

MLS Member Update - January 2017

Topics:

Executive Board Update

- FY2018 Budget Issues
- Fee for Service Discussion
- Listening Tour - Fake News
- Interstate Delivery Pilot Project

Upcoming Events

Legislative Agenda Talking Points

Interstate Delivery Pilot Project

Executive Board Update (January 2017 Meeting)

Budget Issues

Unless our budget is increased substantially significant service reductions will begin on July 1, 2017 (for additional details see Legislative Breakfast Talking Points, below).

- 100 delivery stops per week will be eliminated. This includes all Saturday stops and other stops designed to reduce costs.
- Statewide database funding under a new RFP-based contract will be reduced significantly with the likely result being less content than is presently available.
- Fewer training events and more wait time to work with MLS consultants as a vacancy in that area becomes permanent (until the budget is increased).

- **Fee for Services**

At the request of a member library, the Board had a lengthy discussion about imposing fees to help make up the fy2018 budget shortfall. We talked about imposing a fee on libraries and end users for delivery service. There was a strong argument to keep this service free because it is the most popular MLS service with libraries and patrons and imposing fees could create inequities in access to library materials. In addition imposing and collecting fees from patrons would be a huge challenge in terms of effort and technology development. Similar reasoning to avoid imposing feeds for mediated ILL was stated. The current system creates inequities in that some libraries can pay postage and other cannot (see Interstate Delivery report below). We do not want to impose additional inequities.

MLS currently imposes fees for two relatively new services that would be impossible to provide if we relied solely on state appropriations, i.e., BiblioTemps and Commonwealth eBook Collections. MassCAT has long been a fee-based service with some MLS subsidy.

MLS Listening Tour

- MLS is hosting a series of listening tour events in 2017 to engage members on specific topics and to encourage active membership to strengthen the Massachusetts Library Community. Tour stop themes will vary through the year. The first topic is fake news and libraries. Please join us to meet your colleagues and co-create a path to the future as libraries develop resources to work with their communities in dealing with this phenomenon. See below to RSVP for these events on Feb. 22 and Mar. 8 and a related webinar on Jan. 31.

Interstate Delivery Recommendation

- The Board approved a recommendation to continue interstate delivery service with RI as long as it continues to remain cost effective. The 2016 pilot project was deemed a great success and direct savings for MLS mediated ILL services exceeded the modest cost increases that were required to provide this new service. Providing additional resources for ILL for libraries that cannot afford to pay for postage costs boosts equity of access across all libraries in the Commonwealth. In addition library savings are accrued by avoiding the labor and costs to ship ILL items by USPS or UPS. More details are available below.

Upcoming Events

Listening Tour - Theme: Fake News and Libraries

Focus on how the library community can help address the problem of “fake news.” Come share your thoughts and work with your colleagues to strengthen the libraries role in this area.

February 22 MLS-Marlborough - 4:00-6:00pm [RSVP](#)

March 8 MLS-Northampton 4:00-6:00pm [RSVP](#)

Post-Election, Post-Truth: Using Comprehensive Media Literacy to Assess and Evaluate News and Current Events - Webinar - January 31, 2017 - 3:30-4:30pm [RSVP](#).

Library Director Forums

Please join us for the next series of five library director forums. All library types are invited. Topics will be based on your suggestions (please add as note when you register) with one exception. On May 5th topic is RFID and AMHS implementation. Times vary.

March 3 - Library Directors Forum - Fitchburg PL 10:00-12:00pm [RSVP](#)

March 10 - Small Library Directors Pot Luck at MLS-Northampton 11:00-1:00pm [RSVP](#)

March 24 - Urban Library Directors Forum - Malden PL 10:30-12:30pm
Accessible by the Orange Line. [RSVP](#)

April 14 - Library Directors Forum - Sturgis Library (Barnstable Village) 10:30-12:30pm
[RSVP](#)

May 5 - Library Directors Forum - Newton PL - 12:00 - 2:00pm
Topic: RFID Implementations and Automated Materials Handling Systems [RSVP](#)

Legislative Breakfast Talking Points and FY2018 Budget Update



MLS supports the Library Legislative Agenda and all of the interlocking pieces of resource sharing and support that make libraries so successful.

We will ask your indulgence as we focus on budget line 7000-9401, the line that supports the Mass Library System and the Boston Public Library's Library for the Commonwealth.

