

Mideastern Michigan Library Cooperative Director's Report October and November 2025

State Budget/State Aid:

- On October 1, libraries could start filling out their State Aid. I receive emails from Joe Hamlin at the Library of Michigan at least monthly on how everyone is doing and I will send reminder emails to libraries. Everyone must finish their State Aid Report by February 1, 2026.

Cooperative Services:

- At our October Advisory Council meeting, the group asked me to arrange a meeting with Strategic Planning Consultants via zoom in November. I set up a meeting with 4 different consultants: Director of Woodland Cooperative; Fast Forward Libraries; ReThinking Libraries; and MCLS. Each consultant gave a 15-minute presentation and then we had an opportunity to ask questions. The Advisory Council members present have forwarded a recommendation to the MMLC Board of Trustees on whom they suggest hiring as the Consultant to guide the development of the October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2028 Strategic Plan.
- The MMLC Board of Trustees will be asked to approve the hiring of a Consultant at the January 8, 2026 meeting at Gloria Coles Flint Public Library.
- The Advisory Council meeting on February 3 (Public Libraries of Saginaw – Hoyt Branch) will be devoted to Strategic Planning with the consultant. The Consultant may also utilize direct surveys to member library directors and MMLC Board members, to gather more in-depth information. The May Advisory Council meeting (05/05/2026; Dryden Township Library) and MMLC Board meeting (05/14/2026; Public Libraries of Saginaw – Hoyt Branch) will be used to fine tune the Plan developed by the Consultant. The final document will be adopted by the MMLC Board at their September 10, 2026 (Lapeer District Library – deAngeli Branch) meeting. The Advisory Council meeting on October 6, 2026 (Community District Library – Byron Branch) will be devoted to implementation of the Strategic Plan. Members have requested that an Exit Strategy be included in the Strategic Plan.
- Also at the October Meeting, members requested that the Advisory Council meetings be held in person and not via Zoom.
- Library Directors of 15 public libraries have approved the 2025 Plan of Service Revision, required by the withdrawal of Holly Township Library and Capital Area District Libraries. The revised Plan will be presented to the MMLC Board at the January 8, 2026 meeting for approval. Members requested that an additional section be developed detailing an Exit Plan.

Library Cooperatives of Michigan (LCM):

- LCM has been working on a GPS System for looking up libraries in the State of Michigan, which we have now named MI Library Finder, <https://milibraryfinder.org/> . At the MLA Annual Conference, we introduced the new tool to everyone. As I am traveling to libraries this fall, I have been doing a demonstration of this new tool. The reaction has been very positive. You are also able to get to the tool through the LCM website. (www.micoops.info)

Library of Michigan (LM): Randy Riley, State Librarian

- [National Library Legislative Day](#)- Sponsored by ALA, provides an opportunity for library stakeholders to join ALA's Public Policy and Advocacy Team in Washington D.C. for 2 days (February 25-26, 2026) to visit Congressional leaders and legislators and discuss issues of importance to libraries.

There is a registration fee, and attendees are responsible for transportation and hotel accommodation costs. Interested participants must submit an [INTEREST FORM](#) by DECEMBER 12, 2025, to be considered for participation.

- [The Great Michigan Read](#) from the MI Humanities. LM will be partnering with them to offer 5 circulating book kits!

Michigan Library Association (MLA): Dillon Geshel, Interim Executive Director

- On Wednesday, October 29, 2025, the Michigan Library Association (MLA) hosted a press conference at the Lansing Center during MLA's 2025 Annual Conference to announce the success of the Protect MI Right to Read petition campaign. More than 4,300 Michiganders from every region of the state signed the petition, calling on Governor Whitmer and the Michigan Legislature to defend the freedom to read, to support library workers and critical statewide library programs like [MeL](#) and [MeLCat](#). Following the event, the petition was hand-delivered to every legislative office at the Capitol.
- On November 13, MLA brought together library leaders from across Michigan for an energizing roundtable with Attorney General Dana Nessel at the Kent District Library Service Center in Grand Rapids. More than just a policy discussion, the gathering underscored the shared commitment between Michigan's library community and the Attorney General's office to protect access to information and opportunity for Michiganders. The conversation centered on federal funding threats to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), and Attorney General Nessel's lawsuit in partnership with 20 other state Attorneys General to halt the federal administration's dismantling of the agency. IMLS funding is foundational to the work Michigan libraries do every day: \$4.8 million routed to Michigan each year powers widely popular programs that serve every region of the state, like MeL and MeLCat. In 2024 alone, MeLCat circulated over 1 million items between participating libraries.

Midwest Collaborative for Library Services (MCLS): Scott Garrison, Executive Director

- MCLS kicks off a new year of Virtual Dialogues on **Thursday, Jan. 22 from 10:30 a.m. to noon Eastern (9:30-11 a.m. Central)**. We will discuss how we've survived and thrived amid uncertainty, and how we can use our strengths and the lessons we've learned to continue to serve our communities during unpredictable times... [More information](#)
- Join MCLS this winter and spring for our popular Supervisor Series workshops! These engaging, interactive workshops include group activities, individual reflection, discussions, and hands-on practice on a variety of important skills for today's library leaders. All Supervisor Series workshops are held on Zoom and facilitated by MCLS Library Strategist Jenny Kobiela-Mondor. Session titles include:
 - Motivating Employees to Be Their Best
 - Learning to Manage for New Managers
 - Effective Communication Strategies for Managers
 - (NEW!) Super Manager
 - [More information](#)

MMLC Administration:

- Irene and Eric attended the Advisory Council Meeting at Bay County Library System – Wirt Branch in October. Thank you, Kristen, for hosting us.
- Eric attended *Circulating of Ideas* with other LCM directors. This is a monthly meeting where we have frank discussions.
- Eric attended the LM monthly update meetings.
- LCM has monthly meetings which Eric attended both meetings.

- Eric and Irene attended the October Call meeting, held via Zoom. The November meeting was cancelled.
- Eric and Irene met at Chase Bank in Vernon to sign signatory paperwork. Eric then visited Shiawassee District Library in Owosso.
- Eric visited Ruth Hughes Memorial District Library and Goodland Township Library and also dropped off Library of Michigan bookmarks at Dryden and Almont.
- Eric and Irene hosted the Strategic Planning Consultants meeting via Zoom.

**Respectfully submitted,
Eric Palmer
MMLC Director**