

**Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICFL)
Read to Me Program Evaluation Report**

2009-2010

**Case Studies of Idaho Public Library ICFL Supported
Programs and Analyses of Idaho Reading Indicator Scores**

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Executive Summary

Four case studies were conducted of exemplary Idaho public library early literacy programs. The write-ups of the cases are provided in this report. The purpose of the case studies was to describe best practices and provide a nucleus around which these best practices could be shared and discussed. The cases focused on the following:

- Every Child Ready to Read (ECRTR) Family Workshops in English;
- Every Child Ready to Read Family Workshops in Spanish;
- Early Childhood Literacy Partnership Between a Local Library and a Federal Program; and
- Summer Reading Program.

One public library was chosen for each of the focus areas. The lead evaluator visited each of the case study sites and observed the program in operation and interviewed personnel and program participants. From these on site visits, brief case studies were written providing descriptions of how the programs operated and salient characteristics of each.

An additional outcome of three of the four case studies was the collection and analyses of Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) scores. The IRI is a state-mandated early literacy screening assessment given to all public school children in kindergarten through 3rd grade in Idaho. It was hypothesized that IRI scores would be positively influenced by children's participation in the early literacy programming that was the focus of the case studies. Results revealed mixed effects on children's IRI performance.

Introduction

It has long been known by Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICFL) staff that there are many exceptional library programs in Idaho. It was thus deemed important to select a limited cross section of these programs and showcase them so that other libraries and interested stakeholders can learn from them. The decision, however, to focus on a small subset of high-quality library programming in Idaho created its own challenge. Namely, which programs should be chosen from the numerous fine quality programs found throughout the state?

ICFL staff discussed what they wanted to showcase and why and which libraries represented the various areas of focus. In the end, four distinct programming areas were chosen and four libraries were chosen to study, all of which had solid records of successful program delivery in one of the areas. But before those areas are further discussed, an important corollary motivation behind the case studies needs to be introduced.

The ICFL, as part of its mission to help public libraries expand their roles in their communities beyond traditional collections services, understands the important role libraries play in early childhood literacy development. Many if not most libraries offer a variety of programs targeted at young children, including story times, music and movement classes, lap sit classes, and seasonal programs that draw families into the library. The ICFL saw an opportunity to leverage this existing foundation of early childhood programming to enhance parent/caregiver knowledge about early literacy while improving children's early literacy skills. To this end, the ICFL developed a series of programs that they then supported in public libraries throughout the state. These include Idaho First Book, Jump Start, and Every Child Ready to Read (ECRTR) Family Workshops.

Program evaluations have shown these programs to be highly popular with parents, caregivers, and library staff. The evaluations have also shown strong, positive, and resilient behavior changes in parents and caregivers. An example of an important behavior change is parents reporting that they read more to their children as a consequence of program participation. But apart from measures of satisfaction and parent/caregiver behavior changes little is known about the long-term impact of libraries' early literacy programming on children's early literacy skills and knowledge. In other words, do children enter school better prepared to learn to read after having been exposed to ICFL sponsored early childhood literacy programming? Thus, this question also became a focus of the case studies.

This question, however, posed significant challenges. Specifically, the challenge was how to measure children's early literacy development who participate in library programming? Ideally, children would be tested with valid and reliable measures before beginning participation in their local library's early childhood programming and then be post-tested at the conclusion of participation to see how much growth occurred. Additionally, a comparison group of similar children would be established who did not participate in library programming. They, too, would be pretested and post-tested at the same times as the other children. But such a testing regimen and research design are virtually impossible to accomplish on a large scale because of expense and difficult logistics. Idaho, however, is one of very few states that has a state-wide early literacy

skills screening assessment mandated for use in the primary grades in all public schools. Idaho's assessment is called the Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) and has been in use for a decade.

Until the 2010-2011 school year, all children in Idaho public schools in grades kindergarten through third grade were given the assessment three times each year: fall, winter, and spring. For 2010-2011, the winter screening was not required. The IRI is a screener which means that it quickly identifies children who might be at-risk for early reading failure. Like all screeners, results are not meant to be definitive for a child, but instead a starting point that leads to further diagnostic testing and observation for those children who score below criterion on the test. Since Idaho has the IRI, the ICFL decided to include in the case studies, where appropriate, the collection and analysis of IRI scores for participating children and groups of similar children who did not participate. More detail about collecting IRI scores and the formation of comparison groups is provided in the section of this report devoted to that data.

Overview of the Four Case Studies and the Focus Areas

The ICFL decided on four focus areas. A library was identified that had a history of providing high-quality, successful programming in one of the four areas. The areas were:

- Every Child Ready to Read Family Workshops in English;
- Every Child Ready to Read Family Workshops in Spanish;
- Community Outreach and Partnership with Early Head Start; and
- Summer Reading Program in a Rural Setting

Following are brief overviews of each of the focus areas. Within each overview is an introduction to the particular case study conducted exploring the focus area. Please note that in the remainder of this report several terms will be used interchangeably to denote the adults who attend programming with children. At times the term "parent" will be used but other times the term "caregiver" will be used. And a compound of the two, "parent/caregiver," will be used at times. Whichever term is used it is meant to encompass all adults who attend with children. It is important to broaden the definition for parent in this case since it is not uncommon for children to attend library programming with someone other than their parent.

