided In February of 2024 that the Universal Class should not be renewed. The committee members were charged with taking the discussion back to the county associations for discussion. At the May meeting, after reviewing county discussions, the final decision to not renew was made. We will have access to the admin portal through October 10<sup>th</sup>, based on the countdown posted there, but our subscription ends on 9/29. Ulster County Library Association will continue to provide Universal Class and assume local administration for the resource. All links to Universal Class will be removed from MHLS hosted websites in the first week of October, including public facing access from MHLS and Discover toolbars.

## 7. Awareness & Advocacy Services

- a. The Road Map Exploratory Committee has recommended that this program be pursued for 2025. The rough timeline would be for summer 2025 with plenty of lead time for staff training and publicity. The committee's goal is for the program to be centrally funded, meaning no ask for member libraries to chip in. Stay tuned for more info!
- b. State Advocacy
  - Our bill to create more flexibility in awarding State Aid for Construction Aid funds to economically disadvantaged/distressed communities was signed into law by Governor Hochul. A.9076-A/S.7093-A
  - 2025 Budget Advocacy: The New York Library Association is hard at work on state budget advocacy on our behalf earlier than ever.
    1. We will be making some bold budget asks based in reality this year. The change in thinking allows for the numbers being used to be easily explained rather than the "soft" numbers used in the past.
      - a. The operating aid ask will simply take the amount from the first time the formula was calculated and adjust for inflation through this fiscal year. 2025 ask: \$176.8 million
      - b. The State Aid for Library Construction ask will be based on the total reported need, parsed over five years. 2025 ask: \$175 million.
    2. We will work to lock-in state aid for NOVELny which was first established in this year's state budget.
  - 2025 Legislative Advocacy: We will cut down on the number of priority bills advocated for in the first quarter of next year. Rather than a laundry list of asks, many of which impact small segments of the library community our first phase of legislative advocacy will focus on:

1. Freedom to Read/Intellectual Freedom Bills for both public and school libraries.
  2. eBook Licensing Reform
  3. K-12 Certified School Librarian Requirement
- Save the Date: NYLA Library Advocacy Day will be Wednesday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025 in Albany

## 8. Interlibrary Loan Services

- a. MHLS has suspended limits on media or content that can be borrowed through MHLS interlibrary loan. MHLS will continue to limit requests to items that do not exist as circulating copies (regardless of demand) in our own collection or through Southeastern Access to Libraries (SEAL). In addition, MHLS will continue to limit requesting of items that cannot be purchased in new condition for less than \$25 through Amazon. MHLS will prioritize searches to libraries within the Empire Library delivery network, and to the libraries within that system who do not charge fees. Should the loan incur fees or additional shipping, MHLS will provide the amount required to the lending library before placing the request. These fees will be billed to the borrowing library, who in turn can choose to bill the patron. MHLS will reserve the right to place requests or not, depending on the liability involved and the resources required to acquire the item. If you have any question about what can be requested or availability of items, please contact Interlibrary Loan Specialist, Rebecca Hagan at extension 224 or [ill@midhudson.org](mailto:ill@midhudson.org).

## 9. Construction Program Services

- a. Award announcements for FY2023-2024 are still pending.

## 10. 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](mailto: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](mailto:bulletin@midhudson.org).

## 11. Special Populations

- a. 23 Member libraries have been awarded the MHLS Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Mini Grant. Each grant recipient was awarded \$1,000 to invest in and support the work of promoting and advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion in their library and the communities they serve.
- b. **The Poughkeepsie Public Library District in partnership with the Mid-Hudson Library System (MHLS) and Revolucion Radio Online bring the *Consulate on Wheels* to the Mid-Hudson Library System Auditorium (105 Market Street, Poughkeepsie) Tuesday, October 8<sup>th</sup> through Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup>.** 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. Flyers and reproducible informational cards are available in English and Spanish in PDF and JPG formats. [Download](#)

[all materials here.](#)

All sessions are by appointment only between the times of 9:00 am – 1:30 pm. Appointments are scheduled through WhatsApp, 1-424-309-0009. If community members need assistance making an appointment or if your library has questions, please contact Elva Margarita Corbatón at 845-485-3445 ext. 3349 or visit [miconsulado.sre.gob.mx](http://miconsulado.sre.gob.mx).