At MLS we have been spending its appropriations very prudently over the past three years to continue delivering all of our services despite major cost increases for delivery service.

We are striving to keep our children's school libraries, our public libraries that serve everyone from toddlers to seniors, and academic libraries for higher education on the front lines of digital literacy to support education and lifelong learning and to combat "fake news." We support library access to trustworthy information resources through physical and electronic delivery and education and training for library staff members.

Our budget has increased by 2% since fy2015, which in most people's eyes is very little. At the same time our costs for physical delivery service have increased by 39%, chiefly due to the fact that the state mandated increases in minimum wages. We like this income boost for staff that supports library services and improves the overall economy and the reality is that after the state government mandated this change; employers had to fulfill it. We are doing to the best of our ability by covering cost increases at our delivery contractor so far with no service reductions.

In fy2018 we need to reduce services to balance the budget. We discussed this at length with the Executive Board and have found a solution that calls for spending reductions for physical delivery, electronic content, training, and consulting services to balance the budget in fy2018 without totally eliminating any of our services.

The cutbacks we are facing on July 1st without additional funding are:

1. Reduce spending for statewide databases by \$600,000 or 60%. These trusted, vetted, scholarly resources are critical tools in building digital literacy and education (STEM and more). They are used widely in k-12, higher education, and public libraries. Statewide access creates equity in every town and city in the Commonwealth.
2. Eliminate 5,000 delivery stops per year including all Saturday delivery stops (which will cause delayed delivery for about 800,000 patron requests over the year). This service is a partnership with each library, the shared online library systems, and MLS. The specific reductions are to eliminate Saturday delivery for 75 libraries and to eliminate 25 other stops saving about \$200,000.

3. Cut back by 20% (about \$200,000) in training and consulting services for libraries. Very very few libraries have funds to replace these services that have been funded by state appropriations. MLS is the go-to place for training and consulting and these services will be missed.

Can you help us avoid these cuts with a funding boost to Line 7000-9401 State Aid to Regional Libraries?

We encourage you to share your priorities with both local and state elected officials and to sign up for the email list to stay informed about library needs. Please let your elected officials know how important the library is in your community.

For further information contact:

Greg Pronevitz, Executive Director
Massachusetts Library System
(Offices in Marlborough and Northampton)
225 Cedar Hill St., Suite 229, Marlborough, MA 01752
508-357-2121 x303 | greg@masslibsystem.org

Interstate Delivery Pilot Project Report and Recommendations (Sue Kaler, 12/30/16)

Highlights:

- The Pilot Project cost the MLS \$1,755.00 from April through December 2016.
- Massachusetts libraries saved \$4,230.00 overall.
- Of this figure, the MLS Resource Sharing Department saved \$2,088.00 by lending to Rhode Island participants via Delivery.
- MLS member libraries saved \$2,142.00 by lending to and borrowing from Rhode Island participants via Delivery.
- Almost 18% more borrowing requests were filled for Mediated ILL requesting libraries that cannot pay return postage, avoiding cancellations, expanding equity of access.
- Average travel time for items crossing the border was five days.

Details:

Between April 1, 2016 and December 31, 2016, the MLS and the Rhode Island Office of Library and Information Services (OLIS) ran a pilot project testing expanded free Delivery between libraries on the S routes in Massachusetts and libraries on Delivery in Rhode Island. On October 1, 2016, the Pilot Project was expanded further to include a second cohort of additional libraries from all Massachusetts routes.

Rhode Island participants included 11 academic libraries borrowing and lending independently using OCLC's WorldShare ILL and the OLIS office borrowing for approximately 40 public libraries. In addition, OLIS set up a method for the MLS to borrow from 33 public libraries via an email form on behalf of the requesting libraries for which the MLS offers mediated interlibrary loan borrowing services.

The first cohort of Massachusetts participants on the S routes included 12 academic and special libraries borrowing and lending independently using OCLC's WorldShare. An additional 21 such libraries from other routes were added in the second cohort for a total of 33. The MLS also sent loans from the Minuteman Library Network and Old Colony Library Network in response to OCLC requests from the Rhode Island participants. By October, 2016, the MLS Mediated ILL service was able to borrow from Rhode Island participants for 141 Mediated Interlibrary Loan requesting libraries on all MLS Delivery routes.

