

ELIZABETHTOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Elizabethtown Public Library Closing for a Week Due to Funding Cuts

Elizabethtown Public Library, Elizabethtown, PA, will close Sunday August 22, 2010 through Saturday August 28, 2010 due to a major shortage in funding. Library users should be aware that both Elizabethtown Public Library's facility, located at 10 South Market will be closed **and** its book return bin, located behind the Library off of West High Street, will also be closed.

Deborah Drury Beisell, Executive Director of Elizabethtown Public Library, states that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's multiple cutbacks on top of already insufficient funding for public Libraries is the reason for the closing. In 2009, Pennsylvania cut funding to public Libraries by over 27%. In 2010, the state announced an additional 9.1% cut in public Library funding.

"At this time, the Library has no promise of state funding for the coming year. The state has announced the 9.1% cut. What they have not made clear is that state money will be dispersed in monthly increments *and* that funding may be reduced or completely stop at any time. This ambiguity leaves us with no clear direction except that Elizabethtown Public Library must drastically reduce its spending to remain open and solvent."

Pennsylvania is currently supporting its public Libraries based on 1998 expenditures. For Elizabethtown, this means they are basing current Library funding on a much smaller previous building site on North Hanover Street. Not only has the Library building increased in size in twelve years, the population of the Library's service area and customer usage of Elizabethtown Public Library have also risen significantly.

"Cuts in state funding have come at a critical time. Because of financial stresses, more people than ever are using the Library. At the same time, financial support, especially from the state, is in jeopardy more now than ever. Many people are making use of the great value Elizabethtown Public Library offers. People use the Library's public computers and WiFi to fill out job applications, get financial assistance, and do school assignments. Seniors meet at the Library for socialization and parents bring their children for important early literacy development. Many borrow movies and books for education and entertainment. People look to Library Team members for assistance for everything from how to e-mail their adult children to help with their career search to how to start a small business."

"Some things have already been cut back," says Beisell, "but the effect has not been significant." "Elizabethtown Public Library modified its service hours this past year; the difference was a loss of just one hour of service. More severe reductions are necessary."

It is vital that people in the community show their support for Elizabethtown Public Library by writing Governor Rendell and Pennsylvania state representatives and senators to express exactly how the Library helps them. It is important that citizens petition Lancaster County commissioners to continue their financial support of public Libraries. Community members are encouraged to thank their local municipality leaders for their support of public Libraries, stressing that ongoing support is critical. Library advocates can also help by giving financially to Elizabethtown Public Library. All donations are income tax deductible according to current IRS regulations.

Elizabethtown Public Library is located at 10 S. Market Street (near the square) in Elizabethtown. For more information, please visit the Library's website at www.ETownPublicLibrary.org or contact the Library via phone: (717) 367-7467 or email: information@ETownPublicLibrary.org.