



IMPACT OF THE REDUCTION TO THE PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSISTANCE GRANT **Friday, September 6, 2024**

Contact: Mike Robinson, Chair, Alaska Library Association Advocacy Committee
microbinson@limxr.org

To: State of Alaska Department of Education & Early Development
State of Alaska Division of Libraries, Archives, and Museums
State of Alaska Governor's Office

Public Libraries in Alaska were recently blindsided by a cut to a state grant that has been a steady source of income since at least the 1990s. For decades, the Public Library Assistance (PLA) Grant, funded by the State of Alaska under Statute 14.56.300, has been awarded to eligible libraries in the amount of \$6,250 - \$7,000. On August 16, 2024, seven weeks into the fiscal year, the Libraries, Archives, and Museums (LAM) Division announced that the PLA Grant had been reduced to \$1,829 per library in FY25, a nearly 75% cut.

The budget for this important grant was reduced within the LAM Division from over \$500,000 in recent years to \$150,000 this year. The LAM Division budget was not significantly cut in FY25.

On September 4, 2024, after receiving numerous questions and concerns from libraries and legislators, LAM announced that they were working to restore the FY25 grant to the standard \$7,000.

The Department of Education & Early Development (DEED) has encouraged Alaskans to comment on the importance of the PLA Grant to their libraries. At this point, end library users are not generally aware of this proposed cut and its effects. Libraries are currently working in their communities to raise awareness about the importance of the PLA Grant and educate their users on which services could be impacted as a result of a future grant cut.

The attached impact statements provide a picture of the devastating effects to small, rural communities that a potential cut to PLA Grant funding would create. Many of these libraries operate with volunteer labor for budgets less than \$50,000 per year, some less than \$10,000 per year. These beloved community institutions provide vital services to Alaskans. The best way to support these libraries is to continue to fully fund the PLA Grant each year.

Attachments:

- Map of severely affected libraries
- Graph of PLA Grant over time
- Impact Statements from Public Libraries

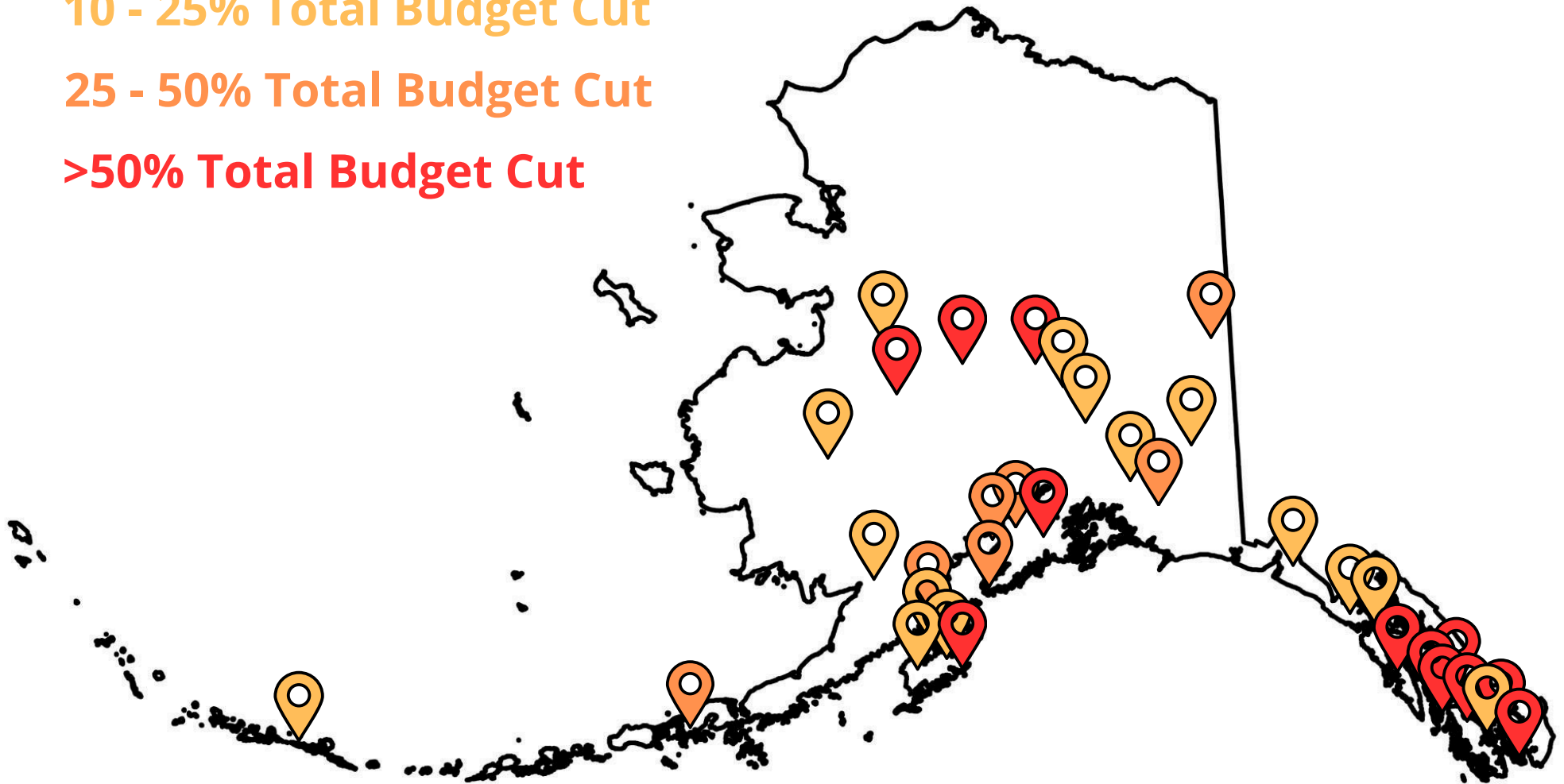
Alaska Libraries Most Affected by Proposed FY25 PLA Grant Cut

