

VI. GENERAL FUND AND MISCELLANEOUS REVENUE FUND**A.1. Finances - FY2015 Budget Submission**

Our budget request is due to the Division of Financial Management by September 1. After discussions with staff, I recommend the Commissioners consider two line items (enhancement, or above maintenance level) in priority order for the FY2015 state budget request:

Libraries as Community Anchors

STATE GENERAL FUND	Amount	Item
Operating	\$ 135,400	Community anchor resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$110,400 LearningExpress Library • \$ 25,000 public information
Trustee & Benefit	\$200,000	Reimbursements for ISP charges after e-rate
Line Item Total	\$ 335,400	

The demand for access to digital resources in public libraries continues to grow, and statewide licenses that cover all publicly funded libraries are by far the most cost-effective way to provide those resources to Idaho citizens. The demand for broadband in public libraries also continues to grow, and even with e-rate discounts libraries are increasingly challenged to cover connectivity and Internet service provider (ISP) charges solely with their property tax revenues.

More than 40% of rural Idahoans don't yet have Internet access at home. Others have inadequate speed at home and/or need help in negotiating websites and online forms. Many go to their public library to get access and to get help. 70% of Idaho public libraries report that they are the only source of free Internet access in their communities. They need broadband not only as infrastructure but as a service for their communities. Without adequate broadband, access to digital resources and online services is limited. As of July, the Idaho Department of Labor will only accept weekly unemployment claims online. Soon, the GED test will only be available online. Many other examples exist, and more will follow.

We propose a package to support public libraries in their role as community anchor institutions that includes ongoing funding for the non-discounted portion of their ISP charges, statewide licenses for online resources that support workforce development and education at all levels, and public information.

Suggested motion: I move that a line item of \$_____ for Community Anchor support be approved as the first priority line item in the Commission's FY2015 budget request.

MSC _____

Read to Me Mini-Grants

STATE GENERAL FUND	Amount	Item
Trustee & Benefit	\$100,000	Mini-grants to libraries
Line item total	\$100,000	

In FY2013 ICfL received an ongoing appropriation of \$100,000 to fund mini-grants for public and school libraries. ICfL received mini-grant applications from 88 elementary schools and 9 public libraries requesting over \$350,000 in funding support. \$17,000 was awarded to seven public libraries to develop materials for child care outreach. Twenty elementary schools were awarded grant funds ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000 for a total of \$83,000 from the \$100,000 appropriation. \$257,000 in eligible requests from 68 schools could not be funded.

Because the needs were so great for the elementary school libraries, staff decided to focus on that aspect for the next several years. The amount of reading done in homes is the single most important factor in developing children's literacy skills. Research shows that if children are not reading on grade level by the end of first grade, there's only a one in eight chance they will ever catch up without costly direct intervention. Providing access to hundreds of age-appropriate quality books through school library lending programs is one of the most cost-effective strategies used to increase literacy skills.

Grant funds are to be used to purchase books to help ensure that access to materials starts from the beginning of children's schooling. The grant program has three goals:

1. Increase the amount of reading done in homes of children in developmental preschool programs, kindergarten, and first grade.
2. Increase access to age-appropriate quality nonfiction and fiction titles in elementary school libraries.
3. Increase the number of children reading on grade level.

Boise State University Literacy Professor Dr. Roger Stewart completed a report of the 20 school mini-grant sites after reading all of their interim reports in January, 2013. This was part of his conclusion in the report submitted to ICfL:

"Thus far this project has been an overwhelming success. [To accomplish] the goal [a strategy] was to push check out policies towards greater access for preschool, kindergarten, and 1st grade children. This has been accomplished in virtually all participating schools where all of the targeted age groups are now allowed to check out a minimum of two books each week to take home.

A second goal was to increase access to age-appropriate nonfiction for preschool, kindergarten, and 1st grade children. This goal was also achieved, but as mentioned above some additional support for librarians may be needed to optimize achievement of this goal in the future. Few challenges were encountered and those that were can be addressed with additional training of future participating libraries...”

Additional funding will allow ICfL to double the number of elementary schools that receive mini-grants to implement positive changes in their libraries.

Suggested motion: I move that a line item of \$_____ for Read to Me mini-grants be approved as the second priority line item in the Commission’s FY2015 budget request.

MSC _____

FY2015 Budget Preparation and Submission

Suggested motion: I move that the Board direct the State Librarian to prepare the SFY2015 budget request according to guidelines received from the Legislative Budget Office and Division of Financial Management.

MSC _____