

KDL Information.
Ideas.
Kent District Library *Excitement!*

www.kdl.org

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For Immediate Release

**Kent District Library to Partner with New York Public Library, Others,
to Improve Access to Libraries**

With print books and electronic versions now available for free checkout from your local library, do you still find it easier to buy those materials? Would you switch to an eReader if you could just figure out how to download from the library's website? Want to borrow eBooks but don't want to have to go to a library branch for a card first?

Kent District Library and nine other U.S. library systems, including the New York Public Library, want to know your answer to "I'd use the library if only..." by embarking on a project dubbed "Library Simplified."

Over a two-year period, participating libraries will explore **how they can better use new technology** -- including and especially eBooks -- **to reduce barriers to use**. They also will examine why people don't use the library, and look at how they might alter their policies so they will. The effort is being funded by a \$500,000 [grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services](#).*

"KDL and the other partners plan to gather information from our patrons, to see what works for them and what some of the barriers are, and to test some of the ideas the project comes up with," said Melissa DeWild, KDL collection development manager. "We want to make sure what we're doing is scalable and can be used at libraries across the country."

NYPL's James English said libraries are finding that as technology changes, so do methods of access to resources libraries offer. "Libraries across the country must find ways to ensure democratic access to books, ideas and information, regardless of format," he said.

Library Simplified is aligned with the [Readers First](#) movement, which is dedicated to ensuring that library patrons have access to both virtual and physical collections.

Kent District Library is supported by millage dollars and private donations. KDL serves 395,660 people in all areas of Kent County except the cities of Grand Rapids and Cedar Springs, the village of Sparta, and Solon and Sparta townships.



The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. Its mission is to inspire libraries and museums to advance innovation, lifelong learning and cultural and civic engagement. Its grant making, policy development and research help libraries and museums deliver valuable services that make it possible for communities and individuals to thrive. To learn more, visit www.ims.gov and follow IMLS on Facebook and Twitter.

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