Map shows 34 out of 82 libraries/outlets receiving the PLA Grant in FY25

10 - 25% Total Budget Cut

25 - 50% Total Budget Cut

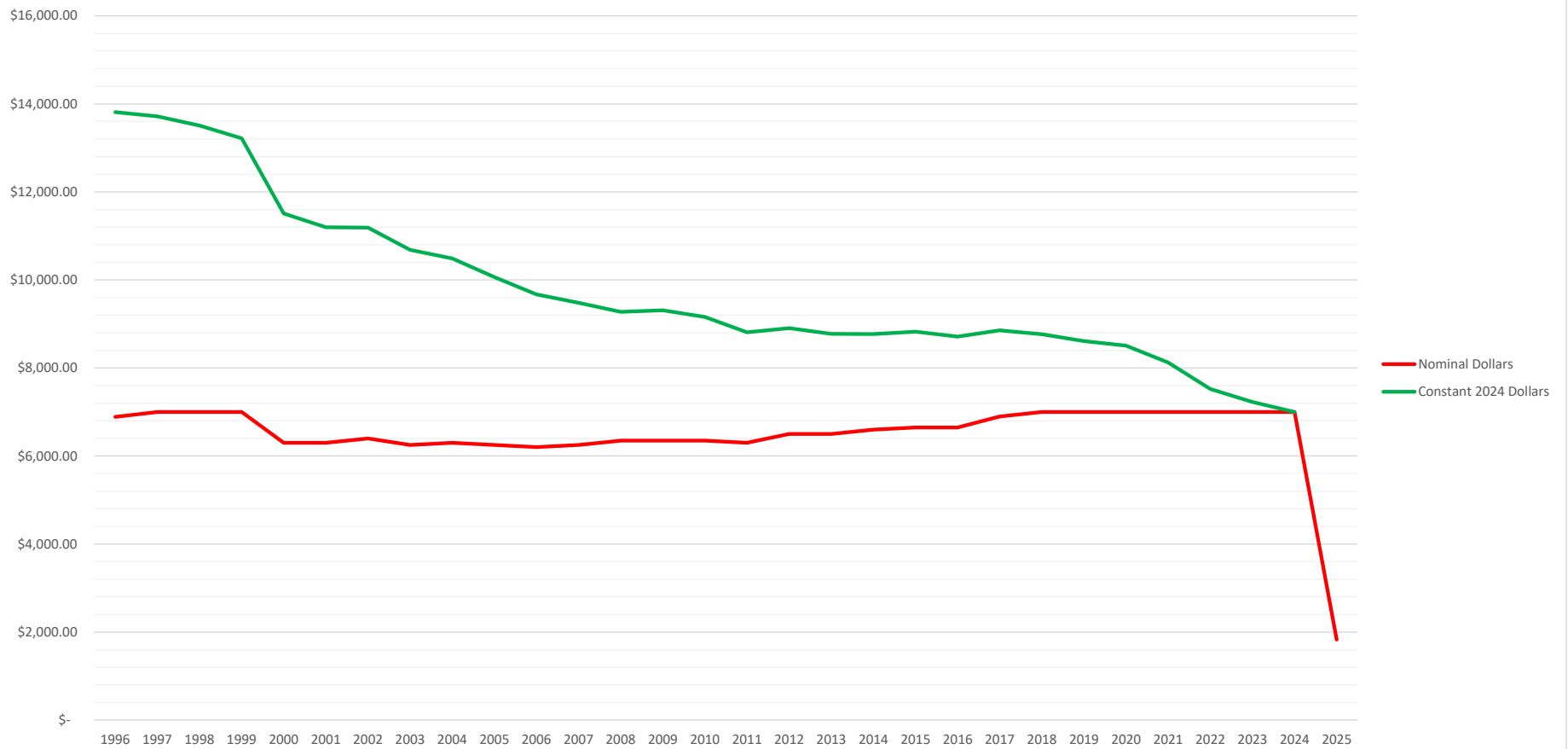
>50% Total Budget Cut



State of Alaska Map Source: GISGeography.com

Data based on library budgets reported on FY23 PLA Grant Reports

Value of PLA Grants, FY 1996 to FY 2025



Library providing impact statement

Adak - City of Adak Public Library
Anchor Point Public Library
Bethel - Kuskokwim Consortium Library
Chiniak Public Library
Chiniak Public Library
Cooper Landing Community Library
Craig Public Library
Glennallen - Copper Valley Community Library
Healy - Tri-Valley Community Library
Homer Public Library
Igiugig Tribal Library
Klukwan Community/School Library
Ninilchik Community Library
Nome - Kegoayah Kozga Library
Palmer Public Library
Seldovia Public Library
Tok Community Library
Utgiagvik - Tuzzy Consortium Library
Whale Pass Public Library
Wrangell - Irene Ingle Public Library

Comments from Adak

Hi Pat – I just talked on the phone with the Adak Library, and here is a summary of what they told me:

They are a newer library, just in their first years of getting started. Most of their funding comes from the PLA Grant and OWL funding. This cut will cause an “icing effect” on developing new services and materials as they are just trying to learn how best to serve their community and move forward. They did not indicate that they’d be shutting down or reducing hours due to the cut, but they will find it hard to add new materials to their collection. They also noted that they were caught off guard with the news and didn’t know that this cut was on the horizon until it was announced on August 16.

They said it’s okay to say that their comments come from the Adak Library.













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99556-0129



Phone & Fax: 907/235-5692

anchorpointlibrary@gmail.com

To Whom It May Concern,

When we received the Public Library Assistance grant letter, we were shocked to see that libraries have not been fully funded. This is a sad day for us since our library counts on this money to be able to provide the services and materials that our patrons need.

We serve a small community that relies on us to help them access the internet. We have many people who can't afford the equipment and cost for internet at home and don't even have an online presence. They depend on us to help them navigate the cyberworld. They also come to us when they need things printed, scanned or faxed. There is nowhere else to get these services in our town.

In addition to helping people who are not computer savvy, we circulate a large number of items each month. Both children and adults look forward to coming and choosing the books to take home. We do several children's reading programs: story time, summer reading, book club for teens, and a winter program we call Idit-a-Read.

We have adult reading programs as well. We help with computer and other reference questions. We will not be able to provide these services if we are closed.