Every Child Ready to Read Family Workshops(ECRTR)in English

The Family Workshops are a series of six meetings parents/caregivers and children attend to learn about early literacy development. At each meeting, parents are provided information about early literacy skills and shown how they can work with their children to teach and reinforce these skills. Scripts are available to guide presenters during the workshops. The workshops are highly interactive. Presenters provide an engaging program for the children while also providing parents with information and ideas. Parents receive hand-outs and free children's books at each meeting. The books are chosen carefully and are showcased and used in the workshops so parents and

children are introduced to the books and have immediate connections with the book when it is taken home.

Previous evaluations of the ECRTR Family Workshops have shown the popularity and effectiveness of the program so it was deemed important to explore in greater depth one highly successful program to provide a description of its operation. A library was chosen that had a history of having a very popular Family Workshop program. The program was so popular that multiple offerings of the workshops had to be provided to meet demand.

Every Child Ready to Read Family Workshops in Spanish

About 15% of Idaho's population is Hispanic, a number of whom are not native speakers of English. Just like native speakers of English, it is important for children of Spanish speaking families to learn and practice early literacy skills. Thus, scripts and hand-outs were developed in Spanish so the ECRTR Family Workshops can be delivered in Spanish. This was a more complicated undertaking than merely translating existing English documents into Spanish. Spanish has a different phonetic structure than English so the rationale for focusing so much on sounds and letters as is done in English has to be explained to Spanish speakers so they understand the differences between the two languages. Consequently, scripts had to be modified in Spanish to account for the language differences.

Prior ECRTR Family Workshop program evaluations had shown that not many Spanish versions of the workshops were being offered throughout the state. Reasons for this ranged from not having many Spanish speakers in the library's service area to not having the expertise available in the library or community to conduct the workshops. In order to help Idaho libraries develop the capacity to provide more Spanish language ECRTR Family Workshops, the ICFL decided to conduct a case study of one such successful program.

Community Outreach and Partnership with Early Head Start

The ICFL has a goal to broaden and strengthen the outreach Idaho public libraries conduct in their service areas. In other words, libraries' roles have expanded in recent years to include not just collections management and serving patrons who walk through the library doors, but also partnerships with local schools, local businesses, and public agencies to promote literacy throughout the lifespan. The ICFL wanted to provide an example of such an outreach program with young children. To this end, they chose a long-standing partnership between a local library and an Early Head Start program. Early Head Start programs serve low income children and families by providing a broad range of services. The local library partnering with this particular Early Head Start program provided early literacy services including regular visits by the library's bookmobile, free book give-aways, and education about early literacy for the parents of the children in the program.

Summer Reading Program in a Rural Setting

Summer reading programs in Idaho public libraries are quite common and quite popular. Librarians enjoy preparing for and delivering high-quality, exciting summer reading programs for children when they are on summer vacation away from school. Thus, considerable time and resources are devoted to summer reading programs in Idaho so the ICFL wanted to provide a description of such a program with a focus on IRI scores. The ICFL understands that there are many other variables than participating in summer reading that could lead to higher IRI scores, but this case study was viewed as the beginning of a more systematic look at summer reading programs and their impact on literacy performance in the schools.

Now that the background to the case studies has been provided and each of the studies has been overviewed, the case studies themselves will be presented. Each is a free-standing story of an Idaho library program. In other words, readers do not need to read the case studies in sequence or all of them for that matter. They are written in the first person since the evaluator traveled to all of the libraries and talked with key people and observed the programs in action. Additionally, using first person provides a more personal and authentic account of the programs. The case studies are followed by a section of the report devoted to presentation and analyses of the Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) scores collected from three of the four case study libraries. The IRI data are treated separately instead of being embedded in the respective case studies since some readers may be only interested in that data and thus do not wish to read the case studies themselves.

**Snake River School Community Library
Every Child Ready to Read Family Workshops in English**

I traveled to Snake River School Community Library to observe their Every Child Read to Read (ECRTR) Family Workshops in English. For efficiency, I will call the library simply Snake River. Snake River serves both Snake River High School and the surrounding community, thus the “School Community” in the name. There are only three such libraries in Idaho, so Snake River is rather unique. When I visited, it was not uncommon to see at any given time in the library 10 to 15 high school students, 40 young children and their parents attending story time, and patrons from the community using computers or checking out books and videos. It is an understatement to say, it is a very busy place.

Students from the high school are comfortable spending time in the library. During the school’s lunch period, the library was full of students sitting in comfortable chairs talking, reading, and using computers. The student circulation statistics and community patron statistics have dramatically increased over the past four years since Sherrilynn Bair became library director. This told me that she and her staff work hard to create an inviting environment for all and that they have been successful at doing so.

Snake River is located six to seven miles outside of Blackfoot, Idaho in rural farm country where potatoes and other crops are grown. Blackfoot is a town in Eastern Idaho

that has approximately 11,000 people. Blackfoot has its own school system and public library, so although Snake River is relatively close to town it is a separate entity.

