

Chapter 625

(Senate Bill 378)

AN ACT concerning

**Education – Regional Resource Centers and County Libraries – Funding
Public Libraries – Young Readers Matching Grant Program, Funding, and
Services**

FOR the purpose of renaming the Young Readers Matching Grant Program to be the Young Readers Grant Program; altering the purpose, application requirements, and funding of the Program; altering the calculation of certain funding for certain regional resource centers and each county public library system for certain fiscal years; altering the types of services of which each public library is required to offer at least one service; and generally relating to the public libraries in the State.

~~BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
Article – Education
Section 23–202(b)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)~~

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Education
Section ~~23–111~~, 23–205(c), 23–410, and 23–503
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
Article – Education
Section 23–202(b)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Education

23–111.

(a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

(2) “Affiliated service” means a book-gifting service performed by a nonprofit organization that is tax exempt under § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or

a unit of State, county, or municipal government that forms an affiliated partnership with an early reader organization.

(3) “Early reader organization” means a nonprofit organization:

(i) That is tax exempt under § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code;
and

(ii) Whose mission is to distribute to children free, high-quality books designed to aid the development of reading skills.

(4) “Program” means the Young Readers [Matching] Grant Program.

(b) There is a Young Readers [Matching] Grant Program in the State Library Agency.

(c) The purpose of the Program is to provide grants to public libraries and affiliated services to:

(1) Support the establishment and operation of affiliated services; and

(2) Contribute [an amount equal to the amount of funding provided for] TO the operation of an affiliated service.

(d) The State Librarian shall administer the Program.

(e) (1) A public library or an affiliated service may submit an application for a program grant on the form that the State Librarian requires.

(2) An application for a program grant shall include a plan to ensure that the public library or the affiliated service is able to gift books to eligible children, including **SPECIFIC MEASURES FOR SERVING** children in low-income zip codes within its area of service.

(3) A program grant shall be disbursed to a public library or an affiliated service that qualifies for the Program.

(f) The State Library Board shall:

(1) On or before December 1, 2024, and every other year thereafter, report to the General Assembly on the effectiveness of the Program in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article; and

(2) Collect statistics and other information necessary for this purpose.

(g) For each fiscal year, the Governor shall include in the annual budget bill an appropriation of ~~[\$350,000]~~ **\$450,000** to the Program.

23-202.

(b) Each regional resource center shall provide, through mutual cooperation and coordination, books, information, and other material and service resources that an individual library cannot provide adequately by itself.

23-205.

(c) (1) Subject to subsection (g) of this section, each year each participating regional resource center shall receive a minimum amount of funding for each resident of the area served, to be used for operating and capital expenses.

(2) The allocation shall be calculated as follows:

(i) ~~For each of fiscal years 2011 through 2015....~~ **\$6.75** per each resident of the area served;

(ii) For fiscal year 2016..... **\$6.95** per each resident of the area served;

(iii) For fiscal year 2017..... **\$7.15** per each resident of the area served;

(iv) For fiscal year 2018..... **\$7.55** per each resident of the area served;

(v) For fiscal year 2019..... **\$7.95** per each resident of the area served;

(vi) For fiscal year 2020..... **\$8.35** per each resident of the area served;

(vii) For fiscal year 2021..... **\$8.55** per each resident of the area served;

~~(viii)]~~ For fiscal year 2022..... **\$8.75** per each resident of the area served;

~~[(ix)]~~ **(II)** For fiscal year 2023..... **\$9.19** per each resident of the area served;

~~[(x)]~~ **(III)** For fiscal year 2024..... **\$9.39** per each resident of the area served;

[(xi)] (IV) For fiscal year 2025..... \$9.59 per each resident of the area served;

[(xii)] (V) For fiscal year 2026..... \$9.79 per each resident of the area served; [and]

[(xiii)] (VI) For fiscal year 2027 [and each fiscal year thereafter]..... \$9.99 per each resident of the area served;

(VII) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2028..... ~~\$10.29~~
\$10.19 PER EACH RESIDENT OF THE AREA SERVED;

(VIII) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2029..... ~~\$10.60~~
\$10.40 PER EACH RESIDENT OF THE AREA SERVED;

(IX) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2030..... ~~\$10.92~~
\$10.60 PER EACH RESIDENT OF THE AREA SERVED;

(X) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2031..... ~~\$11.24~~
\$10.81 PER EACH RESIDENT OF THE AREA SERVED; AND

(XI) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2032 AND EACH FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER..... ~~\$11.58~~ **\$11.02 PER EACH RESIDENT OF THE AREA SERVED.**

23-410.

