

White Paper: Funding Request for SLED and the Alaska Library Catalog
June 7, 2020 (Revised July 12, 2021)

Introduction: During the 2020 legislative session, Senator Begich at the recommendation of the Alaska Library Association's Advocacy Committee, sponsored an amendment to the Alaska State Library's budget for \$635,900 to fund library operations for the Alaska Library Network, which includes the Alaska Library Catalog (ALC) and the Statewide Library Electronic Doorway (SLED) databases, with additional funding for the Imagination Library. The Alaska Library Network is located at the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA)/Alaska Pacific University (APU) Consortium Library. It is operated with a variety of funding sources that have evolved over the past 25 years.

Specifically, of the \$635,900, \$188,900 was included for the Alaska State Library to fund two librarian positions to be located at the UAA/APU Consortium Library, \$397,000 was included for databases, and \$50,000 was included for the Imagination Library. The amendment was approved in late March by both the Senate and the House. Given the current economic and fiscal environment, the amendment was vetoed by Governor Dunleavy. The reaction to the Governor's veto from legislators, the media, and the public indicated a need to clarify background information and funding sources concerning the ALC and SLED.

During the 2021 legislative session, the legislature added \$635,900 again to the State Library's budget. Given the ongoing economic and fiscal environment, the amendment was vetoed by Governor Dunleavy.

Alaska Library Catalog (ALC): Since its inception in 1999 as a joint catalog for UAA and the Anchorage Public Libraries, the ALC has grown to include 86 public, academic, special, and K-12 libraries serving 92% of the population of Alaska. The shared library catalog has 6.4 million items and 235,000 registered borrowers with an annual circulation of 1.9 million books and other items. (Circulation during FY2020 was 3.6 million items; during the pandemic year of FY2021, it fell to 1.9 million.) This nearly statewide catalog is remarkable for its unique multi-type library cooperation and for the cost savings it has provided to each library while providing better service for patrons.

As of FY21, the ALC is supported by 2.5 FTE working at the UAA/APU Consortium Library. These positions are in addition to the Alaska Library Network librarian who is paid through the Alaska State Library using federal library grant funds. This position is located at the UAA/APU Consortium Library.

Alaska Library Catalog (ALC)								
	ALC's FTE Staff at UAA*	Funding from UAA/APU Library	% from UAA/APU Library	Funding from ALC Member Libraries for Staff	Number of Member Libraries	% from Member Libraries	Grant Funding from State Library	Total Cost for Staff
FY2018	4	\$466,424	82.6%	\$98,258	80	17.4%	\$0	\$564,682
FY2019	4	\$459,682	81.4%	\$105,000	81	18.6%	\$0	\$564,682
FY2020	3	\$291,144	72.5%	\$110,250	87	27.5%	\$0	\$401,394
FY2021	2.5	\$153,869	50%	\$153,869	87	50%	\$0	\$307,786
FY2022	2.5	\$153,869	50%	\$153,869	86	50%	\$0	\$307,786

***Starting in FY21, member libraries pay for 50% and UAA pays 50% of the staffing costs**

Statewide Library Electronic Doorway (SLED): SLED started in 1995 as a shared statewide project to provide Alaskans access to a robust variety of online resources via a single web portal. SLED provides access to over 50 databases of articles and full-text periodicals purchased for Alaskans of all ages on many topics – health, business, science, history,

and reading. Starting in 1999 and continuing through 2020, UAA provided funding of \$400,000 annually through the University budget for SLED, with additional funding from the State Library.

Statewide Library Electronic Doorway (SLED) Databases									
	Funding from UAA/APU Library	% from UAA/APU Library	Federal Grant Funding thru State Library	% from State Library	State Grant Funding from State Library	% from State Library	Live Homework Help through State Library	% from State Library	Total Cost of Databases
FY2018	\$400,000	48.9%	\$209,520	25.6%	\$69,800	8.5%	\$138,200	16.9%	\$817,520
FY2019	\$400,000	47.8%	\$298,768	35.7%	\$0	0.0%	\$138,200	16.5%	\$836,968
FY2020	\$400,000	50.8%	\$248,605	31.6%	\$0	0.0%	\$138,200	17.6%	\$786,805
FY2021	\$200,000	24.1%	\$490,337	59.2%	\$0	0.0%	\$138,200	16.7%	\$828,537
FY2022	\$200,000	24.1%	\$490,441	59.2%	\$0	0%	\$138,200	16.7%	\$828,641

The Challenge to Keeping ALC and SLED Operational for All Alaskans:

- **The Challenge:** From FY2014 through FY2022, the UAA/APU Consortium Library's budget was cut by \$2,311,062, causing a 28.5% reduction in its base budget. The library currently has 16 fewer staff positions than in FY15 (23.8% reduction).
- **SLED:** Due to budget cuts, in FY2021, the UAA/APU Consortium Library reduced its contribution to SLED by 50% to \$200,000 and maintained this level of funding into FY2022. The State Library was able to cover this loss in FY2021 and FY2022 by not awarding project grants to individual libraries statewide.
- **ALC:** As of FY2023, the UAA/APU Consortium Library does not believe that it can continue to fund 2.5 staff for the ALC from its own budget, in expectation of budget cuts coming to the University. (Member libraries currently pay for 50% of the 2.5 staff positions.)
- **FY2022:** Both SLED and ALC have enough funding to operate through June 2022.

Governor Dunleavy's veto of the \$635,900 amendment did not eliminate any services mentioned previously.

Alaskans Use ALC and SLED Resources Heavily - FY2021 Statistics

Alaska Library Catalog (FY2021)	1,906,978 checkouts	2.6 items per capita
SLED Resources - Data from 36 of 50 Databases for FY2021		
EBSCO's 30 databases on SLED	8,352,113 sessions	
Tumblebooks for kids	123,391 checkouts	
BrainPop	1,056,916 sessions	
Student Resources in Context	20,106 sessions	
Learning Express	265 tests taken	
Heritage Quest	7,724 sessions	
Live Homework Help	12,883 sessions	
SLED Total	9,573,398 items or sessions	13.1 items or sessions per capita
GRAND TOTAL	11,480,376 items or sessions	15.6 items or sessions per capita