



## LIBRARY BUDGET AND STATE FUNDING

The final result of the recent state budget debate is a further reduction in public library funding. The state's Public Library Fund will now receive 1.97% of state general tax revenue, reduced from the previous 2.22%. This amounts to an approximate 11% reduction in the Public Library Fund, and is on top of the 15-20% reduction already felt by libraries due to declining state revenue this year. For our library system we anticipate receiving approximately \$11.6 million in state funding in 2009, compared to \$14.2 million received in 2008. In 2010 we anticipate a further reduction of approximately \$1 million.

Our Board of Trustees recently approved reductions throughout our budget for 2009. The results of these adjustments will be manifested in the following:

**Services** – No reduction in hours open to the public are planned at this time. However, at some point the necessary reduction in workforce or a continued decline in state funding may cause a broad reduction in services, including hours open to the public. By streamlining routines and reconfiguring work we will strive to avoid such cuts and continue to offer most of the library services currently available.

**Programs** – Most of our programs for all age groups will continue, but some reduction in programming will likely take place at locations where a position has not been filled. We will try to re-deploy staff to cover some of this programming, but some reduction will be unavoidable.

**Materials** – We have reduced the overall budget for books, audio, and video by 15% systemwide.

**Staffing** – We have not filled 20 adult positions so far in 2009. This will continue into 2010 with an eventual reduction of 10% of our adult workforce (35 positions). Such workforce reduction through attrition is a key part of our overall approach to reducing operating expenses going forward.

Adding to this challenging time is the record level of use of our library system by the public – more people of all ages are using the library than ever before.

Our library system, like approximately 1/3 of the libraries in Ohio, has a local property tax levy in addition to the state funding. First approved by voters in 1984, our local levy now provides almost half of our overall revenue for operating the library.

Meanwhile, the budget for 2010 is a very difficult one to predict. If our state funding continues to decline over the next 6-12 months, at some point a reduction in staff hours worked and hours open for public service will be considered.

We greatly appreciate the support of library customers. As library services evolve during these financially challenging times, we will strive to remain a vital part of the community we serve, and continue contributing to the quality of life in Akron and Summit County.