Snake River was chosen as a case because of the popularity of its Family Workshops. The library serves hundreds of children and parents in their Family Workshops each year, many more than most other libraries conducting the workshops. Snake River serves that many because they chose to incorporate the Family Workshop topics and materials into their regular weekly story times, which are highly popular. Snake River conducts five story times each week and attendance can be as high as 60 children at a session. Sherrilynn told me that Snake River did not have the resources to conduct separate Family Workshops considering how many families would want to attend, so she and her staff decided to creatively incorporate the Family Workshop content and materials into their story times. She was kind enough to send me her attendance statistics for spring 2010, which is when I observed at the library. Table 1 presents the statistics which clearly show that story time at Snake River is highly popular and thus provides a powerful venue within which to incorporate Family Workshops.

Table 1: Attendance for Six Week Family Workshop: Spring, 2010

| Six Week Family Workshop Spring, 2010 | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Date | Moms | Dads | Children | Total |
| FEB. 17 a.m. | 24 | 0 | 45 | 69 |
| FEB. 17 p.m. | 20 | 3 | 35 | 58 |
| FEB. 18 a.m. | 12 | 0 | 22 | 34 |
| FEB. 18 p.m. | 14 | 0 | 21 | 35 |
| FEB. 24 a.m. | 31 | 2 | 57 | 90 |
| FEB. 24 p.m. | 16 | 2 | 38 | 56 |
| FEB. 25 a.m. | 28 | 1 | 46 | 75 |
| FEB. 25 p.m. | 21 | 2 | 34 | 57 |
| MAR. 3 a.m. | 30 | 2 | 54 | 86 |
| MAR. 3 p.m. | 26 | 1 | 44 | 71 |
| MAR. 4 a.m. | 20 | 3 | 45 | 68 |
| MAR. 4 p.m. | 27 | 2 | 44 | 73 |
| MAR. 10 a.m. | 32 | 1 | 61 | 94 |
| MAR. 10 p.m. | 25 | 2 | 39 | 66 |
| MAR. 11 a.m. | 26 | 4 | 56 | 86 |
| MAR. 11 p.m. | 28 | 0 | 49 | 77 |
| MAR. 17 a.m. | 30 | 3 | 55 | 88 |
| MAR. 17 p.m. | 12 | 0 | 21 | 33 |
| MAR. 18 a.m. | 32 | 3 | 51 | 86 |
| MAR. 18 p.m. | 30 | 1 | 60 | 91 |
| MAR. 19 a.m. | 10 | 2 | 21 | 33 |
| MAR. 24 a.m. | 28 | 0 | 53 | 81 |
| MAR. 24 p.m. | 22 | 2 | 38 | 62 |
| MAR. 25 a.m. | 23 | 1 | 43 | 67 |
| MAR. 25 p.m. | 25 | 2 | 56 | 83 |
| MAR. 26 a.m. | 11 | 2 | 34 | 47 |
| TOTALS | 603 | 41 | 1122 | 1766 |
| Minimum | 10 | 0 | 21 | 33 |
| Maximum | 32 | 4 | 61 | 94 |
| Mean | 23.2 | 1.6 | 43.2 | 67.9 |
| Standard Deviation | 6.9 | 1.1 | 12.4 | 19.1 |

An average of 43 children attended a session. Couple this with the number of parents attending with their children and on average a total of 68 adults and children attended a Family Workshop story time session.

Snake River was also chosen as a case because they could provide Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) scores for children who participated in Family Workshop story times and then subsequently enrolled in the Snake River schools for kindergarten. Sherrilynn was able to construct a comparison group of Snake River kindergarteners who didn't participate in story time. These IRI scores are presented in the last section of this report where all the IRI scores from the various cases are collected.

I observed three story times over the course of a day and a half, a Thursday and a Friday. Because of the popularity of the program and the large attendance, Sherrilynn had recently added a Friday morning story time. She told me that several parents had approached her and said they would not return for another story time because the sessions were too crowded. Sherrilynn then decided to add the Friday morning session. The first had taken place on March 19, and twenty-one children attended. On the Friday I observed, which was the second week for Friday morning story time, attendance increased to 34 children. Peggy Hansen, the Snake River Storytime Coordinator, conducted the two workshops on Thursday with Mindy Baldwin's help. Mindy is a new story time presenter who had been recently hired for the position. Mindy conducted the Friday workshop with Sherrilynn's help. Snake River always has two people staff each workshop because of the size and complexity of the program. One person takes the lead and the other serves in a supporting role. As I describe the flow of the story time, you will see how these roles unfold.

One thing I noticed right away is Sherrilynn's involvement in the workshops. Even when both Peggy and Mindy were there on Thursday, Sherrilynn was out and about in the library greeting parents and children and helping with the craft or handing out the give-aways at the conclusion of the session. She knew most parents and children by name and those she didn't know she made a point to introduce herself. I saw her shake the hand of a newcomer after she introduced herself and welcomed the mother to the library. I noted right away that Sherrilynn and her staff work very closely together to consistently deliver a high quality program while also focusing on the individual parent or child so that everyone feels welcomed and appreciated at the library.

As Sherrilynn introduced herself to newcomers, talked with regulars, and interacted with the attendees, I realized how hands-on a manager she is and how this is important for the popularity of their program. She works hard to get to know the attendees and make personal connections with them. In the meet and greet role that she is very good at, she supports Peggy and Mindy by being available to pitch in when help is needed but also to do the bulk of the important meet and greet function with the parents. Peggy and Mindy have only limited time to devote to greeting and talking with parents since they are preparing for story time and most importantly greeting and interacting with the children who want attention from their favorite library people, Miss Peggy and Miss Mindy. To further illustrate Sherrilynn's role, I will provide another example.

