



WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM – CONNECTING LIBRARIES WITH THEIR COMMUNITIES

Westchester Library System (WLS)

WLS is one of NYS's 23 public library systems established in 1958 by State Education Law. Public Library Systems provide a wide range of direct support services to public libraries and neighborhood branches, enabling them to serve their communities better. The majority of Library Aid from the New York State budget goes to support library systems.

It has been estimated that Library Systems produce a return on investment of \$13 in services for every \$1 invested.

The capability for library users to place a hold online was introduced in 1999. Due to this advance alone, borrowing exploded from about 4,000 items per month to over **90,000!**

Here are some examples of what WLS provides:

Maintenance of the online library circulation system –

This includes over **624** computers throughout the libraries in Westchester and wireless network available at 43 library locations.

Delivery services 6 days per week – This allows library users to borrow an item from one library and return it to any of the other county libraries—saving them time and money. Library users may also place a hold online and pick-up the item at any library location.

Inter-Library loan program – If a library user needs something not found at their library, WLS will search to locate the item among local, regional and international sources.

State Funding

- Library Aid proposed in the Executive Budget for FY2011-12 is \$76 Million – a **10% decrease** (down from \$84.4 Million in FY2010-11) – below 1994 levels.
- This will be the **6th cut** to funding in the **past 3 years** – and for **8 years** (1998-2006) there was **no increase** in Library Aid.
- Library Aid represents less than 1/10 of 1% of the State Budget.
- Library Systems received only **42% of their FY2010-11** funding – WLS is still awaiting **\$920,094**. Cash flow is critical. Library aid needs to be received no later than July 1 each year.

NYS Operating
Funds since 1999
74% Increase
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Library Aid
since 1999
15% Decrease