

**Mideastern Michigan Library Cooperative  
Director's Report  
December 2025 and January 2026**

**State Budget/State Aid:**

- Everyone finished their state aid reports with an entire day to spare. Congratulations to all. We have some good news from the Federal Government. A year ago, they were trying to eliminate the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) department, and this year they are increasing the budget by \$1.4 million. If this passes then the Library of Michigan (LM) should receive the funds for Mel and Melcat. However, this could all change before October arrives.

**Cooperative Services:**

- The MMLC Board of Trustees accepted the FY 2024-2025 Audit Report from Lewis & Knopf Auditors, at their January meeting. MMLC received an unmodified opinion, meaning there are no reportable conditions or material weaknesses.
- The Advisory Council met at Public Libraries of Saginaw in early February to begin working on the Strategic Plan with consultant Kate Pohjola Andrade, Director of Woodlands Library Cooperative. Frank discussions on the future of MMLC were held. We are working with Kate to create a survey to send out to all members in order to include everyone's ideas and thoughts. Members requested a zoom meeting be held in late March, or possibly mid-April.
- The next Advisory Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 5, 2026, at Dryden Township Library at 10am. We will continue working on the Strategic Plan.
- The next MMLC Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 14 at Public Libraries of Saginaw at 5:30 p.m.

**Library Cooperatives of Michigan (LCM):**

- LCM Continuing Education committee is working on hosting a panel discussion on the opportunities and barriers to becoming a District Library. It will be geared towards libraries who are thinking about becoming a District Library. We are planning it for early March. More information to come.

**Library of Michigan (LM): Michelle Bradley, Interim State Librarian**

- In early January we unexpectedly lost Randy Riley, State Librarian. Randy had worked for the Library of Michigan since 1989; he was in several positions before becoming the State Librarian in 2014. This is a big loss for the library community and he will be missed.
- Michelle Bradley has been named Interim State Librarian, through July 4<sup>th</sup>. Then David Votta will become the Interim State Librarian. The Library of Michigan is hoping to have a permanent State Librarian sometime in the Fall.
- [Trustee Training 101 - The Basics](https://libraryofmichigan.app.neoncrm.com/np/clients/libraryofmichigan/event.jsp?event=10833&) - 02/23/2026 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM ET **Free** Webinar link will be emailed to registrants the day before the webinar begins. **CLICK LINK BELOW TO REGISTER** - <https://libraryofmichigan.app.neoncrm.com/np/clients/libraryofmichigan/event.jsp?event=10833&>
- [Trustee Training 102 - Advanced Trustees](https://libraryofmichigan.app.neoncrm.com/np/clients/libraryofmichigan/event.jsp?event=10838&) Registration - 03/02/2026 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM ET **Free** Webinar link will be emailed to registrants the day before the webinar begins. **CLICK LINK BELOW TO REGISTER** - <https://libraryofmichigan.app.neoncrm.com/np/clients/libraryofmichigan/event.jsp?event=10838&>

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

- **Protecting Library Funding: Trial Court Changes** Thursday, February 12 | 10:00–11:00 AM **Originally scheduled for January, this important session is back.** In 2025, Michigan’s Alternative Funding for Trial Courts Workgroup released a [final concept paper](#) proposing that all revenue from penal fines and civil infractions be redirected to trial courts — a shift that could significantly reduce funding for public libraries. [Registration](#)
- **The Llano Decision & the Right to Read** Thursday, February 19 | 10:00–11:00 AM What does the Fifth Circuit’s decision in Little v. Llano County really mean for libraries and book challenges? This session welcomes Skip Dye, Chair of Penguin Random House’s Intellectual Freedom Taskforce and his fellow taskforce member, Dan Novack, VP Associate General Counsel, Penguin Random House, as they break down the ruling in plain terms, explore how Penguin Random House is thinking about it alongside its other ongoing cases, and look ahead to what this legal landscape could mean for libraries in 2026. We’ll focus on real-world implications, open questions, and what libraries and publishers should be watching next. [Registration](#)
- **Leading Through Uncertain Times;** Thursday, March 26 | 10:00–11:00 AM MLA welcomes **Scott Duimstra**, Director of Hennepin County (MN) Library, former Director of Capital Area District Libraries in Lansing, Michigan, as well as a past MLA President. Scott will share his experience in Minnesota, including how his system is responding to immigration and DHS enforcement activity, how they are supporting staff and patrons, and lessons learned that may help guide Michigan libraries. [Registration](#)

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

- The next date in MCLS’s popular Virtual Dialogue series is **Thursday, March 19, from 10:30 a.m. to noon Eastern (9:30-11 a.m. Central)**. Our Virtual Dialogues are designed to provide opportunities for those in Indiana and Michigan libraries to connect and engage around various topics relevant to library staff. [Register today](#) and watch for topic announcements coming soon to email lists and our [Virtual Dialogues web page](#).
- **Visit our training store at [store.mcls.org](https://store.mcls.org) to find your next learning opportunity!** If you have any questions, contact Gwen at [training@mcls.org](mailto:training@mcls.org) or call 517-220-9950.

## **MMLC Administration:**

- Met with Ann Manko at GCFPL and Jennifer Dean from UMF.
- Eric dropped Bookmarks at CDL and visited Sara Danford at Laingsburg.
- Eric dropped Bookmarks and visited Kara Haight at LDL and Kelli Lovasz at North Branch.
- Eric dropped Bookmarks and visited Coleman, Pere Marquette, Chippewa River and Grace A Dow.
- Signed checks with Irene and Tanya at GCFPL.
- Eric attended the LM update.
- Eric attended the LCM Circulation of Ideas.
- Eric met with the Bay County Library System Board.
- Participated at the MLA Connect meeting talking about State Budget with Randy Riley.
- Met with the Public Libraries of Saginaw Board
- Eric attended both LCM meetings.
- Eric met with Erin Fredrickson, a new Board member, conducting a brief training.
- Eric and Irene attended the MMLC Board meeting.
- Eric and Irene attended the memorial service for Randy Riley at the LM.
- Irene has worked with our Website company to successfully update the MMLC Archives.
- Irene has begun preliminary work on the FY 2026-2027 Budget.

**Respectfully submitted,**  
**Eric Palmer**  
**MMLC Director**