- c. The New York State Library has announced the “Digital Access for All” program in partnership with the New York Association on Independent Living (NYAIL), public libraries around the state are eligible to receive a free, in-person accessibility survey this fall.

The New York State Library’s Division of Library Development is working with ConnectALL (the NYS Broadband Office), the Empire State Library Network (ESLN), and the [New York Association on Independent Living](#) (NYAIL) on a project around technology, accessibility, and libraries intended to help libraries better serve all members of their communities.

Building on a pilot program administered by the South Central Regional Library Council, this project will support libraries in first conducting accessibility assessments and then using their results to implement suggested improvements. This will be guided by an advisory committee made up of the library workers, agencies and organizations who serve the disability community, disability advocates, and people living with disabilities lending their expertise to the project.

Funded through ConnectALL’s digital equity program, the assessment phase will occur this fall and be administered by NYSL in partnership with NYAIL. **NYAIL will oversee a number of in-person accessibility surveys as well as the creation of a self-assessment tool for public libraries to identify gaps in their accessible technology offerings.** Each library will receive individualized suggestions, and NYAIL will also create a wider report with general recommendations for all libraries. Following this, libraries will be eligible for grant funds administered by ESLN to obtain equipment and staff training to better serve individuals with disabilities.

**For the first phase of in-person evaluations, libraries will be contacted directly by NYAIL, so there is nothing you need to do at this point.** Not all libraries have independent living centers in their service areas, but most do; to see the full list of centers, please visit the [NYAIL website](#) (a [map](#) is also available). All libraries, regardless of proximity to an independent living center, will be able to use the subsequent self-assessment tool and be eligible for assistance in making suggested improvements.

## 12. Cooperative Efforts with Other Library Systems

- a. **Fall into Books Conference**, Oct 24th | 9:00 – 2:30 pm | [Learn more & register](#)  
**The 25th annual children’s and teen literature conference, Fall Into Books will be held in-person.** This collaborative event features book discussion sessions ranging from picture books to young adult, and a keynote presentation. This year’s keynote speaker is author Brendan Kiely. Full details, including discussion groups and registration, can be found on the Fall Into Books website, <https://fallintobooks.org/>. The cost to attend this event is \$100  
**The deadline to register is September 24!**

## 13. Administrative

- a. The MHLS Board unanimously approved the **Path to Membership Procedures** as recommended by the DA at their July board meeting.

- b. The **Union Vale Library** was given a provisional charter in July by the NYS Board of Regents. Their board has reached out to discuss system membership and we are working to set a meeting date with them to walk them through the new procedures approved by the DA and the Board.
- c. 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 leaders in the fight for intellectual freedom.
- The 2025 Ceremony will be held on Saturday, April 5<sup>th</sup> at The Bardavon in Poughkeepsie
  - The MHLS library community has been invited to help recognize living authors who “boldly defend human rights through their writing in the face of the alarming rise in book bans.” Head to [ervk.org/nomination-form/](http://ervk.org/nomination-form/) to nominate an author who inspires you. Submission Deadline: September 30th
- d. The **MHLS Annual Membership Meeting** is planned for Friday, October 25<sup>th</sup> at The Wallace Center at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library in Hyde Park. Our keynote speaker will be Lisa Varga, Executive Director of the Virginia Library Association and Library Journal’s 2024 Librarian of the Year. Ms. Varga’s talk is entitled: *Opening Minds, Closing Doors: The Threat of Censorship in Libraries*. All directors, member library staff, trustees, and Friends are welcome! In addition to the election of trustees and amendments to the MHLS Bylaws vote, we will celebrate the outstanding accomplishments of libraries that have achieved sustainable funding, the Sustainable Library Certification Program, and those colleagues who have completed the Public Library Administration Certification Program through Long Island University. Registration is now open: <https://MHLSAnnualMeeting2024.eventbrite.com>