At the conclusion of the workshops, Sherrilynn always went to the exit doors of the library and handed out the free book that was provided at each of the six workshops and the other give-aways that are so popular with parents. She didn't do this to control the distribution of materials but instead she used the give-aways as another way to

connect with the parents and their children. These materials were on the circulation counter that was just inside the front doors of the library. She stood by the counter and as the parents walked by to leave the library she directed them to the various materials and either watched as the parents picked them up, or in the case of mothers with several children in tow and a Read to Me book bag full of library books hanging from an arm, would pick the materials for the mom and put them in her bag. She chatted with the parents as she did this and used the time to make a final connection with the attendees and to wish them farewell and invite them back next week. I came away from my observations realizing that Snake River's Family Workshops are highly participant centered. Sherrilynn and her staff work hard each session to make every attendee feel a part of the library. In other words, no patron was taken for granted.

It is an understatement to say that Snake River is bursting at the seams because of popularity. The children's area would be fine if half the number of children and parents attended. But that is not the case. It was filled with children and parents on the days I observed. As I said earlier, Sherrilynn told me that some parents complained about the over-crowding and decided to not attend because of it. This made sense to me because I experienced this same thing with my grandchildren. Each week I take them to our local library for a music and movement class, and parents have said to me that they don't attend or do so only sporadically because of the large attendance. These are good problems for these libraries to have, but they are significant and important problems all the same. But the staff at Snake River take it all in stride. They make the best of the situation by offering multiple story times each week and arranging the space in the most efficient way possible to make it feel larger than what it actually is. Sherrilynn also told me of plans to expand the library in the near future.

The children's area is carpeted with a pull down projection screen on one side. This is where the presenters stand or sit in front of the children. Children sit on the carpet and parents sit on chairs or couches that surround the space. Sherrilynn told me that the small area hinders parent involvement. She said, "When we have 30 or 40 children, there just isn't room for everyone to be up shaking their sillys out." But even though limited in space, the children's area is quite nice and one of the better equipped spaces that I have seen in my travels around Idaho. There is an LCD projector mounted on the ceiling that projects images and video from a computer or other device onto the screen. There are also very good quality loudspeakers mounted in the area so that when Peggy or Mindy speak using a lapel microphone the quality of the sound is very good. When music is played, it, too, goes through these speakers and sounds equally good. Usually, libraries have a boom box CD player at the front of the children's area that produces somewhat limited and usually tinny music, but Snake River has a much better audio-visual set-up that helps them ameliorate some of the challenges that come with such large numbers of attendees in limited space.

I will now turn to a description of the story times that I attended. The particular ECRTR Family Workshop I observed focused on letter knowledge. I watched three workshops over two days and they were all quite similar whether Peggy presented or Mindy. This I found to be a real positive about the Snake River program because it showed me that the staff works closely together to deliver consistently high quality programming no matter who is doing the teaching. Since all three story times were nearly identical in format and delivery, I will provide a composite description of all three.

I will use Peggy's name in the description since she is the Story Time Coordinator for the program, but Mindy's name could just as easily be substituted.

While setting up for story time, Peggy pulled the screen down and put in a commercially produced video of children and adults singing songs and playing with animals. The first song I noticed was "Woolly Bully." The children in the video sang the song and held up various animals to the camera. Another song on the video was "Travelin along singing a song side by side." Again the children held animals as they sang. The video was full of songs like this. This video played while the children and parents assembled for story time. Peggy played the video instead of what they usually do which is have high school Advanced Placement (AP) English students read to the children as they come into the library. Sherrilynn said the AP students are usually very interested in doing the reading but this semester the students had opted out. She described how endearing it was to see the children enter the library and immediately go to their high school buddy who reads to them each week. Sherrilynn said that the high schoolers enjoy it and the children love it. She spoke of one male AP student who at first didn't think he would enjoy reading to young children but then fell in love with it. He started hanging around the library more and became a library aid.

There was a small table about 15 feet inside the doors of the library that parents had to walk by in order to get to the children's area. On this table was a yellow pad for signing in, name tags, and two informational signs. There were one or two other strategically placed tables around the story time area with sign-in sheets and name tags. Sherrilynn said they typically have two or three such stations to make the sign-in and name tag process as accessible and efficient as possible for participants. Snake River keeps very accurate attendance records. Sherrilynn takes the yellow pads where people sign-in and immediately puts them into an Excel spreadsheet so she can break the attendance out by dads, moms, and children. The person running the circulation desk also counts the number of parents and children at each story time after all have assembled and the program begins. Snake River appears to be quite data driven, which is another positive.

I noticed two signs on the sign-in table just inside the doors of the library. The signs were laminated construction paper and each was taped to a separate simple metal book end—the kind of small stamped metal book ends that are ubiquitous on library shelves. The signs were each about 8 inches tall by 6 inches wide. One sign (bright yellow construction paper with black letters) said: "Nametags for children and adults. Please use upper and lower case letters. Thank you." The second sign was red construction paper with black letters and said:

Parents, please help by:

- Temporarily leaving the room with a noisy child.
- Turning off your cell phone.
- Keeping toys and snacks for after your library visit.
- Modeling good listening skills.