[Beginning January 1, 2024, each] EACH public library must offer at least one of the following services alone or in partnership with units of government or nonprofit organizations:

(1) [A program to increase scores on the kindergarten assessment administered under § 7-210 of this article;

(2) A program designed to close learning gaps created by lack of access to education, including learning gaps that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic;

(3) An initiative to expand digital equity and access to free computing and broadband Internet;

(4) An educational program providing technology instruction and skills, health literacy, instruction on operating a small business, and instruction on workforce

development] **A PROGRAM DESIGNED TO INCREASE EARLY CHILDHOOD LITERACY AND LEARNING, SCHOOL READINESS, LITERACY PROFICIENCY, AND STUDENT SUCCESS;**

(2) AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM THAT ADVANCES INFORMATION LITERACY, TECHNOLOGY INSTRUCTION AND SKILLS, AND ECONOMIC, CAREER, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT;

(3) AN INITIATIVE THAT INCREASES DIGITAL EQUITY AND ACCESS TO THE INTERNET;

[(5)] (4) Serving as a community resource and distribution site during public emergencies; AND

[(6) A program to reduce barriers to STEM education, including by providing activities, classes, programs, and events; and

(7)] (5) Support for mental health and [reducing social and physical isolation] PERSONAL WELL-BEING.

23-503.

(a) (1) The entire capital and operating cost of the minimum library program for this State as a whole shall be shared as provided in this subsection.

(2) Subject to subsection (d) of this section, the State shall provide:

(i) Approximately 40 percent of the total cost of the minimum program; and

(ii) Not less than 20 percent of the cost of the minimum program in any county.

(3) The counties participating in the program together shall provide through local taxes approximately 60 percent of the total statewide cost of the minimum program.

(b) (1) Subject to subsection (d) of this section, each county public library system that participates in the minimum library program shall be provided for each resident of the county, to be used for operating and capital expenses:

(i) [For each of fiscal years 2011 through 2015 – \$14.00;

(ii) For fiscal year 2016 – \$14.27;

- (iii) For fiscal year 2017 – \$14.54;
- (iv) For fiscal year 2018 – \$15.00;
- (v) For fiscal year 2019 – \$15.50;
- (vi) For fiscal year 2020 – \$16.00;
- (vii) For fiscal year 2021 – \$16.43;
- (viii)] For fiscal year 2022 – \$17.10;
- [(ix)] **(II)** For fiscal year 2023 – \$17.50;
- [(x)] **(III)** For fiscal year 2024 – \$17.90;
- [(xi)] **(IV)** For fiscal year 2025 – \$18.30;
- [(xii)] **(V)** For fiscal year 2026 – \$18.70; [and]
- [(xiii)] **(VI)** For fiscal year 2027 [and each fiscal year thereafter] –

\$19.10;

(VII) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2028 – ~~\$19.71~~ \$19.50;

(VIII) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2029 – ~~\$20.35~~ \$19.92;

(IX) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2030 – ~~\$21.00~~ \$20.32;

(X) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2031 – ~~\$21.67~~ \$20.74; AND

(XI) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2032 AND EACH FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER – ~~\$22.37~~ \$21.15.

(2) (i) Subject to subsection (d) of this section, the State shall share in this amount.

(ii) Any county may provide an amount greater than its share under the cooperative program, but the State may not share in the excess.

(c) Any employer Social Security contributions required by federal law for any employee in a county public library system shall remain the obligation of the employer.

(d) (1) Receipt of State funding for a county library system that participates in the minimum library program under this section is contingent on the board of library

trustees adopting a written policy for operation of the county library system that is consistent with the State standards for libraries.

(2) (i) The Comptroller shall withhold all State funds from a county library system that the State Library Board certifies has failed to meet the State standards for libraries.

(ii) The Comptroller shall continue to withhold funds under subparagraph (i) of this paragraph until the State Library Board certifies that the county library system has adopted a written policy consistent with the State standards for libraries.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

Approved by the Governor, May 26, 2026.