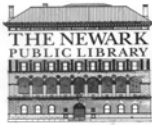


THE NEWARK PUBLIC LIBRARY
5 WASHINGTON STREET, NEWARK, NEW JERSEY 07102



PRESS RELEASE

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Please Contact: Heidi Cramer, 973-733-7837

City Budget Crisis Takes its Toll on Newark Public Library

Facing the biggest budget crisis in its history, The Newark Public Library is being forced to reduce its hours and to cut critical services and staff. The city of Newark is cutting funding to the Library by \$2.45 million (nearly 20%) in 2010 and by \$4.9 million in 2011. These cuts represent a nearly 45% reduction since 2008.

The Library has had to shut down all branches on Saturdays and has no choice but to permanently close two branch locations at the end of August.

“The cuts come at a time when our students have never been more in need of our services, and when residents have unprecedented need for library resources to help them find jobs,” said Library Director Wilma J. Grey.

The historic Newark Public Library is the largest municipal library in the state. Nearly three quarters of a million people visit the Library each year. In the past five years there has been a 63% increase in adult book circulation and a 75% increase in children’s book circulation. The Library has also increased the number of public computers by 74% during that period.

Responding to the cuts from the city, the Library’s Board of Trustees adopted this budget reduction plan at their May 26 meeting.

- The permanent closure of two branch libraries – First Avenue Branch, 282 First Avenue and Madison Branch, 790 Clinton Avenue. The last day of service is August 27.
- The closure of all branch libraries on Saturdays.
- Beginning August 16, the Library will be closed to the public every Monday and Tuesday. The Main Library will only be open four days per week, from Wednesday through Saturday. The eight branch locations will only be open three days per week, Wednesday through Friday.

“These were tremendously difficult decisions for the Trustees, but given the \$2.45 million reduction in the Library’s allocation from the City during the last half of this year, we can no longer maintain all of our facilities and services. Many programs for children will be cut. Adult access to computers and computer classes will be limited. The budget for books and research databases will be greatly reduced. We’ve had to lay off 31 of our workers and impose 38 unpaid staff furlough days this year. But we will provide Newark residents with as many services as possible under these challenging circumstances,” said Grey.

Jerry Caprio, president of the Friends of the Newark Public Library, said residents should contact their elected officials and show their support for the Library.

“The Newark Public Library is the pride and joy of Newark,” said Caprio. “It has inspired countless generations of children to read. Now the Library needs the support of the community. I am urging anyone who loves books or who has benefited from the Library in any way to pick up the phone or send an e-mail to their elected officials to show their support for this essential treasure.”