**TO:** PLA Board of Directors

**RE:** Engaging Elending partners

**DATE:** April 20, 2021

**SUBMITTED:** Kelvin Watson

**ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:** Discuss and approve

**ACTION REQUESTED BY:** Approve letter

**BACKGROUND**

In February 2021, the Board reviewed and discussed a draft letter to Ebook aggregators (Document no.: 2021.53a). After discussion, the motion was withdrawn with a request to refine the letter in consultation with a small subgroup of board members and staff. The revised letter was developed with Toby Greenwalt, Kelvin Watson, Michelle Jeske, Mary Hirsh, and Larra Clark. If approved, the letter will be sent soon after the recommendations for the ALA Digital Content Working group are published, in May 2021.

**DRAFT OF MOTION:**

We seek board agreement to send the attached to the following aggregators, timed to follow soon after recommendations from the ALA Digital Content Working Group are published:

* OverDrive
* Baker & Taylor
* Midwest Tape
* Biblioteca
* Hoopla
* DPLA

Elenders may wish to engage PLA in follow up conversations. In addition to discussing the content of the

letter, we propose that a small subgroup of Board members be empowered to respond and engage as needed to advance PLA goals expressed in the letter.

[Date]

[Contact Name]

[Company Name]

Dear [Contact Name of eLending partner]:

On behalf of the Public Library Association board and our 8,500-plus members, thank you for your work with publishers and public libraries to provide digital content to our communities across the country. As you know, eLending has grown significantly during the pandemic and over the past decade, and public libraries are committed to improving digital content access to cultivate a love of reading and exploration today and into the future.

We need your help. Specifically, public library leaders would like more ways to buy eContent – which could be a real opportunity to *sell* more eContent. To make this possible, we are asking all eLending content aggregators to enable multiple lending models and display them together all in one place. Each title ideally will show a:

* Metered‐access option (sequential loans, lower price point)
* Perpetual use option (sequential loans, higher price point)
* Concurrent use option (concurrent loans, priced by individual loan)

Multiple lending models help libraries optimize their collection budgets and meet diverse community needs according to library policies and the anticipated life cycle for a title. Enabling concurrent use for community reading events, for example, with one title while pursuing a metered-access license for trying out new or lesser-known authors enhance our ability to serve our diverse readers. The ALA Joint Digital Content Working Group [identified](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1WGaEPHvdDXFqjhlqt1il1rwWpgrBJOyUdIwNQWZWwfk/edit) multiple licensing models as a change that can significantly benefit public libraries and readers, and this letter to you is an effort to realize this change.

We appreciate that aggregators may only implement multiple lending models if publishers enable these licenses, so we are advocating directly with publishers, as well. Many medium or smaller publishers are amenable, and one of the Big 5 is offering multiple models at least until the end of the year. We need both the licensing options *and* the acquisition platforms to support these options to enable choice for libraries and our readers. Library choice and user-friendly interfaces to access diverse content will be key drivers for determining future investments by public libraries related to digital content.

Thank you for your work with public library leaders to cultivate readers and lifelong learning through your products. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to your reply.

Warm regards,

Michelle Jeske

PLA President

Kelvin Watson

PLA Board member

ALA DCWG Co-chair