



May 17, 2010

RE: Change in ALS Core Services

Dear ALS family and friends,

I have sad but significant news. Due to the Illinois financial situation, the Alliance Library System will be changing its core services dramatically effective Monday, May 31, 2010.

ALS new core services will be:

- the delivery of materials, which currently accounts for more than 1 million items annually.
- supporting RSA and resource sharing.

There will no longer be:

- Continuing education and consulting services.
- Marketing, advocacy, or library promotional services.
- Innovation and grant development services.
- Web services.

MITBC services will be *suspended* until funding is re-established.

More than 80% of ALS funding originates from an annual grant from the Illinois General Assembly distributed through Secretary of State Jesse White's office. Library systems have not had a budget increase in more than 20 years, and last August, we received a 16½% budget cut. To date, ALS has not received 42% (\$668,206) of the money owed to it for the fiscal year ending June 30. The talking book service has not received 97% of its annual funding (\$252,618). ALS is almost out of money. Under these conditions, we cannot continue to offer our members the service they expect and deserve.

Last Friday truly was a sad day. On behalf of the ALS Executive Committee, I called together the wonderful ALS, RSA and MITBC staffs to announce that 22 ALS and MITBC staff will be laid off as of Friday, May 28.

All ALS IT support staff and all ALS Consulting and CE staff positions will be eliminated. All MITBC staff will be on temporary layoff (meaning no salary or benefits, but the possibility of a recall) and *suspending* talking book services until funding returns. ALS will streamline delivery without affecting the frequency

During the next two weeks, Kendal, Paul, Morgan and I will be focused totally on assisting staff with applying for unemployment insurance, seeking alternate employment, investigating re-training/education options, and retirement procedures.

Our goal is to help every staff member find a soft landing.

You have done everything possible to help us turn this situation around. The ALS board, library members, staff, friends, and family have fought for our survival and rallied behind us on numerous occasions. Thank you for participating in our campaigns, contacting legislators and supporting our cooperative efforts. Unfortunately, we have run out of options; the storm is upon us, and we are in survival mode. Other Illinois library systems are on different time lines as to when they will run out of money, but they are all in trouble. There is no safe harbor from this storm.

Personally, I am humbled by your support and words of kindness in this tsunami of change; they are much appreciated. I am particularly grateful to ALS president John Richmond who, throughout this mess, has been visionary, supportive, and so very kind

To my co-workers at ALS: Never before have I been so privileged to work with such an impassioned and visionary group of folks. You made coming to work an adventure. Wherever you land, whatever you do, I hope that the passion and team spirit that you brought to Alliance every single day will be reborn in your new adventure. You are simply the best!

Sincerely,

Kitty Pope
Executive Director