

## **BACKGROUND FOR OPI DISCUSSION: ADDING STAFF SUPPORT FOR MSC SCHOOLS**

The MSC Executive Committee, State Library and the Office of Public Instruction had discussions last year concerning the rapidly growing number of school libraries joining, or showing interest in joining, the MSC. The discussions centered on the additional workload for the MSC support staff and how it would affect the overall operation and continued growth of the consortium. The possibility of OPI requesting funding from the Legislature for an additional FTE to provide additional MSC support did not materialize. As a result, the State Library put in place a temporary hold on adding new school libraries to the MSC until a solution to the increased staffing need can be determined. The State Library has been working with OPI and the MSC Executive Committee to investigate opportunities and options of how to best address the situation. Those opportunities and options will be explored and discussed during the MSC Spring Meeting in Miles City, May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Past experience has shown us that as the MSC membership grows, the support staff must grow proportionally to keep pace with administrative and system requirements. We've learned that a staff person is needed for about every 50 to 60 libraries that join the consortium.

There were 53 cost estimates requested by school libraries as of November 2012. This total includes two large school districts: Billings (29 schools) and Kalispell (12 schools). This would have nearly doubled the current number of schools in the Catalog, which is currently 66.

### MSC demographics if all join, by library type:

School Libraries	Public Libraries	Academic Libraries	Special Libraries	Total
118 (53.9%)	81 (37%)	7 (3.2%)	13 (5.9%)	219