The small grant amount will only keep us open for one month. We really need the DEED to reconsider the grant funding.

Thank you,

[REDACTED]



Chiniak Public Library

P.O. Box 5610

Chiniak, AK 99615

chiniaklibrary@gmail.com

To Whom It May Concern,

September 3, 2024

We are writing this letter in an effort to create an understanding of what the Chiniak Public Library (CPL) provides to our rural community, how we operate, and express the importance of the State Public Library Assistance Grant to our Library.

The CPL is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing information, education, and positive recreational services to the community of Chiniak, Pasagshak, and Kalsin Bay. We document an average of 750-800 uses a year. In addition to the literary and multimedia resources we provide, the library acts as a Tsunami Shelter and Community Center. CPL hosts various group activities to unite and educate our community. Some examples include: plant walks, astronomy nights, all ages game nights, yoga, early childhood group activities, art workshops, CPR/First Aid Class. These activities are especially valuable to our community because there are no extracurricular activities offered through the school and children don't often have the opportunity to go to town. CPL also hosts the presidential elections.

CPL provides high speed internet for patrons to be able to continue their education and attain college degrees. We offer easily accessible resources for homeschoolers and the Chiniak School staff and students. In the past 5 years, we have had two students obtain college degrees through use of the library. We have one currently attending college. Arwen Botz earned her masters degree in early childhood special education and Gabe Edwards earned his bachelors in history, both through UAA. Renee Truitt is currently attending the Midwife's College of Utah for her bachelor's in science and midwifery. CPL hosts virtual field trips that the school attends. High school students frequently use the library after school hours to catch up on homework and study. Homeschooler's also frequent the library for activities and references. We host local organizations such as Kodiak Area Native Association who come and have early childhood intervention activities.

Chiniak Public Library Association was established in 1984 and has been operated by volunteers since establishment. CPL is funded by an annual Public Library Association (PLA) as well as donations and fundraiser funds. CPL is completely operated by all volunteer staff including maintenance and janitorial services. We are unsure how we would continue to operate with the drastic cut in our budget due to the much smaller PLA Grant that was announced last week. We were blindsided by this news six weeks into the fiscal year and hope that the funds can be reinstated back to the previous year's funding allocation so we can continue to offer these positive services to our community.