I watched three story times over two days. No one violated the requests on the parent instruction sign and everyone had a name tag. The name tags were written with a marker the same color as the color of the day. It was pink for the week I attended. Some of the

children and adults wore pink and Peggy did an activity during story time with the color of the day which will be described below.

I want to spend a little time talking about name tags. Granted, to some this might appear to be a minor detail, but I see it as important after having observed and participated in a number of library programs. By building into the story time culture the expectation that all attendees, adult and children alike, will wear name tags, it shows that Sherrilynn and her staff want to be able to call everyone by name but also that they want the attendees to get to know one another. I will draw again on my library experience with my grandchildren. The library where I attend doesn't put name tags out. The turn-out can be big on any given day for story time or music and movement. As we sit in a circle by our children, I talk with the people next to me and we may or may not exchange names. If we do, it becomes hard to remember all of them from week-to-week since not everyone attends every week. And if we don't, then little connection is made between me and the person with whom I am having the exchange. Having name tags would greatly increase my week-to-week interaction with those around me. Maybe I'm too much of an introvert or too shy and my reticence to interact is unique to me, but what I saw at Snake River convinces me otherwise. I saw strangers conversing with one another and addressing each other using first names. I saw Peggy, Mindy, and Sherrilynn using the name tags to call children by their names and to initiate conversations with parents on a first name basis. I also saw Sherrilynn notice several attendees who didn't have name tags. She brought this to their attention and went over to the table and provided them with one. I have little doubt that without the name tags attendees and library staff alike would have had trouble remembering all the names. In short, the consistent use of name tags becomes a nucleus around which important, positive social interactions form and are maintained.

The "stage" for story time was a table at the front of the children's area just behind the pull down screen. The Every Child Ready to Read (ECRTR) black bi-fold felt board sat on it. The Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICFL) provides the felt board as part of the support materials for the Family Workshops. The board stands about three feet high and has the six early literacy skills poster from the ICFL on one side (there are 6 crayons stacked horizontally on top of each other and each lists one of the skills) and on the other side the focus skill of the day, which was letter knowledge. Peggy had placed a plastic tub full of puppets and other props on the table behind the felt board. To make changes, she simply and adeptly moved to the side of the table and reached behind the bi-fold to pick out puppets and other props.

At the start of story time, Mindy turned the video off and Peggy raised the screen revealing the bi-fold. The first activity was a microphone check. Miss Peggy called out to the children from in front of the table where she was standing. After the mike check, Mikka the Monkey Puppet, which is a staple every week, had to be awakened. Peggy rang a bell while the children yelled, "It's story time." Peggy slowly brought Mikka from behind the bi-fold felt board and the children were delighted to see their friend. Mikka said "Hello" to everybody and then directed the children to stand up and stomp their feet and perform several other physical movements to get the children warmed up. This was done using a sing-song chant that ended with the command for the children to sit on their pockets. Peggy sang it and so did the children. This first song appeared to be a staple also.

Peggy introduced Miss Mindy. They clapped the syllables in “Miss Mindy” and then clapped the syllables in “Hello Miss Mindy.” Mikka clapped also. Peggy asked them what the color of the day was. The children yelled “pink.” She complimented them about all the pink they wore. She pointed out the children’s pink clothing and shoes all the while using the children’s names to identify who wore the particular clothing. She then asked them to look for pink in the rug. The children looked down and pointed to pink around them. Peggy asked them to stand and move around looking for pink on the carpet as they chanted “Pink, Pink, Pink, Pink,” By this time Mikka had been retired behind the bi-fold.

Peggy brought a second puppet from behind the bi-fold. She asked the children to provide a loud drum roll for the new puppet. A drum roll at Snake River story time is children pounding on the carpet while some of the parents slap their thighs. The new puppet is named Tatyana. “T” is the letter of the day. Each story time has a letter of the day and a color of the day. Sherrilynn told me that they use different puppets for each letter of the day. They clapped out syllables of the puppet’s name. I noticed one little girl, probably about 2 years old, who clapped the syllables perfectly each time she was asked to do it during story time. Sherrilynn must have noticed this also and said to the little girl as she and her mother were leaving the library after story time, “Bye, bye. You’re a master syllable clapper.” The mother beamed at this. On Friday after my final observation of story time, Sherrilynn and I talked informally in the library as I was preparing to leave and I mentioned how amazing the little girl was in her ability to clap syllables. Sherrilynn said with a laugh, “She has probably been coming to story time since she was a newborn. Probably before she was even born!”

Another drum roll and another puppet is brought out. This one is Terry Tarantula. They clapped out the syllables for tarantula. Peggy asked how many syllables and the group chimed “four.” She also showed the children the number of syllables by holding up a finger as she pronounced each syllable until four of her fingers were up. After she had delineated the syllables with her fingers, she asked how many and the children again said “four.” They then clapped out Terry Tarantula and Peggy asked how many syllables. The children responded in unison with “six.” She then praised them for successfully clapping out so many syllables.

