

Testimony of Gail Santy, on behalf of the Central Kansas Library System
Executive Board to the State Library of Kansas Advisory Board
June 9, 2023

Chairman Roberts and Members of the State Library Advisory Board:

Thank you for the opportunity to supply written testimony regarding the Hays Public Library's intended protest of the 2024 Central Kansas Library System (CKLS) proposed budget.

The primary issue between the Central Kansas Library System and the Hays Public Library (HPL) is the allotment of system revenue among the cooperating libraries. Hays Public Library would like to receive more money and has proposed a contract to address their desire.

The CKLS Executive Board believes this contract is unrealistic, unfair to all other member libraries, and unsustainable.

Unrealistic:

Under the CKLS funding mechanism approved by the Executive Board in 2023, libraries are placed into grant categories by population. Each library has the opportunity to earn more money for their library through resource sharing and out of district borrowers. These are two key standardized performance measurements that measure service to rural library patrons who do not pay a local tax to support the Hays Public Library. The CKLS Base Public Library Allotment (grant in aid) is also intended to partially compensate the aforementioned patrons.

The total money available to CKLS public libraries in 2024 is \$686,334. The new funding mechanism provides \$446,500.00 for base public library allotments. Eligible public libraries located in CKLS taxing counties receive a Base Public Library Allotment annually.

A library's Base Public Library Allotment is calculated on the State's official population of the library's taxing district. (The official population of the public library's service area is based each year on the "Kansas Public Survey Annual Report" provided by the State Library of Kansas.)

Libraries are placed by population into library grant categories which, while similar

to the service levels set in the Kansas Public Library Standards, serve a different purpose.

Table A, below, shows the library grant category by population range and the amount of the 2021 and 2024 Public Library Base Allotment for each grant category.

Hays, Kansas, has a population of 20,795 and is a Major Service Center I library. The table below shows the base grant in aid from 2021 under the old funding model and the 2024 amount of the base grant in aid each library will receive under the new funding mechanism.

Table A

2021 and 2024 Comparison of Library Categories and Base Grant in Aid			
Category	Population Range	2021	2024
Major Service Center II	25,000 to 100,000	\$23,100	\$46,000
Major Service Center I	10,000 to 25,000	\$19,600	\$21,000
Service Center II	2,500 to 10,000	\$10,100	\$11,000
Service Center I	1,000 to 2,500	\$8,200	\$8,500
Linking Library	500 to 1,000	\$5,800	\$7,000
Gateway Library	500 or fewer	\$5,100	\$6,000

The remainder of the money available for grants in aid is to be equally divided into two categories: Out of District Borrowers Allotment and Resource Sharing Allotment.

Out of District Borrowers Allotment

This is a supplemental allotment calculated on the basis of the number of registered borrowers who reside outside the library's taxing district. This dollar amount will change based on two factors:

1. The actual number of out of district (ODB) registered borrowers at a library.
2. The total number, System wide, of registered out of district borrowers.

Each library's out of district borrowers (ODB) is calculated on a percentage of the whole System, using the Library's actual number of ODB registered borrowers, divided by the System total number of ODB registered borrowers, times 100, equals the percent of ODB allotment.

Utilizing best practice procedures, CKLS recommends that inactive borrower accounts

be removed from the patron database every three years.

Resource Sharing Allotment

This is a supplemental allotment calculated on the number of resources provided to library patrons outside the library's taxing district. This number is calculated from SHAREit and Pathfinder consortium-level items lent to library borrowers with a home library outside the lending library's taxing district.

Each library's Resource Sharing Allotment is calculated on a percentage of the whole System. This dollar amount will change based on two factors:

1. The actual number of resources a library lends to library patrons outside its own library taxing district.
2. The total number, System wide, of resources lent to other library patrons.

The formula for calculating this allotment is: the Library's actual number of lends to patrons outside its own library taxing district, divided by System total number of lends to other library patrons, times 100, equals the percent of Resource Sharing Allotment.

Under HPL's proposed contract with HPL population being 20,795, they would receive \$105,000 the first year. It must be noted, Great Bend Public Library (population 14,580) will receive a base grant of \$21,000, and Salina Public Library (population 46,481) will receive a base grant of \$46,000. I use these three libraries as an example as they are the largest libraries in CKLS based on local population and the Great Bend Public Library is set in the same grant category as HPL.

Under the new funding mechanism, all member public libraries have the opportunity to "earn" more money based on services: out of district borrowers and resources shared based on a percentage of the whole System and the funds available (\$119,917.64, respectively). Based on early estimates, in 2024, Hays Public Library could receive \$54,728. Great Bend could receive \$63,853, and Salina Public Library (SPL) could receive \$89,191. Because Great Bend is the largest library in the Pathfinder Catalog Consortium, Great Bend has a significantly higher number of resources shared than either HPL or SPL. Every public library in CKLS has had an opportunity to opt into the consortium catalog. HPL and SPL declined that opportunity. The actual work each public library in CKLS does in 2023 will influence this number up or down with final dollar amounts to be assessed in January 2024. This model is based largely on the model successfully used by the South Central Kansas Library System for years.