Respectfully,

Chiniak Public Library Board of Directors

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



Chiniak Library Funding Cut

[REDACTED]

To Pat Tully, Library Director in Ketchikan

We are permanent residents of Chiniak and [REDACTED] is on the Chiniak Public Library Board of Directors.

We are very involved in our library and are regular volunteers.

Our last library burned in a wildfire 9 years ago, and we have worked very hard to restock make our library an important part of Chiniak again.

Our little library is located in the KIB owned building and is multi-functional as a Community Center and Tsunami Shelter.

We are strictly run by community members that volunteer their time and energy, we have no paid employees.

We rely heavily on the \$7,000.00 from the State each year for our expenses, we have depended on this for years and were blindsided by the budget being cut to \$1,800.00 without any warning!

This is devastating to our small community.

Our library offers not only reading materials, but much needed reliable internet for our patrons.

Over the past years we have had residents earn college credit and degrees, doing online classes in the Chiniak Public Library, many residents in Chiniak do not have any other access to internet.

In addition, we have hosted First Aid/CPR training, a variety of arts and crafts, marine debris recycling, celestial class, community game nights all by volunteers sharing their expertise. Our library in Chiniak is very active and well used, please reconsider our full funding.

Thank you,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Chiniak, Alaska 99615

[REDACTED]



[AkLA-L] FY25 GRANTS ANNOUNCEMENT: Alaska State Libraries, Archives and Museums

Cooper Landing Community Library <cooperlandinglibrary@gmail.com>

Thu, Aug 22, 2024 at 2:15 PM

[Redacted]

Good afternoon [Redacted]

I tried calling your office phone, and received the following message: "You have reached a State of Alaska number that is not in service." I did not get an answer on your cell phone, so I am sending an email.

This message is regarding the Public Library Assistance Grant. Your email arrived late Friday afternoon and was overlooked until last night. At first glance, it seemed to be a general update about museum and library grants. This morning I read the message more carefully and realized that our Public Library Assistance Grant is being reduced by nearly 74% almost two months into the fiscal year. I feel like the bottom has dropped out from under us. I am the director of a small, volunteer-run library in the state. We have no paid staff and no revenue source beyond the PLAG, donations, and any grants our volunteers apply for. Our small rural library cannot operate without the support of this grant from the state. We have recently made monetary commitments to services such as the Alaska Digital Library, our Integrated Library System, and internet services for FY25, all of which we cannot afford without this grant, let alone new books for our library patrons to check out. Today I am trying to figure out how to break this news to our community. I'm wondering which bills we can stop paying and if it is possible to cancel any FY25 services we have already paid for. Today I will inform our volunteer staff that all media purchases must cease immediately.

I have so many questions. How did this happen? Why, after years of being able to depend on this grant, are we being informed about this reduction in funding so late? Why was this message emailed to the AkLA list, and not directly to each library's director? Why is excitement shared in the first paragraph of the email, rather than sadness and apologies at such shocking news? Do the decision-makers at the state level understand that many of Alaska's small rural libraries exist outside of municipalities, and have no other sources of revenue?

For the first time since our library was founded in 1983, we are faced with the possibility of closing our doors to the community. I am devastated!

I look forward to hearing back from you and hope I misunderstood the message below.

[Redacted]

[Quoted text hidden]



Sample impact statement; email address for DEED

Sat, Aug 31, 2024 at 3:29 PM

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Hi Pat,

Here is our impact statement:

Craig Public Library, located on Prince of Wales Island, serves 12 rural communities both on and off the island road system. While we are not the only library on the island, we are the largest and most accessible. The PLA funds play a vital role in ensuring our collection stays up-to-date, reliable, and relevant to patrons. We also depend on this award to supplement our programming budget, to prevent summer learning loss through our annual reading program, to promote early literacy with our lap-sit bags for check out, and to facilitate life-long learning through requested workshops for our community. The sudden and unexpected loss in funding has left us scrambling and disappointed. In addition to supporting our materials and programming budget, we had planned to roll out hoopla, a new digital collection service that would have allowed us to improve library access for our homebound senior patrons and off-road communities. Our communities- small, rural, and semi-isolated – rely on a strong public library system. The loss of this funding will deny our community the library services they deserve.

Thank you for all your work on this. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Hope you have a good weekend!

Best,

[Redacted signature]

Craig Public Library

[Redacted quoted text]

[Quoted text hidden]



PLA Grant cuts - THIS IS A PROBLEM

Copper Valley Community Library Association <cvcla@cvinet.net>
[Redacted]

Fri, Aug 30, 2024 at 12:50 PM

Good morning Pat - [Redacted]

[Redacted] Three board members met this morning to write a short paragraph about the PLA grant cut. Never, since I have been affiliated with the library, have I had to deal with such a drastic reduction in a grant AFTER the amount was initially quoted and I have been with the library since 1996.

