





TO: Cultural Education Committee

FROM: Mark Schaming 

SUBJECT: State Aid for Library Construction Program Update

DATE: January 3, 2019

AUTHORIZATION(S): 

SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

State Library staff will present an update on the State Aid for Library Construction program, which has supported over 2,200 public library construction and renovation projects over the past 12 years. The Board will receive a brief overview of this program and its history and an update on plans for the 2019 program and beyond.

Reason(s) for Consideration

For information.

Background Information

In FY 2018-2019, the State Budget provided \$34 million in capital funds to support State Aid for Library Construction. While the State Aid for Library Construction Program allocation formulas are in statute (Education Law 273-a), the annual funding level is not specified in the law. The funding level is determined annually through an appropriation of capital funds in the State Budget.

State Aid for Library Construction Program capital funds may support up to 75 percent of approved project costs for broadband installation or construction, renovation, rehabilitation, or site acquisition of public libraries and public library system headquarters. The State Library collaborates with the 23 public library systems in administering this program. Each library system ranks the applications from their system area and determines the funding level for each project. Particular attention is given to the service needs of any communities which are isolated, economically disadvantaged

or located beyond the reasonable service capabilities of other libraries. After State Library review, applications are then sent to the Dormitory Authority of New York State (DASNY) for final review and approval.

Over the past 12 years, the program has supported a total of 2,249 construction and renovation projects for 760 unique public library and library system facilities. Construction and renovation projects have included: new building construction, updating of electrical wiring and computer technology, improving broadband infrastructure, renovations to meet energy efficiency standards, renovating facilities to provide full accessibility to library users with disabilities and creating meeting spaces to accommodate community needs.

Despite the many successes of the program, there is still a pressing need for additional state support for public library construction and renovation; a needs assessment survey conducted by the State Library quantified the capital fund need at \$1.7 billion through 2020.