

# NJSL DIRECT

Weekly News Updates for New Jersey Libraries

December 15, 2025

## State Library Updates

### NJ State Library Awards Digital Literacy Grants to Five Public Libraries

The New Jersey State Library has announced the recipients of its Expanding Digital Literacy grant program, awarding nearly \$109,000 in total among five New Jersey public libraries. Selected libraries will offer programs that teach digital skills and provide access to technology, helping residents gain the competencies and confidence needed to thrive in an increasingly digital society. [View the press release](#) for more details.

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### Uncovering Individual Education Plans with Artificial Intelligence

You are cordially invited to join an information session on a free, open source Artificial Intelligence tool called AIEP, developed by the AI for Impact program at the Burnes Center for Social Change.

Created by and with families of children with special needs, AIEP uses artificial intelligence to help families translate, summarize, and understand their child's Individual Education Plan (IEP) in plain language. IEPs are complex documents, often more than 25- 30 pages long and containing educational and medical jargon that is difficult for anyone, especially those who are low literacy and non-native speakers, to decipher.

Developers of AIEP will be joined by New Jersey's Chief AI Strategist for a demonstration of the tool and discussion of the role libraries might play in supporting K-12 special education students and their families.

The session will be held on **Tuesday, January 13 from 2 – 3 p.m.** Registration is not required; [join by clicking here](#). Please contact [Jen Nelson](#) with any questions

## News From Around the State

### NJLA+NJASL Conference Funding Opportunity

The NJLA Professional Development Fund Task Force is excited to announce its inaugural opportunity with funding awards for the 2026 NJLA+NJASL Annual Conference. Does your library lack the necessary professional development funds to sponsor your NJLA Conference trip? Has this deterred you from attending? This fund may be able to help you! **The application will close on January 2.** Award notifications will be sent out by January 16. NJLA membership will be considered, but is not mandatory. [Apply here.](#)

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### NJ STEM Month - March 2026

[NJ STEM Month](#) is a celebration co-hosted by the New Jersey STEM Pathways Network (NJSPN) and Research & Development Council of New Jersey that highlights NJ's incredible accomplishments in science, technology, engineering, math, and innovation. All organizations in the state are called to showcase and celebrate excellent work in STEM for NJ STEM Month by hosting/attending events and engaging on social media. If your library is considering hosting an NJ STEM Month event, [please fill out the interest form.](#)

2026 NJ STEM Month mini-grants are available in amounts of up to \$500 for event/program enhancements. Event/program enhancements can include hosting costs such as snacks, meals, transportation, materials, etc. The deadline to submit is **January 9, 2026.** [Apply for a mini-grant here.](#)

Learn more at: [www.njstempathways.org/njstemmonth](http://www.njstempathways.org/njstemmonth).

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### Register for NJ Makers Day

This year's New Jersey Makers Day will take place March 20th, 21st, and 22nd, 2026! Registration is now open and sites are encouraged to choose a date that is best for their community. [Register to take part in NJ Makers Day 2026](#)

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## NJSL Presents Events

Our NJSL Presents Webinars are free and open to anyone interested in attending. Registration is required in advance and [all webinars are recorded and posted to our YouTube page](#) afterward. You can also [check out event recaps on our blog](#)! Here's what we have coming up in December, feel free to share within your communities.

- [RetireReady NJ: Your Path to a Secure Retirement](#)- December 18th @ noon
  - [Virtual Author Talk - Winning the Ten Crucial Days: The Keys to Victory in George Washington's Legendary Winter Campaign](#) - December 29th @ noon
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## Professional Development Opportunities

Visit the State Library's [CE Training webpage](#) for a variety of Continuing Education training opportunities for New Jersey librarians, library support staff, and trustees.

[On-Demand Training Portal](#) in the LibraryLinkNJ LearningSpace and [a list of training programs](#) currently being offered.

[Professional Development Links](#) and [Webinars and Other Training Events](#) from the NJLA Professional Development Committee.

Check out the upcoming LYRASIS CE opportunities on their [calendar here](#).

[Click here for a monthly national list](#) of CE and Professional Development opportunities.

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## Library Marketing Resources

If your library is looking for marketing tips, best practices and inspiration, [check out our Marketing Blog](#) updated monthly. Here's our most recent blog posts:

- [Five Free Library Content Ideas You Can Post This Week](#)
- [The Secret to Social Media Hooks](#)
- [Refresh Your Library's Approach to Email Marketing](#)
- [How to Create Better Hyperlinks for Accessibility](#)
- [Spotify Playlists for Library Programs](#)

Download sharable social media graphics and videos from the [Statewide Digital Marketing Campaign](#).

Also, you can [download marketing resources from State Library Vendors &](#)

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