THIS IS A PROBLEM

The Copper Valley Community Library agrees with comments from the other libraries and we are deeply concerned about the cut in the PLA grant amount.

This will have a devastating impact on library services in rural and remote Alaskan communities. CVCLA will now need to redo the budget to accommodate these changes. This will require us to make cuts to programs such as but not limited to; the ILL returns, new book purchases and our pre-school story hour. This will leave the Glennallen, Slana, Chistochina, Gakona, Gulkana, Tazlina and Copper Center communities underserved.

We know that the Kenny Lake library also serves Copper Center, Chitina, Upper and Lower Tonsina, and the McCarthy communities with this grant. These two libraries cover the whole Copper River basin – 24,000 sq miles the size of West Virginia.





PLA grant impact on Homer Public Library

[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Thu, Aug 29, 2024 at 10:30 AM

Here's the letter I sent to DEED yesterday:

Good evening!

By now, you've likely received a great deal of feedback about the cuts to the PLA grants. I'll add some input from the perspective of Homer Public Library (and forgive me if it repeats much of what you've already heard!).

We use the PLA funds to supplement our materials budget. In a typical year, we spend about a third of the PLA money on picture books and juvenile fiction, with the remainder mainly going to adult nonfiction. The loss of over \$5,000 in expected funding means we will cut back on purchasing new releases, slow down replacement of damaged materials, and shift the focus of collection development. Updates to our medical collection and foreign-language section will be put on hold. When we have to pick and choose our purchases, we inevitably trend towards ordering more broad, high-demand titles and fewer specialized or cutting-edge materials.

Our library is taxpayer-supported, which gives us the wherewithal to survive a single year of significant funding cuts. The small libraries around us are not so fortunate. I've been working with the volunteer staff in Ninilchik, Anchor Point and Seldovia to find supplementary funding to see them through the year. All three are considering reductions to service hours, and it goes without saying that their materials budgets have been wiped out.

The importance of the PLA grants can't be overstated. I sincerely hope there's a way to repair the damage before it's too late for the many small, volunteer-operated libraries across Alaska.

Cheers!

[Redacted]

[Redacted], Homer Public Library

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]



Regarding the reduction in this year's PLA

Igiugig Library <igiugiglibrary@gmail.com>

Fri, Aug 30, 2024 at 3:08 PM



To whom it may concern,

As a small, rural tribal library, we are so grateful for the funding we have received over the years through the Public Library Assistance grant. The PLA funding has allowed us to improve our collection and address community needs year after year--it is the main source of funding for collections and programming. We rely heavily on the funding from two sources to keep our library going, the State PLA and the IMLS Native American Basic grant. The IMLS covers wages for our part-time staff of two people, as well as travel money for a trained library consultant to visit us onsite for training and improvements. The PLA covers everything else, namely Collections, Technology, and Programming--all the good stuff! Books and other materials for the children and adults in our community. Unlimited internet access for our community (the library is the only place community members have free internet access). Our budget for the upcoming year was based on the usual \$7,000 we have received in the past, so the drastic reduction in funding will require a major shift for our collections and programming plan for this year. The loss of \$5,000 from the PLA amounts to a 29% reduction for us, essentially a third of our entire budget. We hope this reduction is only temporary and that the Alaska State Legislature and other organizations involved will find a way to return the PLA to the full \$7,000 award in coming years.

Quyana, thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.



Impact of FY25 PLA Grant Reductions on Irene Ingle Public Library

2 messages




Mon, Aug 26, 2024 at 12:19 PM

Hi Pat,

My heart is with you and Ketchikan today as you deal with the devastating landslide that has affected your community. We know all too well in Wrangell what you are going through, and I am so sorry for what your community is facing. Please reach out if there is anything you need, or your community needs.

I am writing to respond to your request for impact statements regarding the PLA Grant reduction. I wrote the EED an email already, but wanted to let you know how these cuts affect our library specifically:

Since 2018 we have received a \$7,000 PLA grant, therefore we reasonably included these funds in our FY25 budget. Without the restoration of this funding, we will face severe budget shortfalls, particularly affecting:

- **OCLC WorldShare Subscription:** These funds cover our OCLC WorldShare subscription, which is essential for providing interlibrary loans both within Alaska and across the country. This service is a critical lifeline, not only for our patrons who rely on it for access to materials beyond our local collection but also for other libraries that depend on us to fulfill their loan requests. - This \$3200 has already been spent.
- **Collection Development:** We also rely on the PLA Grant to purchase large print and children's books. Wrangell has one of the highest median ages in Alaska, and large print titles are essential for our older residents. The reduced funding will severely impact our ability to maintain and expand our collection.

Thank you for your work on compiling this report, and for including Wrangell's information.

