

PROTECT MICHIGAN LIBRARIES!



What is the MeLibrary (MeL.org)?

The Michigan eLibrary (MeL.org) is a collaborative, statewide project developed by the State Library of Michigan. It involves every library in the state – academics, publics, community colleges, k-12, and special libraries (law, corporate, hospital, prison libraries, etc.). MeL is an anywhere, anytime, virtual library for Michigan residents. It is filled with rich online research tools for faculty, small business, job seekers, and more. It is accessible from your home, school or office – with your library card or your driver's license.

MeL databases are online, copyrighted, subscription resources including magazines, newspapers, and more that are not available through Google. MeL represents the future of information in a knowledge-based economy. Through statewide group purchasing the library community has saved more than \$72 million. MeL Tests and Tutorials are filled with advanced placement, GED, and police, fire and nursing certification tests. MeLCat is a centralized, statewide union catalog and patron-initiated interlibrary loan system. MeLCat allows libraries throughout the state to share books, CDs, DVDs and more from other communities.

Who Uses MeL and MeLCat ?

Everyone. MeL is used by students, teachers, faculty, job seekers, doctors, lawyers, legislators, policemen, firemen, nurses and more. The MeL Business and Jobs Gateway links people directly to job postings, career exploration, filing for unemployment and market research for small businesses. From October 2008 to July 2009 Michigan residents conducted more than 56 million searches and sessions on MeL databases. Today, 400 libraries participate in MeLCat. Residents from Ann Arbor to Escanaba have access to more than 9 million materials in MeLCat and circulate 1,000,000 per year, reducing costs through statewide resource sharing. MeLCat usage increased 33% this past year as residents visit their libraries in a down economy to borrow vital resources. Rural communities with small library collections are extremely dependent on MeLCat.

How is MeL/MeLCat funded and why is it at risk?

Currently, the State Library of Michigan funds the Michigan eLibrary with approximately \$5 million in federal funds from the Library Services and Technology Act. State aid to libraries serves as the maintenance of effort required to sustain federal funding for MeL. PA 89 requires that libraries be funded at \$1.50 per capita, or approximately \$15. million. The Governor's proposed budget would reduce state aid to libraries to \$3,445,000 putting the federal funding for the Michigan eLibrary at risk of collapsing.