

2026 Legislative Platform & Priorities



Funding Initiatives

State Aid to Libraries Grant Program

- Fund the State Aid for Public Libraries Grant program through the Division of Library and Information Services in the Florida Department of State
- This grant supports libraries efforts across Florida to positively impact their communities by providing operating dollars to pay for day-to-day needs
- Libraries promote civic engagement. Many public libraries serve as trusted polling places
- All libraries increase literacy rates and enrich quality of life. Libraries provide educational materials for all levels and serve as an anchor for building stronger communities

Public Library Construction Grant Program

- Fully fund all public library construction requests for FY 2026-2027, as Florida's population grows (an increase of over one million residents since the 2020 Census) and the state will need the viable community hub that is a public library.

Multitype Library Cooperatives Grant Program

- Continue to support recurring funding and increase the State's investment in the Multitype Library Cooperatives which provide essential training for library staff and support resource sharing activities for all Floridians.

Upskilling and Workforce Diploma Special Project

- **Fund this critical program that provides educational access (at no charge) to adult students seeking to improve their quality of life and job opportunities through completing their accredited private high school education at their local branch library.**

Colleges' and Universities' Essential Library and Distance Learning Services

- **Support continued recurring funding to the Florida Postsecondary Academic Library Network for library resources, distance learning, and student services. This critical program serves all of Florida's State Colleges and Universities.**



Benefits of Florida Libraries

Florida's Public and Academic Libraries support Success

- **Job Seekers – Librarians teach classes and provide one-on-one training for resume creation, job searching, and job applications**
- **Small Business Owners – Libraries provide space for business owners to meet, utilize fast internet access, and take advantage of industry-standard financial and business research tools and databases**
- **College Students – The Florida Virtual Campus is essential to the success of students, faculty, and researchers across the Florida College System and State University System. Florida's State Colleges and Universities have contributed tens of billions of dollars to state economic growth through student success and funded research**

Florida's Multitype Library Cooperatives provide:

- **Resource sharing among Florida's libraries including access to ebooks, electronic resources, WiFi hotspots, other shared resources**
- **Library technology and digitization training and resources**
- **Continuing education for library staff, ensuring high quality public services**
- **Cost savings benefits to Florida's libraries through shared resources and collaborative purchasing – Multitype Library Cooperatives produced over \$10 in value for every \$1 invested by the State**

Florida's Public and Academic Libraries support Free and Fair Elections

- **Voting and Elections** – Many libraries serve as polling locations for early and Election Day voting, providing physical space and support. All Florida public libraries also serve as voter registration locations and provide spaces for political and community forums



Florida's Public and Academic Libraries support Literacy Initiatives

- **Children learning to read earlier** – library storytimes teach important pre-literacy skills like improved vocabulary and understanding of sentence structure. Storytime movement activities promote vital cross-brain communication that is invaluable to development of learning to read
- **Adults learning to read for the first time** – Libraries provide Adult Literacy coaching, classes, and resources to assist the approximately 22% of adult Floridians who lack basic reading and writing skills. Floridians sit below the national average for Adult Literacy, in approximately the bottom 20% of states
- **Inspiring and nurturing the love of reading for all ages** – Florida libraries offer robust print and electronic collections, summer reading programs, year-round book discussions, and events coupled with trained expertise of professional and paraprofessional library staff.
- **Providing training and resources to increase Financial and Digital Literacy** - valuable survival skills in people of all ages. These skills support families in their work and daily lives
- **STEM/STEAM initiatives, like Makerspaces in many public libraries** - Help foster financial independence and literacy with small business creation of selling items made in the Makerspaces



Florida's Libraries are Community Hubs

- **Meeting place** – Libraries offer spaces for study groups, parent groups, civic organizations, and other community groups that meet regularly. Cultural programs and enrichment activities – Important cultural and historic events are held throughout the year across all Florida libraries. Cultural programs and enrichment activities – Important cultural and historic events are held throughout the year across all Florida libraries
- **Emergency relief**- During disasters both large and small, libraries provide essential services as required by their community



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