You are all in my thoughts,







RE: PLA Grant reduction impact statement Klukwan Library

Tue, Aug 27, 2024 at 12:21 PM

to: "eedlibrarygrants, eedlibrarygrants (EED sponsored)" <eed.library.grants@alaska.gov>
[Redacted]

Hello –

The Klukwan Community and School Library would like to make the following impact statement regarding the reduced PLA grant amount.

Reducing the amount of the Public Library Assistance (PLA) grant down to \$1,829 will have severe negative impacts to our library and community. This sudden reduction is especially impactful because the late announcement doesn't allow any planning to offset the loss and this is substantial for our small library.

In our remote village with few other resources, people of all ages go to the library for information, learning, and recreational opportunities. Our library is a community hub and offers easy access for patrons of all ages to attend cultural and life skills programs, access to materials, and search the internet.

With the reduction of funds, this will reduce the amount of hours our library will be open, and thereby reducing our ability to provide services and programming to our patrons, teachers, students, and all community members. Our unique position as a school and community library also allows us to provide a lot of support within a small, multi-grade school both during and after school hours. We provide a workspace for students, have helped run reading, writing, and math groups, and serve as a reading space. Students come before and after school for special programs, checking out materials and enjoying the quiet space to read. Reducing our hours would limit our ability to work with the school community effectively and help support our youth in their educational and recreational reading/activities.

The PLA grant provides our main source of funding to add new materials to our collection in order to keep them relevant and useful to our patrons. This past year alone we were able to add over 300 items consisting of books, movies, and audio. Without this funding, we will not be able to add as many new materials, and our collections will become stagnant and less useful to our patrons. Being able to add newer materials is a big draw to our community and even encourages other patrons from the surrounding area to use our library services.

Our library uses PLA funds to cover the yearly cost of having an online catalog. Now, we will only be able to cover the cost of the online catalog, spend the required 50% on library materials, and that leaves us very little to cover any other expenses. This will impact our general library work by severely limiting the time we have to work on library tasks as well as reducing our ability to provide programming and collaboration with our community and school. We will no longer have supply funds which we use to cover purchasing general library supplies, as well as supplies for programming. We will no longer have a travel budget which will impact our ability to attend the annual AkLA Conference which is extremely important for our staff's continued education and peer networking.

Thank you for listening,

Klukwan Library Staff



Impact statement from your library?

[Redacted]

Thu, Sep 5, 2024 at 11:06 AM

This is what I sent to Amy!
Thanks for doing this.

For my library and a lot of small, rural libraries the PLA grant is our only source of funding to buy books. I am going to have to cancel our subscription to the Alaska Library Catalog, stop buying bestsellers, cancel our magazine subscriptions and more for the entire year without this funding. This is a huge loss to us. What can we do to advocate for this funding to be restored?

[Redacted]

Kuskokwim Consortium Library | UAF Kuskokwim Campus

[Redacted]

Kuskokwim Campus (KuC), University of Alaska Fairbanks occupies the Indigenous and traditional lands of the Yup'ik and Cup'ik peoples in the Southwest region of Alaska. We at KuC honor, recognize, and respect the Indigenous communities and the land of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region and throughout the state of Alaska.



[AkLA-L] FY25 GRANTS ANNOUNCEMENT: Alaska State Libraries, Archives and Museums

nincomlib@alaska.net <nincomlib@alaska.net>

Fri, Aug 23, 2024 at 12:32 PM

Reply-To: nincomlib@alaska.net

[Redacted]
Cc: aklaist@lists.akla.org, ak museums@list.state.ak.us

As a small library in Ninilchik, AK this hit will most likely cause us to close in the near future. We are already only available 4 days a week, we are starting 3 days a week. We will not be able to afford staying open in the winter months with the cost of plow services and heating the library.

[Redacted]
Ninilchik Community Library

[Quoted text hidden]

[Quoted text hidden]

To view this discussion on the web visit <https://groups.google.com/a/lists.akla.org/d/msgid/aklaist/1724445126.291xi7exsk4gs8k4%40mymail.acsalaska.net>.



RE: External Email FY 2025 PLA Grant Agreement



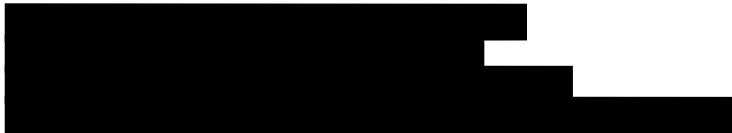
Mon, Aug 26, 2024 at 11:57 AM

Pat,



It is not an ideal situation and the cost of my catalog, OCLC, McNaughton, ALN and software already cost so much that I would have very little money to purchase library materials if I don't take this small amount of money. So in the best interest of our public library patrons, I am forced to get it signed before September 1. It will be a bleak year for the library. I can't make it bleaker.

Warm regards,



August 27, 2024

Dear Dr. Amy Chan,

I am at a loss as to how to respond to the Public Library Assistance Grant reduction. You have received the same emails I have, expressing concern that this is going to cause devastating consequences to small libraries across Alaska.