Terry Tarantula was the transition into the featured book of the day, *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* by Bill Martin Jr. and John Archambault. The book is an alphabet book that employs a tropical jungle theme. For example, the first line of the book is “**A** told **B**, and **B** told **C**, “I’ll meet you at the top of the coconut tree.” Peggy told the children that Terry the Tarantula was walking in the jungle and saw a coconut tree and wanted to read a book about them. She then drew the children’s attention to the big book version she had and began reading it. As she did Mindy held it and turned the pages. Peggy read the book rhythmically and had the children slap their thighs in time with the reading. The difficulty of reading rhythmically over multiple pages needs to be recognized. Reading a book with consistent rhythm so children and parents can slap their thighs in time to the rhythm is a lot harder than it looks. Too often readers lose time or speed up or slow down in places and the children’s and parents’ clapping, or slapping in this case, becomes out of sync. As a consequence, children and parents stop participating and just listen. But Peggy was a master at reading with consistent rhythm so all could actively and enthusiastically participate throughout the book.

During the reading, Peggy did a parent aside. She signaled the aside by projecting her voice into the room and prefacing her comment with “Parents.” Peggy was very good at signaling the parents when she had something to say to them. These were quick asides but they were very clear and effective. Peggy is an excellent communicator. She said, “Parents, when you’re doing the alphabet song, it’s good you slow down during those letters.” This was in response to reading l, m, n, o, p in the Chicka book. She then clearly explained that children get to school thinking that l, m, n, o, p are all one letter because they have said it too fast during the alphabet song.

After reading Chicka, Peggy led the group in singing the alphabet song two times. The upper and lower case letters were on the back pages of the Chicka big book so these pages were displayed and the letters were highlighted by pointing a finger at them as the song was sung. The first singing was at a normal pace, but the second time they sang it faster. Before the second time, however, Peggy did another parent aside that reinforced the previous one. She repeated the importance of slowing down and enunciating the letters l, m, n o, p when they came to them in the alphabet song. She gave the reason why again, and then she explained that when they sing the song the second time at the faster pace, they will slow down when they come to those letters and then pick back up for the remaining letters. Peggy did exactly this during the faster paced singing. It was clear to me that Peggy is an excellent story time teacher who loves her work. It was readily apparent that she is talented, experienced, and always well-prepared.

Another puppet, Tammy the Turtle, was brought up from behind the bi-fold panel. As Peggy slowly revealed the puppet, she asked for a soft drum roll, but the children didn’t participate much. They did remain attentive, however. Peggy noticed the lack of participation and said, “That was a soft drum roll” and laughed. Syllables for Tammy the Turtle were clapped and then pink, heavy construction paper upper and lower case Tt’s were handed out to the children by Mindy. These were three to four inches tall. Peggy brought out a piece of laminated black construction paper (8.5 x 11 inches) with an upper and lower case t on the left side of the paper held landscape and a color picture of a turtle on the right side. She held the paper in one hand and had Tammy the Turtle on the other. She led the children in the following chant that followed the tune of “Old McDonald Had a Farm:”

Every letter makes a sound.
 Tuh tuh tuh tuh tuh
 Every letter makes a sound.
 Tuh tuh tuh tuh tuh.
 With a tuh, tuh here
 And a tuh tuh there....

They did this chant several times. At this point, Peggy directed the children to stand up and say “Tuh, tuh, tuh” as they moved their pink Tt’s from high above their head to low on the floor. They did this several times and increased the rate each time. The children were directed to sit back down and Peggy showed them how to hold their thumb in-between their middle and index fingers to make a t. She told them to hold their hand behind their back so they couldn’t see the t. They then chanted the following to the tune of “Frere Jacques:”

Where is t? Where is t?

Here I am. Here I am. (They brought their hands out so they could see their hand-made t.)

What do you say T? What do you say T?

Tuh tuh tuh. Tuh tuh tuh.

They did this chant with the hand movements several times.

At this point, Peggy picked a dark blue uppercase T made from Play-doh or clay out of the box behind the bi-fold. She also opened a children's book to two facing pages that had been marked with a sticky note. She chanted "Big T. Little t. What begins with t? Ten tired turtles hanging on a tree." The pages being held up illustrated this chant for the children. The children were directed to hold up their pink construction paper t's during this. According to Sherrilynn, parents say that the construction paper letters are very important to their children and many put them in a book or on a poster when they get home so they don't lose them.

Next Peggy initiated a nonsense word chant using words that began with t. It looked to me like she spontaneously generated the nonsense words and the children followed her lead. This was a very brief activity. Mikka the Monkey puppet came back and Peggy asked the children to stand up. They then chanted the "shake my sillies out/jump my jiggles out/clap my crazies out/itch my itchies out" song. It ended with one last big wiggle and then a command to sit on your pockets.

After refocusing with Mikka, Peggy called for another drum roll. Participation was much better than the previous one. She brought a triceratops puppet from behind the bi-fold. Peggy immediately bridged the "d" for dinosaur that she assumed the children would be thinking to the focus letter "t" by counting the number of horns on the face of the puppet. There were three so she called it a triceratops—specifically Tommy Triceratops. She explained that "tri" means three. They then clapped the syllables for Tommy Triceratops, and Peggy continued by telling the children that Tommy loves shapes. She signaled a parent aside by saying "Parents" and explained how shape recognition is important to early reading because the shapes of the letters follow the basic shapes. Thus the basic shapes are important in children's emerging letter recognition skills. The right side of the bi-fold had been cleared of the focus skill of the day poster. In its place a triangle and circle were stuck to the board. She then put an A in the circle and asked the children if the shape of the letter matched the background shape. They said "no." She then placed the A in the triangle and asked the same question and the children responded "yes." She then placed a Q in the triangle and asked the children if it matched and then placed it in the circle and asked the children.

