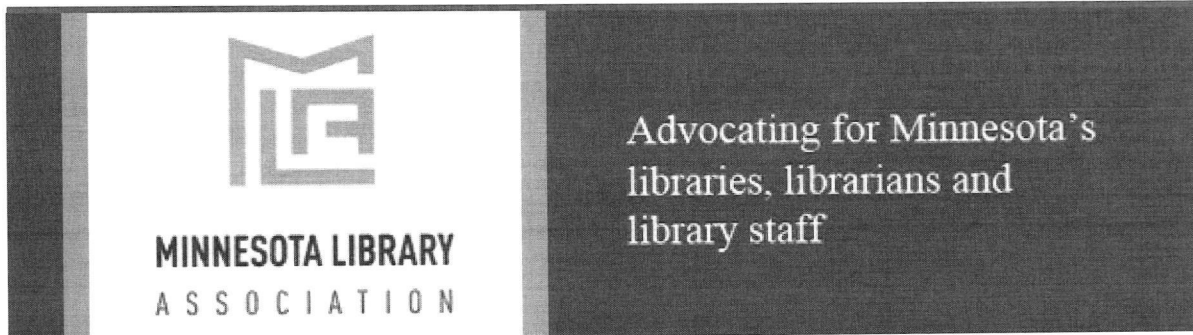


**Will Richter**

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**From:** Minnesota Library Association Office <office@mnlibraryassociation.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 22, 2024 2:55 PM  
**To:** Will Richter  
**Subject:** MLA Legislative Update



## **MLA Legislative Update 4.22.24**



### **2024 Legislative Session enters final phase**

Four weeks from Monday, April 22 the Minnesota legislature will be heading home for the summer. With a short week due to the Passover religious observation, there's really about three weeks left for the House and Senate to process dozens of policy and supplemental budget bills. A Bonding

bill was to be the primary focus of this session, but it has taken a quiet backseat as the DFL Trifecta continues to press an aggressive pace and agenda for this otherwise non- budget session.

The GOP doesn't have much leverage except of the Bonding bill and there's speculation they'll want more support for rural emergency medical services. The Trifecta budget targets only allow about \$16 million of the \$120 million that rural entities are asking for EMS support. Perhaps the budget targets will be increased in the final week of session to accommodate a few caucus priorities to help get a Bonding bill to the Governor's desk.

At stake for libraries in the Bonding bill is the potential to add another \$1 million to the Library Construction & Renovation Grants program, which saw a \$4 million infusion in last session's Bonding bill.

## **Education Policy Conference Committee: HF 3782/SF 3567**

Rep. Laurie Pryor (DFL Eden Prairie) and Sen. Steve Cwudzinski (DFL Eden Prairie) are co-chairing a conference committee on Education Policy issues. At stake for libraries is a waiver for MELSA to hire a library director who does not have a MLIS degree. The bigger issue is a proposal that would prohibit the banning of books by a governing board of a library system, be it public, K-12, Multi-County, Multi-Type or other. The Governor is asking for this proposal to be delivered to his desk.

## **Education Supplemental Budget: HF 5247/SF 5252**

Rep. Cheryl Youakim (DFL Hopkins) and Sen. Mary Kunesch (DFL New Brighton) will eventually co-chair a conference committee on supplemental spending for the state's E- 12 budget. They have \$43 million to spend on fiscal year 2025, but the "tails" budget, fiscal years 2026-27, can only increase by \$18 million, therefore most of the funding is one-time.

The Read Act is the focus as schools and teachers implement the massive new law aimed at ensuring teachers are using structured literacy as the driver of reading instruction in elementary grades. Roughly \$35 million of the one-time target will go to pay teachers for their time getting trained in new curriculum and instructional methods. A \$35 million allocation from the 2023 E-12 budget bill is being remodeled so school districts will get a direct infusion of \$40/pupil to cover other costs associated with the Read Act. The previous language would have required schools to apply for grants, which is unpalatable for many small and medium sized schools.

At stake for libraries are two proposals in the Senate's bill. The first is the creation of a new LMS position at the MN Department of Education's State Library Services Division. Chair Kunesch is pushing for this position to complement the state aid she created for school library support in the 2023 budget bill. The second proposal is the creation of a Digital Citizenship Task Force that would include representatives from the library community.

## **Net Neutrality**

Legislative to create a state level requirement for vendors to abide by NN regulations is advancing. However, the state legislature is watching action by the FCC on April 25 that may pre-empt certain state level NN regulations, perhaps those that would go above and beyond what the FCC is planning to adopt in a new NN rule. Stay tuned on this one and we'll see what the FCC actually takes action on at the end of April.

## **Gun Violence Prevention – Dangerous Weapons Restrictions**

Despite a strong push during House Public Safety hearings this session, it doesn't appear that removing state level preemptions on local governments regulation dangerous weapons will advance. Instead, gun violence prevention measures dealing with safe storage of firearms and the reporting of lost and stolen firearms appear to be the ones advancing toward the finish line. Gun violence prevention measures are highly controversial and the thin majorities in the House and Senate make them difficult to pass.

## **Future Legislative Updates – May 1st**

Join us virtually at 10am on Wednesday, May 1st for an updated on these measures and get your questions answered about other legislative activity.

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