

VII. STATE LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

A.1. Library Role in Student Success – Information Item

Several current initiatives, including the Department of Education's "Gear Up Idaho" and the Albertson Foundation's "Move On" challenge, focus on increasing the percentage of Idaho students who graduate from high school and are well-prepared to go on to college or career training. Clearly, school, academic, and public libraries have roles in supporting student success. Using a draft concept paper, the Commission has started discussions with our advisory groups and the Idaho Library Association about what libraries might do more effectively to support student success.

College and Career Ready: Help Idaho libraries plan for student success Draft Concept, 9/23/11

Each type of Idaho library plays roles to support student learning, helping prepare Idaho students to succeed in college, career, and civic life. However no comprehensive conversation has occurred to create a leadership plan that engages all types of libraries to address one of Idaho's gravest challenges: reducing the dropout rate and ensuring that more students are college and career ready. As we face increasing economic challenges and rhetoric focused on reduction of public services, it behooves us to come together as a library community to create an action plan to address our role in helping solve this challenge, along with many other community and statewide partners.

The problem:

- Nearly one in four Idaho students fails to graduate from high school with a regular diploma in four years.¹
- Idaho ranks 46th of all states in college completion at 22.3 percent.²
- Nearly 5,800 students did not graduate from Idaho's high schools in 2010; the lost lifetime earnings in Idaho for that class of dropouts alone totals over \$1.5 billion.³
- Children who start school behind tend to stay behind. Idaho Reading Indicator scores from 2010 show 18 percent of children entering kindergarten did not recognize three or more letters of the alphabet. Another 25 percent recognized fewer than 11.⁴

¹ Alliance for Excellent Education, "Education and the Economy: Boosting Idaho's Economy by Improving High School Graduation Rates," March 2011, www.all4ed.org/files/Idaho_seb.pdf

² 2009 American Community Survey (Census Bureau), cited in 2010 Grad Nation Index provided by Johns Hopkins University's Everyone Graduates Center, www.every1graduates.org

³ Alliance for Excellent Education, "The High Cost of High School Dropouts," www.all4ed.org

⁴ Idaho State Department of Education

Board Document 12-09

- A student within the age range of 16 to 24 years of age who comes from the lowest quartile of family income is about seven times more likely to have dropped out of high school than his/her counterpart who comes from the highest quartile.⁵
- Idaho has a high percentage of families living in poverty. In 2010, 55 percent of infants born in Idaho received Women Infant Children (WIC) services.⁶ In 2011-2012, over 50 percent of Idaho public school children were eligible for free and reduced school lunch.⁷

We hope you'll reflect on the many things you are already doing in your libraries to support student learning and join with us in discussions and plans for aligning resources and creating an action plan to further address this great need in our state.

⁵ Alliance for Excellent Education High School Dropouts in America Fact Sheet, updated September 2010

⁶ WIC Statistics, Idaho Division of Public Health, Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics

⁷ Idaho State Department of Education