- Alaskan Public Libraries with FY23 operating budgets below \$50,000? **34**
- Alaskan Public Libraries with FY23 operating budgets below \$14,000? **13**

That is **34** libraries that may have to close or shorten hours out of the **82** funded?

As the [REDACTED] of Palmer Public Library, trying desperately to have a replacement library built, we are on a tight budget. With the continued attacks by the book banners, and the anti-library crowd, the size of the potential new library has shrunk. We do not know when it will be funded or how much or when. I use this PLA grant money to purchase things that are needed but not necessarily in the planned budget. Just today I went to a thrift store to purchase patron tables at a sizable cost difference than anywhere else to keep our costs down.

Alaska Public Libraries serve 95% of the Alaska population.

Reaching people is so much more than books or dvds or internet access. We are helping patrons, from every walk of life, navigate information. We are touching and changing people's lives daily. And with the Public Library Assistance Grant reduced by so much, our ability to help our patrons is reduced as well.

How has this happened? Where was the \$424,000 money reallocated?

I look forward to hearing your response.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Palmer Public Library [REDACTED]

"State Grant Funding Through the Alaska Statutes and Alaska Administrative Code

Each year, the State Legislature appropriates funds for library grants to the State Library. The State Library uses 75% of this appropriation to fund the public library assistance grants. These funds are simply divided up by the number of public library outlets that are eligible for the public library grant. In recent years, the amount of the public library assistance grant for each outlet has ranged from \$6,200 to \$6,350. The remaining 25% of this appropriation is used to fund netlender reimbursement and interlibrary cooperation grants." <https://lam.alaska.gov/library-grants/funding>



FY25 PLA Funding Cut report - Seldovia

Seldovia Public Library <seldovia.library@gmail.com>

Fri, Aug 30, 2024 at 9:56 AM



The Seldovia Public Library depends upon the Public Library Assistance (PLA) Grant program for the vast majority of our funding - approximately 85%. Our only other income is from Pick.Click.Give., our annual Fourth of July Book Sale, and other small donations. All of these together add up to an (unpredictable) approximate \$1000 per year.

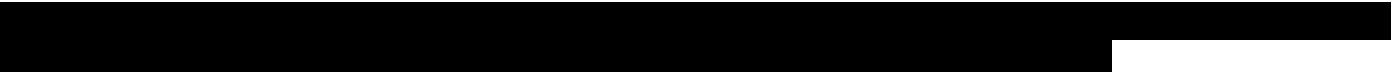
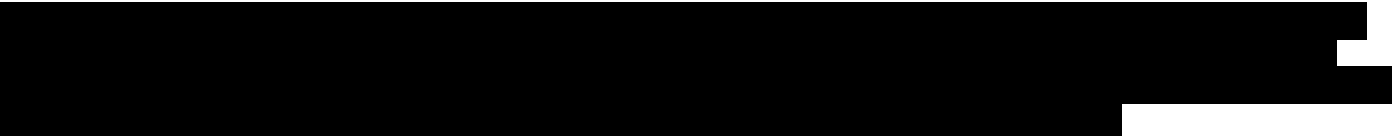
Our budget for Fiscal Year 2025 is counting on \$7,000 from PLA, as we have for many years past. We use this money to purchase new books and DVDs, pay for our magazine subscriptions, internet service, furniture, equipment, and other materials, software, supplies and services, including keeping our electronic catalog up and running. We already operate on a shoestring budget, and 100% of our labor is provided free by volunteers.

We are very fortunate to have our building and utilities costs covered by the City of Seldovia, and our faithful volunteers will keep showing up to keep our doors open and run programs. But, we will likely have to spend money out of our savings to pay for copy paper, software, internet and so on. Perhaps our most vital service to the community and to visitors is our free WiFi and our copier/printer. These services are in jeopardy. In addition, we won't be able to add any new materials to our collection, so our circulation will go down and patron numbers will probably go down.

The Seldovia Public Library is an important hub in the community. This funding cut has not only been devastating and stressful to our all-volunteer staff, our community has also expressed concern.


Seldovia Public Library

Seldovia Public Library
PO Drawer H
Seldovia, AK 99663
907-234-7662
<<http://seldovialibrary.wordpress.com/>>





[AkLA-L] FY25 GRANTS ANNOUNCEMENT: Alaska State Libraries, Archives and Museums

Tok Library <library@tokak.us>
To: "aklalist@lists.akla.org" <aklalist@lists.akla.org>

Fri, Aug 23, 2024 at 2:26 PM



I agree with everything others have said about the impact of this cut and seriously question why the PLA funds were cut by \$411,605 when the overall cut was only \$30,700. The PLA funds amounted to 43% of our budget for FY24 so a cut of this magnitude is devastating.


