



Paula A. Kiely
Director

A Letter to Our Patrons:

The Milwaukee Public Library's vision is to be Every Person's Gateway™ to an expanding world of information. Our highest priority is providing quality services, programs, and materials that our community wants and needs. Whether it's a copy of the latest best seller, a Saturday morning story hour, access to the Internet through a library computer, or a meeting space for community and neighborhood activities, MPL's mission is to meet those needs.

With the current economic situation and the impact on State and Local government, our ability to continue services has been greatly challenged. Since 2000, the library's budget for operations has declined significantly and our ability to continue operations at the same level severely impacted.

Our library staff has worked hard to increase efficiencies and decrease costs. We have reduced our energy consumption, worked collaboratively with other libraries to provide services less expensively, streamlined operations to reduce turnaround time for new books and other materials, and centralized functions to ensure uninterrupted operations.

Over the last year as we've talked about the budget and listened to you at a series of community meetings, you told us not to close libraries. The message was clear: Fewer hours were preferable to libraries closing, while we continue to work on a long-term sustainable library plan.

In 2010, all neighborhood libraries funded through the City will remain open, but with a reduction in hours. Each library will be open 35 hours a week – 5 days at 7 hours per day. Center Street Library, which is funded with federal block grant dollars, will continue to be open 50 hours a week. Central Library will be open 54 hours per week, continuing to serve the entire City and metropolitan area. However, the Frank P. Zeidler Humanities and Art, Music and Recreation Rooms located in Central will have reduced hours.

While far from ideal, this schedule will provide equitable access to libraries throughout the city, supporting seniors during the day and students using the library afternoons and evenings. MPL web services will continue to be available 24 hours a day at www.mpl.org

We welcome your comments on these changes and your ideas for improvement. Please feel free to complete a comment form or email me at libraries@milwaukee.gov.

Sincerely,

Paula A. Kiely
Director