

# HOW DELAWARE FUNDS LIBRARIES

## 1 WHERE STATE FUNDING OF LIBRARIES COMES FROM

- Public libraries receive state funding through the Library Standards line in the Delaware State Budget under the Department of State/Division of Libraries.
- This funding is distributed to public libraries according to the formula outlined in the Delaware State Code: Title 29 Chapter 66 Section §6602.

## 3 LIBRARY STANDARDS DISTRIBUTION FORMULA

Every dollar in Library Standards is divided as follow:

- **40% – Local Spend** - based on how much a library's local government spends on operating costs. This is to encourage local investment in libraries.
- **40% – Based on the population** in each library's service area as determined by Council on Libraries. This is intended to ensure funding reflects community size.
- **10% – Statewide Library Services.** Managed by the Delaware Division of Libraries (DDL) to provide shared services like Delaware Library Catalog/Consortium, Transit, shared databases, eMedia, etc.
- **Up to 10%** – for countywide services coordinated through Anchor Libraries.

## 5 WHY THE CURRENT FORMULA NEEDS UPDATING

- The Library Standards formula was last updated in 2012, when the Local Spend portion was reduced from 60% to 40%.
- Because part of the formula depends on how much local governments spend each year, **state funding can rise or fall unexpectedly, making it difficult for libraries to plan stable services.**

To ensure libraries can plan and serve their communities effectively, the State Code should be revised to ensure the formula is **ADEQUATE, STABLE, AND PREDICTABLE.**

## 2 HOW LIBRARY STANDARDS FUNDING IS DISTRIBUTED

Library Standards funding is distributed statewide by the formula set in Delaware law.

- Funding **cannot** be directed to a single library.
- Any increase to the Library Standards is shared by **all** public libraries according to the formula.

## 4 FLAT FUNDING EQUALS BUDGET CUTS

The Governor's Budget proposes keeping Library Standards Flat in FY 27. Because funding is distributed by formula, flat funding means cuts to public libraries. *If some libraries increase local spending or population faster than others, they receive a larger share of the formula, which means other libraries receive less—even if their own spending or population increased.*

- **WITHOUT AN INCREASE OF APPROXIMATELY \$1.15 MILLION, THE FORMULA WILL REDUCE FUNDING FOR 10 LIBRARIES IN FY27.**
- Budget cuts could result in fewer materials, fewer programs, reduced services, and challenges maintaining staffing and service hours.

## 6 WHAT DLA IS REQUESTING FROM LEGISLATORS

- **Work with members of the Joint Finance Committee to fund an increase to the Library Standards line to:**
  - **Prevent funding reductions to 10 libraries**
  - **Maintain staffing, materials, & service levels**
  - **Protect fair access to library services for communities statewide**
- **Work with the Delaware Division of Libraries and Council on Libraries to revise the Library Standards formula to ensure stable and predictable funding.**