



## HYDE PARK-KENWOOD COMMUNITY CONFERENCE

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November 3, 2011

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Chicago Academic Games League

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Friends of Blackstone Library

Hyde Park Garden Fair

Hyde Park Used Book Sale

Nichols Park Advisory Council

Parks Committee

Preservation, Zoning, and  
Development

Schools Committee

Southside Preservation  
Action Fund

Transit Task Force

Website and Reporter

WhistleStop/Safety

A 501c(3) in good standing

Dear Friend of the Conference,

Mayor Emmanuel has presented his proposed budget before the City Council. With a \$637 million projected shortfall, the city is in for a rough ride. Initially, it seemed that libraries had been spared, with none slated for closing. But closer inspection of the budget revealed that major changes to libraries were coming. The budget included another reduction in hours, in addition to the staggered schedule we currently suffer through, and staff reductions, cuts that will directly impact each branch library in the system.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/ct-met-library-cuts-focus-20111025.0.2434094.story>

The mayor's office says this is better than closing branches, but in fact with reduced hours and levels of service, the community will suffer. Hours at libraries were reduced in 2010 as branches went to a staggered schedule that resembled a maze and closing times that left children on the street at 6pm and shortened hours for programming. When pages (the staff that reshelves books and processes your holds) were eliminated in 2009, books remained unshelved and the time you waited for the material you put on hold went from 7 to 45 days. This is the wrong direction for our children and our communities.

**OUR COMMUNITY MUST TAKE ACTION NOW**

**BEFORE THE BUDGET VOTE ON NOVEMBER 16!**

Here's what you can do:

1. Contact your alderman (in Hyde Park, Ald. Will Burns [4<sup>th</sup> Ward, [Ward04@cityofchicago.org](mailto:Ward04@cityofchicago.org)] or Ald. Leslie Hairston [5<sup>th</sup> Ward, [LHairston@cityofchicago.org](mailto:LHairston@cityofchicago.org)]). Every branch in the system will be affected. Let him/her know that you want a fully functioning library, not just a shell.
2. Express your concern to local newspapers including the Hyde Park Herald ([Letters@hpherald.com](mailto:Letters@hpherald.com)), the Chicago Tribune, the Chicago Suntimes.
3. If you're a blogger, let your support for quality libraries be known to your blog community.
4. Show your support at [www.friendsofblackstone.wordpress.com](http://www.friendsofblackstone.wordpress.com). Connect with us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com).

We all need to support our libraries as centers of culture, knowledge, and access to tools that help us make the transitions that life is requiring of all of us in these times. Support libraries where we build and foster the type of society in which we want to live.

Sincerely,

Brenda Sawyer, Vice President, HPKCC, and chair, Friends of Blackstone Library, for the Board of Directors