

CHAUTAUQUA-CATTARAUGUS LIBRARY SYSTEM

DIRECT ACCESS PLAN

2017-2021

1. *Describe how all individuals residing within the boundaries of the system but outside a member public library's chartered to service area will receive library services.*

Since the System's establishment in 1960, all residents of Chautauqua and Cattaraugus Counties have been able to access the materials and services of any member library within the two counties. When joining the System, each member signed a contract to that effect. Neither the System nor its member libraries may charge system residents for library cards and all provide free onsite use of computers and access to the Internet. The Library System receives funding from both counties which it in turn distributes to its members in the form of aid through a program called Materials Plan. A major reason for the Materials Plan is to compensate the member libraries for freely sharing materials and services in to those living outside their chartered-to-serve areas. Access to digital collections is freely available to all resident of the two counties.

2. *Describe how the system will assure that those persons living within the system boundaries in an area where a member library chooses to withdraw from the system, or where a chartered and registered library was never a member of the system, will be served by the system.*

Should a member library choose to withdraw from the System, the residents of that chartered-to-serve area will continue to be eligible to receive service at any other library within the System. At this time, the System area has no chartered and registered libraries which are not members of the System.

3. *Describe what the system considers "serious inequities and hardships" and the criteria used by the system to make the determination.*

The System does not believe that any serious inequities and hardships exist within its area that would prevent one library from serving the entire System's population without restriction or limits. Traditionally, this System's members have always cooperated with one another. Members believe that service to all the residents of the System's area must be delivered on an equal footing inasmuch as all residents are subject to State and County taxes which support library services. A robust delivery system allows member libraries to share materials, and member libraries encourage their patrons to use other libraries if they cannot provide the needed service or materials. The System provides access to an online shared catalog and eBook database. All of the System's member libraries meet all of the State's standards.

4. *Describe what constitutes excessive out of chartered service area borrowing in the system.*

There is no reason to believe that excessive out of chartered service area borrowing exists on the part of any member library because serving the entire population of the two counties has always been a condition of membership in the System.

5. A. Describe the unserved and the underserved populations with the system. B. Describe the criteria used by the System to identify libraries as having an inadequate level of local income to support the delivery of acceptable library services (underserved). List those libraries so identified. C. Describe the actions the system will take to expand the availability of library services to unserved and underserved individuals residing within the boundaries of the system. D. Provide a timetable for such actions. E. Identify who will be responsible for carrying out these actions.

Underserved populations throughout the two counties include people who are blind or who have a physical disability, seniors, people who have a developmental or learning disability, people living in institutionalized settings, members of ethnic or minority groups in need of special services, people who are educationally disadvantaged, people who are unemployed or underemployed, and people who are geographically isolated. The Outreach Coordinator works directly with these populations and other organizations that serve these populations, and with member libraries to improve services to these populations. All residents of the two counties have free access to digital materials and are eligible to receive full services at any of the 36 libraries.

The only significantly large area of unserved population exists in the Cherry Creek-South Dayton area, an area which closely matches the boundaries of the Pine Valley Central School District. Small overlaps exist with service areas of existing libraries, which is a barrier to forming a district library in this area. The superintendent of the school district has indicated a desire to form a library to help serve children after school hours, and the Outreach Coordinator has had meetings to this effect. The Division of Library Development has given guidance that because of this overlap a library district should not be explored, so no timeline exists, however future service area changes at existing member libraries might make a library more feasible in the future, and the options for serving these populations are being continuously explored. A digital library card was developed in collaboration with school teachers in this district to give children access to digital collections.

6. Describe the conditions under which modifications to the free direct access plan can be made: a. Without the prior approval of the Commissioner of Education; b. With the prior approval of the Commissioner of Education.

Because a requirement of System membership by all of its member libraries is free direct access for all residents there are no conditions either with or without the prior approval of the Commissioner of Education under which modification to this free direct access plan may be made, except by vote of the members.

7. Describe how the system will assure that member libraries are complying with the system free direct access plan approved by a majority of member libraries.

Each member library will receive a copy of this plan following its approval by the System Board, a majority of the System's members, and the Education Commissioner. To maintain its membership in the System, it must comply with the plan. In the unlikely event that any member will not comply, the library will be reminded of the requirements for membership in the System, what benefits derive from that membership, and the consequences of losing its privileges as a

member. Any member which after a warning delivered by the System Board fails to comply with the free direct access will be dropped from System membership.

8. *Describe how the system obtained member library input to the plan for direct access.*

The plan was distributed to member libraries for comment following a strategic planning process guided by a Strategic Planning Committee, which comprised CCLS board member and member library directors.

Approved by majority vote of Member Libraries, October 3, 2016. Approved by the CCLS Board, December 28, 2016.