

Oklahoma State Report

March 21, 2016

MPLA Activities

- Attended OLA Monthly Executive Board Meetings on January 15th and February 19th.
- The Oklahoma State Library Conference is March 30th-April 2nd in Tulsa, Oklahoma. I will staff the MPLA table and attempt to finalize renewals and attract new members. I am pleased with the pace of renewals so far in Oklahoma.

Oklahoma Library Association News

- The fiscal situation in Oklahoma continues to deteriorate. In February all Oklahoma State agencies were cut an additional 5% due to continued revenue failures (following a January cut of 3%). The Oklahoma Department of Libraries budget has been cut 8% this fiscal year. This brings the cumulative 3-year cut to Oklahoma's libraries to 33%.
- With a projected hole of \$1.3 billion for the 2017 Oklahoma State Budget, an additional cut of 12-15% next year is a possibility for all State agencies if no new revenue sources are approved by the legislature. Many municipal libraries will have no materials funds at all, and several may close completely, if a cut this large is passed onto them by the State Library.
- Oklahoma is one of only five states that has a State Universal Services Fund (OUSF) which supplements the Federal Universal Services Fund (E-Rate). A public library can potentially get its telecommunications services paid in full if they apply for both funds.

Due to increasing demand from the rural health sector, the OUSF is rapidly depleting its funds. I served on a working group of legislative staff, telecom providers and Oklahoma Department of Libraries staff which drafted HB 2616 in an attempt to modernize the OUSF fund. Under HB 2616 rural health care providers in Oklahoma will now be required to file for federal E-Rate funds first before accessing the State fund. This will extend the life of the fund, thus preserving an important benefit for Oklahoma's libraries. The bill passed the Oklahoma House early in March and is pending on the Senate Floor. It is supported by the Oklahoma governor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tim Miller, Oklahoma Representative