

## Schools and Local Libraries Lose Vital Funding and Programs

School and Community Libraries fared very poorly in both the regular and special called legislative sessions. The funding for the K-12 database programs for school libraries was completely eliminated. The State Library is working on trying to negotiate good pricing for those districts that can afford (and are willing to pay) for these resources. Sadly, districts will not have the funds, so most schools are going to be left without this incredible resource.

**The only library funding that was restored was \$2.5 million (over the biennium) in state funds for the TexShare database program.** That's \$2.5 million in state money out of what had been \$8 million. The grants to local public libraries was entirely eliminated, as was so much more.

The fallout for school librarians (aside from the general cuts all education is facing) is that many, many school librarians have lost their jobs. As I'm sure you've seen in countless papers, cash-strapped districts unfortunately often look at "non-mandated" services first, and school library positions have been hit hard. Even if districts face smaller cuts than what they thought a few months back, the cuts are still deep, and a lot of educators have been let go.

**K-12 Databases**-School Library Online Resource Sharing for Students, Teachers, and Parents

**Status**-all state funding eliminated

**What is the K-12 Database Program?** The K-12 Database Program is a statewide program that offers thousands of online full-text educational resources—such as reference works, multi-media programs, and authoritative journals—to students in K-12 Texas public schools. **This program is specifically designed to meet the academic needs of K-12 students and teachers.**

**What will happen if the program is eliminated?** The loss of these resources would be a devastating blow to Texas schools and the millions of students and teachers who rely on them. Many campuses cannot afford the high cost of online reference works and the diverse and curriculum-driven learning resources offered through the K-12 databases. With the urgent need for current and authoritative instructional support materials, the elimination of this program would affect learning at all levels across the state.

**TexShare Databases**-Online Resource Sharing for Colleges, Universities and Public Libraries-

**Status**- **The only library funding that was restored was \$2.5 million (over the biennium) in state funds for the TexShare database program. This is slightly more than half of what was budgeted in the past..**

**What would happen without TexShare?** Institutions of higher education and public libraries will lose access to critical information. **They will pay more to get substantially less**, and communities and institutions in Texas will once again grapple with **inequitable access to quality online library information** – a problem for which the state and Texas libraries found a solution through TexShare almost 20 years ago. To lose this funding would mean a loss of two decades of progress.

*SB 773 (Zaffirini), the key telecom bill for educational institutions, did pass the legislature.*

**Lone Star Libraries**-Direct Aid to Public Libraries

**Status**- All state funding eliminated

**What is Loan Star Libraries?** Loan Star Libraries is a direct aid program that provides grants for about 541 public libraries statewide. Local public libraries use these funds to extend hours, purchase collections and equipment, and provide educational programming. In 2009, Texans visited libraries about 80 million times.

**Why is the Loan Star Libraries program important?** This program: supports workforce development in communities throughout the state; allows local libraries to maintain hours and services; promotes adult education and job advancement; provides funding for programs to support early literacy and student assistance; helps libraries provide public access to state resources, programs, and applications; and provides essential access to the Internet and needed educational programming.

**What is the state's role in supporting public libraries?** Under Texas statute (*Government Code* 441.006), the State Library is charged with aiding and encouraging the development of public libraries in Texas. In many ways, public libraries serve as a delivery arm for state government. In addition to serving local needs, public libraries form part of the state's infrastructure to deploy a robust educational infrastructure and state government information.

**What is the average state support for public libraries?** The national state average for direct support of public libraries is around 8%. This partnership recognizes the vital role of libraries in helping the state maintain a strong public infrastructure for education and workforce readiness. According to the most recent (2008) statistics from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, however, Texas provides only 1.1% of support for public libraries. And that figure is before the complete elimination of state funds to this program.