To further illustrate shapes for the children and parents and how they can be studied with everyday objects and activities, Peggy had collected colored socks with shapes on them. These were regular socks that could be purchased at stores. She held up two socks and asked the children if they matched and why or why not. She did a parent aside signaled by "Parents" about how this is good practice for children in preparation for discriminating upper and lower case letters.

Story time was nearing its end. Peggy brought out a final puppet from behind the bi-fold and asked for a quiet drum roll. She revealed it slowly by bringing it up a little at

a time. Each time she revealed more of the puppet, she asked the children to predict what it might be based on what they could see. It was a baby t-rex sitting in an egg that was broken off at the top. They clapped the two syllables of t-rex and then Peggy introduced the next song-chant. She asked if the children had ever seen a dinosaur standing on its head? They said “no” and she said, “Because dinosaurs are no longer on earth—they are dead.” Then they launched into a song-chant with the following lyrics:

Have you ever seen a dinosaur standing on its head?

Repeated

No, I don’t think so, because dinosaurs are dead.

Have you ever seen a dinosaur jumping on the bed?

Repeated

No, I don’t think so, because dinosaurs are dead.

Have you ever seen a dinosaur laugh until he turns red?

Repeated

No, I don’t think so, because dinosaurs are dead.

As they chanted the children clapped on the underlined words. After this final chant, Mikka came back to introduce the craft. Peggy explained through Mikka while holding up an example of the completed craft that the children will make an egg out of paper that has the top broken off in a craggy manner. The sides of the egg fold up to make a container. They will then color a baby dinosaur and cut it out and put it in the egg. Peggy also introduced the color for next week’s story time. It will be yellow. And she announced that the children were getting Play-doh today that they could take home and make letters. She asked the children if they could make letters with their Play-doh. She followed this by asking them if they could make the first letter of their names. She then made a P with yellow Play-doh that she had taken out of the container as she was talking. This illustrated for the children and parents what she was asking about while showing them what they might do at home. She also made a circle and triangle out of it. She made the circle by rolling a ball and then flattening it. She talked through this so the children both saw and heard an explanation for what she was doing. Peggy is a natural at thinking out loud for the children and parents so they can more readily and easily learn from her.

Peggy also used this closing time to mention to the parents that if they already had *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* then there was another book for them, David McPhail’s *Animals A to Z*. She prefaced this announcement with the phrase “This is for parents.” She pointed out that the books were located on the front counter right by the entry door. The last announcement she made was about an ABC book hand-out the parents would also pick up as they left the library. This was a book 8.5 x 11 inches in size, if the book was opened and laid flat. It had a blue paper cover and then blank pages inside. The paper was standard copy paper. Stuffed into each book were two 8.5 x 11 sheets of abc’s printed in color. The sheets were broken into a grid and in each square was a letter (upper and lower case) with a picture depicting the letter. Cutting along the grid lines would produce a complete alphabet. Peggy explained to the parents that the children were to make an alphabet book using the letters and then add their own pictures and drawings depicting the letters. While she explained the take-home activity, Peggy held

up an alphabet book that she had made using the hand-out materials and pictures that she cut from magazines.

The story time ended with a song with Mikka leading. It was readily apparent that the same song is used each week to end story time because everyone knew it well:

Good-bye everybody. Read lots of books. Read lots of books.

Good-bye everybody. Read lots of books. Read lots of books.

Good-bye everybody. See you in two weeks. See you in two weeks.

The last line of the closing chant emphasized “two weeks” because Peggy had previously announced that there would be no story time the following week. Usually the last line of the chant is “Good-bye everybody. See you all next week. See you all next week.”

After the closing song, the children and parents moved to the craft area. It was located adjacent to the story time area but was separated from it by a row of low library shelves containing books. It was a smaller area than the children’s area so things were crowded but manageable because of the way the space was set up. The space was rectangular. Five short, small square tables were set in a row along one side of the space. These tables were just the right height for a child to stand at them. Thus no chairs were provided. Four or maybe five children could stand at each table with adults behind them providing help. The sign-in table had been converted to a craft station and four children and adults completed the activity there. A few feet away running parallel to the small, low tables were two larger tables with five chairs at each. These tables were standard banquet hall tables, approximately 2 feet wide by 5 feet long. The number of stations that were available at all the tables was almost exactly the number of children in attendance. At one story time, the attendance was greater than expected so an additional table was set up during the story time so there were enough stations available when the children were released to go to the craft area. The staff took a head count during story time, realized there were not enough tables for the craft, and quickly remedied the problem. I didn’t notice the table had been added until I got to the craft area and noticed that the number of tables had changed from when I originally drew a diagram of the area prior to the beginning of story time. Like I said earlier, the staff at Snake River work closely together to make sure story time flows smoothly and attendees are treated to seamless transitions.