Tok Community Library



[Quoted text hidden]

To view this discussion on the web visit <https://groups.google.com/a/lists.akla.org/d/msgid/aklalist/C9F09638-51F0-42C0-9D0B-CE26D423D965%40tokak.us>.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, September 6, 2024 10:12 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: [AkLA-L] FY25 GRANTS ANNOUNCEMENT: Alaska State Libraries, Archives and Museums

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I'm shocked to see that this funding has been drastically reduced! As my library receives funding for all 7 of my village libraries, as well as Tuzzy Library, this is a massive hit! I rely on this grant to pay for a portion of my village staff's wages as well as books, subscriptions, and online services that support all of my rural communities of the North Slope. I do receive other grant funds, but it supports the remainder of my staff's wages. At this rate, I don't know if I can maintain the open hour requirements to keep these libraries open. If that's the case, then I assume I would be ineligible for this grant.

Quyanaq (Thank you),

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Tuzzy Consortium Library | Ilisagvik College
PO Box 2130 | Utqiagvik, AK 99723
P: (907) 852-4050 | [REDACTED]

RE: State of Alaska Public Library Assistance (PLA) Grant 70% Cut

The successful functionality of any library relies on a dedicated and trained staff to be efficient and available to the public. This proposed cut in state funding will negatively impact our ability to staff our libraries and to keep our internet connections available as a resource to the public. Because our libraries offer public services, we tend to rely on public funding in the form of patron donations, local grants from borough government assemblies, sponsorships via local businesses, and importantly, the state funding that we budget for and apply for annually.

Like many libraries in Alaska, our local Tri-Valley Community Library in Healy, and our sister Community Libraries in Anderson and Cantwell in the Denali Borough, often operate as important hubs of our small rural communities. We offer not only books, magazines, and other media; we also offer many useful resources such as computers, printers, other electronic devices, and of course the all important public wi-fi connection to the internet. For residents living off the grid or in a home far from the main transportation artery of highways and roads, this usually means the traditional internet networks are only available sporadically and often not at all. The library is one of the only places many patrons are able to complete certain functions that our current technologically advanced society requires from its citizens.

As an extension of the local public schools, all three of our Community Libraries also offer much needed programs to incoming and continuing students. These programs include, but are not limited to, winter Story Hour sessions, and Summer Reading programs that help children and their parents stay connected to what is happening in the School District and to keep reading skills honed during times outside of the school season or outside of regular school hours. The multitude of homeschool families in the borough also use the resources available at their local libraries on a weekly and sometimes daily basis.

The libraries in our borough have recently suffered a setback because of the worldwide effects of the pandemic that our nation endured in 2020-2021. We are still struggling to return from those days when we were required to close our doors and to adhere to public safety mandates. While we continue to operate via the donations, sponsorships, and state funding mentioned previously, we typically also coordinate major fundraising events to remain as self-sufficient as possible. However, because of the nature of a major fundraising event – large crowds, buffets of food, crews of volunteers – the atypical pandemic years put a damper on those previously significant events. Pre-pandemic events could pull in tens of thousands of dollars, money that

has been non-existent during recent years. Due to this, our Tri-Valley Library is operating at a deficit. We have also not been immune to the economic and employment crisis created by the pandemic. To keep a consistent staff we need to stay relevant in the employment market and be able to offer our employees a competitive wage and consistent schedule.

We are currently surviving within an era of crisis, and most likely many rural Alaska libraries are in a similar situation. This is the worst time for the State of Alaska to be removing previously consistent funding that has been relied upon. It is during these times of national crisis that the state should be bolstering existing public infrastructure such as public libraries, not removing helpful resources. This is a devastating cut to our local libraries, and will perpetuate the problem of trying to bring back our major fundraising events to be more self-sufficient. With less funding to guarantee a library staff, there will be no one to coordinate these efforts. There will be more days that the library doors will be forced to remain closed. There will be less access to the public services we have offered for decades. We sincerely hope this cut in funding for Alaska libraries will be reconsidered.

The Tri-Valley Community Library Board and the School & Community Library Staff

Library Staff:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Library Board of Directors

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



TRI-VALLEY COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Serving the Communities of Healy, Denali Park & Ferry, Alaska



Impact Statement - Whale Pass Public Library

Wed, Sep 4, 2024 at 6:57 PM

Cc: Library Whale Pass <whalepasspubliclibrary@gmail.com>

Hi Pat,

Tyra forwarded your email, I'm the new library director for the Whale Pass Public Library. Please see below for the impact statement. Hopefully we will all receive supplemental funding in October per Dr. Phillips-Chan's recent email.

Thank you for putting this together,


Library Director

"Reducing grant funding will negatively impact our summer reading program, reduce the relevance of keeping updated collection materials, and make it challenging to keep our lights on. The PLAG covers all our summer reading materials and new collection items and pays for our heating, electricity, and phone expenses. -Whale Pass Public Library"