**What would the loss of Loan Star funding mean?** A loss of Loan Star support will translate into a decrease in hours of library operation throughout the state, hundreds of thousands of fewer people having access to programs (such as job-seeking and technology classes, GED support, and homework assistance), and a decline in equipment, resources, and technology needed to help libraries support community and state priorities.

### **Strong School Libraries**

**Status-**All state funding reduced by \$4 billion dollars. Non-instructional staff positions (librarians) will be reduced across the state.

**Why is it inaccurate to categorize school librarians as non-instructional staff?** School librarians are frontline teachers who instruct students' everyday on curriculum requirements, such as how to research, locate, evaluate, cite, and use information effectively and ethically. School librarians specialize in information literacy, the universal currency for success in today's competitive world.

**Librarians are teachers.**

**Why are school libraries important?** School libraries serve as information literacy classrooms. Libraries: help students perform better on standardized tests and curricular expectations; create equal opportunities to allow students to be competitive against state and national peers; and support learning and student achievement at all levels.

**What is the impact of school libraries on student performance?** Research shows strong school libraries equal higher student achievement. Dozens of national studies, including one conducted in Texas, demonstrate that students in schools with strong school libraries perform better on standardized tests.

**What does the State say about school library programs?** According to the 2008 TEA/State Library *Report on the Needs of Public School Libraries*, "The findings show that adequate funding, resources, and recognition of the vital role the school library program and school librarian play in student success are needed."

### **82<sup>nd</sup> Regular Session Review: Bills**

#### **Passed**

- [SB 834](#) (Deuell)/[HB 2765](#) (Gallego, Chisum): Relating to the update of discounted telecommunication services provided to educational institutions, libraries, hospitals, and health centers. This measure adds a health entity for discount eligibility and amends the a portion of statute to extend the discounts until 2020. **Merged with SB 773.**
- [SB 773](#) (Zaffirini; Sp. Gallego) – Extends current state telecommunications discount program for libraries, schools, institutions of higher education, and non-profit hospitals for another four years. **Passed and sent to the Governor.**
- [HB 2139](#) (Guillen): Relating to authorizing the State Library to create an "Adopt-a-Library" program. **Passed and sent to the Governor.**
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#### **Failed**

- [HB 209](#) (Alonzo) : Relating to providing Internet access in certain local public libraries. **Was not heard in Committee.**
- [HB 493](#) (Dutton): Relating to evaluation under the public school accountability system of the delivery of library resources. The measure would give the Commissioner of Education the option of including the delivery of library resources as a criterion for district accreditation. **Was not heard in Committee.**
- [HB 1394](#) (Castro): Relating to reports concerning the number of full-time librarians, counselors, and school nurses who are employed at a public school. The measure would require that campuses and districts report the number of listed full-time employees and include student ratio information. **Was not heard in Committee.**
- [HB 1505](#) (Munoz, Jr.)/ [SB 784](#) (Hinojosa): Relating to librarians employed by school districts. The measure outlines that districts may employ a certified school librarian for campuses of over 500 students. **Was not passed out of Committee.**
- [HB 2879](#) (King, Phil): Relating to the abolishment of the Texas Historical Commission and the transfer of its duties to the Parks and Wildlife Commission, the General Land Office, and the Texas State Library and Archives Commission. **Was not heard in Committee.**
- [HB 3283](#) (Guillen): Relating to the authority of certain development corporations to undertake projects with respect to community libraries. **Was not heard in the Senate.**
- [HB 3367](#) (White): Relating to the repeal of the laws authorizing the imposition of ad valorem taxes, the rates and expansion of the applicability of state and local sales and use taxes, the distribution of sales and use tax revenue to entities formerly imposing ad valorem taxes, and the replacement of ad valorem tax revenue in relation to financing public schools. Note some impact to library districts. **Was not heard in Committee.**
- [SB 1488](#) (West): Relating to the purchasing and contracting practices of junior college districts; providing criminal penalties. The bill includes (TLA supported) statutory language permitting exceptions for library purchases. **Did not pass the House.**