The proposed contract would realize the Hays Public Library receiving more money than the Salina Public Library by \$15,809 or the Great Bend Public Library by \$41,147.

Table B provides a sampling of the “base grant” the Kansas Regional Library Systems provide to eligible libraries. The Regional Library Systems do provide additional grants for various different things to eligible libraries, but this demonstrates the work CKLS has done to align the base grants with the amounts in the other Regional Library Systems.

Table B

The Regional Library Systems provide grants in aid					
Library Grant Category	CKLS	SCKLS	SEKLS	NEKLS	NWKLS
Major Service Center II	\$46,000	na	\$40,808	\$37,098	na
Major Service Center I	\$21,000	\$13,828	\$13,828	\$28,087	na
Service Center II	\$11,000	\$6,670	\$6,770	\$23,450	\$5,500.00
Service Center I	\$8,500	\$4,736	\$4,736	\$19,014	\$4,000.00
Linking	\$7,000	\$3,978	\$3,978	\$13,768	\$3,500.00
Gateway	\$6,000	\$2,756	\$4,164	\$9,411	\$3,000.00

The HPL proposed contract would create an imbalance in the amount of money the three largest libraries in CKLS receive, and would set a precedent of favoring one library over another in regards to funding. This is unrealistic.

Unfair:

Accepting this contract would mean a drastic reduction in grants in aid to the other member public libraries and the member school districts.

Table C below shows the money CKLS has available for grants in 2024.

Table C

2024 CKLS Grants-in-Aid	
Public Library Base Allotment	\$446,500.00
Courier Allotment (does not include CKLS office)	\$89,418.30
Continuing Education Allotment	\$37,100.00
Out of District Borrowers Allotment	\$119,917.64
Resource Sharing Allotment	\$119,917.24
School Library Service Allotment	\$14,000
Total (does not include Competitive Conference Grants \$4,000)	\$826,853.18

CKLS Standards (in the System Plan) require each library to attend a total of 6 hours of continuing education each year and a quorum of the trustees to attend trustee training. Because of this requirement, CKLS cannot eliminate the Continuing Education Allotment.

The CKLS Executive Board has placed a high priority on resource sharing and heavily subsidizes courier service for public libraries and funds Pathfinder Central, the shared integrated library system. These cannot be eliminated.

CKLS would have no choice but to take the money from the Out of District Borrowers and Resource Sharing Allotments funds. This means that the other 53 libraries would receive a significant cut to the grants in aid. In a System of 53 libraries, Hays Public Library would receive 12.70% of the total funding allotted to grants in aid. Reducing grants in aid to 53 libraries so the Hays Public Library can receive more money is unfair.

Unsustainable:

The proposed contract is unsustainable. The Hays Public Library proposes the contract starts at \$105,000 with an annual 2.0% automatic increase.

CKLS is proud the Executive Board and System Librarians have worked to improve efficiencies, eliminate waste, and reduce the tax burden by \$449,031 over the past four years, while continuing to increase the money given to libraries. Table D on the next page shows the actual reduction in funds levied systemwide for each of the past four years.

Table D

CKLS Mill Levy Funds systemwide	
Year	Amount
2019	\$2,552,074
2020	\$2,459,569
2021	\$2,360,497
2022	\$2,103,043

Accepting the contract would mean a greater tax burden on rural taxpayers.

Accepting the contract with the automatic 2.0% annual increase means CKLS would need to reverse the downward trend and increase the tax burden year after year to cover the \$105,000 and the 2.0% increase as well as the necessary costs for mailing the revenue neutral rate notification in CKLS' 16 taxing counties. In 2022, mailing the revenue neutral rate in Cloud County cost \$6,347.24. If we use this amount as a representation of the cost, CKLS would need to levy from \$50,000 to \$100,800 more just to cover the costs of the revenue neutral rate notifications.

In five years, Hays Public Library would be receiving \$113,654. No other library in CKLS will receive a 2.0% automatic increase. In fact, every other member library will need to absorb this percentage increase as an annual loss of funds, which would cause great harm to those libraries each and every year the contract might be in place. This one-sided contract is not sustainable.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony. The CKLS Executive Board will not accept the proposed HPL contract for the following reasons: it is unrealistic, it is unfair to other members libraries as their funding would be reduced, and it is unsustainable as it would unreasonably increase the tax burden on rural taxpayers.

On behalf of the Central Kansas Library System Executive Board,



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