

## **Southern Adirondack Library System 25 (Library) 75 (State) Construction Match**

### **Background:**

This year, as in past years, New York State has approved a grant aid program for library construction. SALS is allocated approximately \$389,713 each year under this program, and it is anticipated the allocation to be similar for the cycle commencing with grant applications due in Fall 2012.

In the past, a 50/50 match has been the maximum allowable award. This year, due to changes in the law legislating these funds, Library Systems Boards of Trustees are permitted to approve a 25 (Library)/75 (State) match for eligible projects located in economically disadvantaged communities (as defined by the Library System's Board of Trustees), if program funds are available after reviewing all eligible projects.

SALS has been unable to disburse all of the grant monies in the past due to the lack of construction applications from the membership, primarily because many of the libraries could not afford to contribute the required 50% match. The intent of these changes in the criteria is specifically to increase participation by libraries which might not otherwise have applied. The SALS Board of Trustees is developing the criteria by which some projects may be awarded a 25/75 match, if program funding is available after all applications have been reviewed.

### **Law:**

The system will need "to provide documentation where such an application requests state aid in an amount greater than fifty percent, demonstrating how the project will address the service needs of one or more economically disadvantaged communities. Such documentation may demonstrate need through poverty rates, concentrations of English language learners, low high school graduation rates, limited fiscal capacity or other relevant factors" and the law also states "geographically isolated or economically disadvantaged communities".

In approving any application that would receive state aid beyond fifty percent of the total project approved costs, the board of trustees of the library system shall give particular attention to addressing the library service needs of economically disadvantaged communities as provided for in paragraph e of subdivision two of this section.

### **Justification:**

Looking at the counties served by SALS, if funds were available it would be possible to justify that all of the libraries are in areas that have people living below poverty, high unemployment rates, and large numbers of children receiving free lunches. Please see

the chart below.

County	Below poverty	Unemployment	Free/reduced lunch	Per capita support per county
Hamilton	9.5%	9.2%	36.9%	75.34
Saratoga	6.30%	6.20%	19.5%	65.71
Warren	10.90%	7.90%	31.5%	45.99
Washington	14%	7.30%	42.1%	9.70

Further information to be considered may include the per capita support as documented in the Free Direct Access underfunded libraries.

### **Funding guidelines – SALS Policy for review of applications:**

There are three potential circumstances facing the SALS Board of Trustees relative to the review process.

1. If there are not enough applications to spend all of the construction aid (available funds allocated to SALS), then all libraries will be recommended at the 25/75 match based on the criteria in the chart above.
2. If the eligible project applications do not utilize all available funds allocated to SALS by applying a 50/50 match to the budgets, then some Libraries will be recommended for the 25/75 match based on economic disadvantage, with other projects recommended for the 50/50 match. The SALS Board will consider the impact on communities, and the level of disadvantage based on the above chart in determining how many and which projects to recommend for increased aid.
3. If the eligible project applications total more than the available funds allocated to SALS, then some or all projects may be funded at less than a 50/50 match, at the discretion of the SALS Board, until all available funds are assigned.

The SALS Board will strive to fairly and judiciously allocate the available funds based on the merits of the projects, and the proportional impact each might have to the patrons and communities in the chartered to serve areas of our member libraries. The most economically disadvantaged communities, as defined by the information above, will be given higher preference in the determination of more advantageous funding matches.

Data used to determine economically disadvantaged communities:

Per capita support per library from the previous year's Annual reports

[http://portal.nysed.gov/pls/cn\\_port/mel3\\_pkg.elig\\_enroll\\_query](http://portal.nysed.gov/pls/cn_port/mel3_pkg.elig_enroll_query) (free or reduced lunch)

[http://www.nyscommunityaction.org/poverty\\_reports.cfm?location=nystate&section=2011](http://www.nyscommunityaction.org/poverty_reports.cfm?location=nystate&section=2011)  
(poverty levels)

<http://www.nyscommunityaction.org/PovReport/2011/Supplements/employpage.pdf>  
(unemployment)

Other possible links to help determine economically disadvantaged communities:

[Poverty Information](#)

[Census Data Collection Directions](#)

[Free and Reduced Lunch Statistics](#)

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