Overall, Massachusetts libraries participating in the Pilot Project borrowed 460 items from Rhode Island participants. Items included books and other returnable items such as CDs and DVDs. Conservatively, postage plus packaging amounts to \$3.00 per interlibrary loan package. Thus, the overall savings for borrowing Massachusetts libraries comes to \$1,410.00. Of this savings, \$1,103.00 was saved for requesting libraries using the MLS Mediated ILL service. In addition, borrowing from Rhode Island participants assisted the 18% of such libraries that cannot pay return postage and limit the MLS to Delivery lenders

only when we borrow for them. We were able to fill almost 18% more of these "Delivery Only" requests by borrowing from Rhode Island Delivery lenders as well as Massachusetts Delivery lenders, thereby expanding access to mediated ILL and working toward equity of access.

Overall, Massachusetts libraries participating in the Pilot Project sent 940 loans to Rhode Island participants. Items included books and other returnable items such as CDs and DVDs. Conservatively, postage plus packaging amounts to \$3.00 per interlibrary loan package. Thus the overall savings for lending Massachusetts libraries comes to \$2,820.00. Of this savings, \$2,088.00 was saved by the MLS lending from Minuteman Library Network and Old Colony Library Network. The MLS paid \$1,755.00 to Optima in costs to run a detour from Wheaton College to Norton Public Library three times a week to exchange materials.

There were two turnaround studies during the Pilot Project, one in the spring and one in the fall. Volunteer participating libraries from Rhode Island and from the S and C routes in Massachusetts reported when items were expected to be picked up by Delivery and when they reached their destinations. There were 34 items in each sample. These items all travelled with routing slips, using the normal Massachusetts slips and special Rhode Island slips. The average length of journey between borrowers and lenders was 5 days in both studies, regardless of the direction of travel. Since the transfer at Norton Public Library ran only three times a week, this is excellent.

Comments from Massachusetts Participants:

"I hope the program continues and expands!" From Western New England University

"...This program is working great for us!" From Bentley University

"Even though our library does not send a lot to RI libraries we still like the idea of being able to use this service. We did notice that two requests took longer than usual to reach their destinations." From Brandeis University (Brandeis sent thirty-one items to Rhode Island Delivery destinations in all. Apparently twenty-nine were not delayed.)

"Thank you! I'm so glad that Rhode Island is part of the delivery program now." From Chicopee Public Library

"What a great idea!" From Lunenburg Public Library

"This is so great! Thanks so much." From Amesbury Public Library

"We have had several ILLs from Rhode Island so far--it seems to be working well." From Fall River Public Library (early on in the project. Fall River actually has received more Rhode Island ILL items than any other library the MLS borrows for via Mediated ILL.)

Recommendations:

The Pilot Project was a success.

- It saved money for member libraries.
- It allowed the MLS to lend more items at no additional expense, thus improving our lending fill rate and our standing in the Resource Sharing Community.

- Member libraries liked the service.
- Equity of access was improved--It allowed us to provide a higher borrowing fill rate for "Delivery Only" requesting libraries using the MLS Mediated ILL Service and cancel fewer of their requests.
- The MLS was able to borrow from Rhode Island Public Libraries not normally lenders to us due to an arrangement worked out with OLIS as part of this project.
- There was a certain amount of work to set up the Pilot Project, but ongoing efforts required from the MLS, OLIS, Optima and Norton Public Library were minimal.
- Costs to the MLS were minimal compared to the savings gained.
 - The HELIN route from Providence to Wheaton College will be continued at least until June 30, 2017. That route is paid for by Rhode Island. Therefore, the only cost to the MLS will continue to be \$45 per week for three trips from Wheaton College to Norton Public Library to exchange materials for the two states on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. This will ensure the sustainability with a likelihood of expanded cost savings to MLS and libraries as participation grows.
 - If the HELIN route were to cease, Optima has proposed a pivot point closer to their Providence sort site at a cost to be negotiated at that time, but very likely reasonable enough to be acceptable to the MLS and Optima.

Therefore, the MLS recommends

- 1. Continuing the Interstate Delivery Project with Rhode Island, i.e., making it permanent to expand cost savings and equity of access.**
- 2. Continuing to explore options with other nearby states looking for similar possibilities to enhance equity of access and to save money for member libraries at little expense to the MLS.**