Trays of crayons and scissors were on each table. The children set about cutting out their eggs and coloring their dinosaurs. Most of them needed some help folding the corners of the egg up once it was cut out to make a container for the baby dinosaur. I saw some parents doing the cutting for their younger children. Peggy, Mindy, and Sherrilynn were all in the craft area to help. Sherrilynn, however, did not stay long because she moved to the exit doors to say good-bye and to hand out the free books and give-aways which were on the circulation counter next to the doors.

On the counter was a basket of Play-doh containers. These were small round plastic containers of Play-doh. Each child received one. There was a clear plastic square container with Dum-Dum-like suckers in it. Each child received one of these also. Next to the suckers, was a pile of *The Scoop* newsletter from the ICFL with information and ideas for Family Workshop parents. Next to *The Scoop* was a box with the two titles of children’s books standing upright in the box. Next to the box were bags of magnetic letters and a stack of red Read to Me bags. These are canvas tote bags the ICFL provides.

Many of the attendees brought these bags with books in them to return and then left with their bags full of new books. Parents received a bag of letters and a Read to Me bag if they had not already received these by attending previous workshops. Sherrilynn remarked, "It would be really beneficial to offer upper case letters one year and lower case letters the next year. Most of our attendees return for at least 2-3 years. Or, upper case letters in the fall and lower case letters in spring. Sets of letters are almost \$9.00 each, prohibitive for most libraries. Doable by ICFL, because of the volume purchased."

Not long after Sherrilynn moved to the door, a story time mother came up to get her things in preparation for leaving. Sherrilynn greeted her (Sherrilynn recognized her) and said to her "See you next week." The mom responded that there isn't any story time next week and Sherrilynn immediately rejoined with a big smile on her face, "You're right, but that doesn't mean we can't see you in the library next week." Numerous anecdotes like this could be provided about what Sherrilynn and the patrons said to each other as the give-aways were loaded into bags and people shuffled out the doors, but one is especially pertinent and poignant. I was standing at the counter by the give-aways with my yellow pad of paper and pencil in hand taking notes. There were not many parents left and a mother came up to the counter to get her things. Her child was back in the children's area playing. I immediately noticed that she was more out-going than many of the mothers who had left at that point and that she spoke with a louder voice than the others. She noticed that I was writing with my left hand and immediately said to me, "Smart man. You're left handed." She was left handed herself. She was obviously friendly and enjoyed interacting with people and felt quite comfortable doing so. I responded with a laugh and smile and said, "Thanks. I always knew I was different for some reason." After this exchange she turned to the mother next to her who she knew and said, "Have you tried some of that phonics stuff with Jayden (pseudonym)? I have done it with Travis (pseudonym) and he has gone crazy with it."

The anecdote is an excellent way to begin closing this description. Snake River's Family Workshops are highly popular while also being highly effective. Between the opening microphone check and the closing song were a mere 30 minutes. That 30 minutes was chock full of activities focused on early literacy development and enjoyment of books and reading. I watched three story times and even during the last one I was noticing more and more details that I had missed. I had missed so much not because there was too much or it moved too fast, but because the pace was quick, the transitions were smooth, and I just couldn't keep up with my note taking and also take in all of the various components of the workshop. Each story time was an event that had been carefully planned and as carefully executed. I have been an educator for the past 30 years and have watched hundreds of public and private school teachers teach at virtually all grade levels. I have been fortunate to witness some breathtaking teaching where the teacher and students were enthralled because the quality of teaching and materials were superb. Snake River's Family Workshop story times are examples of that level of teaching. It was a pleasure to witness a group of committed professionals so consummately pursuing their passion for teaching early literacy.

Jerome Public Library Every Child Ready to Read Family Workshops in Spanish

I traveled to Jerome Public Library in Jerome, Idaho in April to observe the Monday evening kick-off meeting of the Every Child Ready to Read Family Workshops (ECRTR) conducted in Spanish. This was the first family workshop in the series of six. The series was timed to start shortly after spring kindergarten registration. Jerome Library participates in the Jump Start program which is one of the Read to Me programs sponsored by the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICFL). Libraries attend kindergarten registration at their local schools and provide parents with information about early literacy development and library programs. Each parent receives a tote bag full of hand-outs and give-aways, and the future kindergarteners each receive a book to take home. A prior Jump Start program evaluation found that parents appreciated the materials and found them quite informative and helpful. Jerome uses their Jump Start program to recruit families to participate in the ECRTR Family Workshops that start in April or May following kindergarten registration. Jerome Library believes that this population is ideal for the workshops since the children are getting ready to attend school in the fall.

Jerome Library offers both English and Spanish versions of the workshops. Families who attend the workshops learn about early literacy skills for their young children and receive a free, high-quality children's book at each meeting to take home. The ICFL purchases books written in English for the English versions of the workshops and books written in Spanish for the Spanish versions.

Jerome Library reached out to the local public schools for their workshop presenters. The English versions are taught by an experienced first grade teacher who is also a reading specialist. The Spanish version, which will be the subject of this case study, is taught by Anna Rosa Trelles an experienced 5th grade teacher at Summit Elementary in Jerome. She is fully bilingual in Spanish and English and is Hispanic. She has been in Jerome since she was 16. She has been teaching nine years and has her elementary education degree in bilingual/ESL education and recently completed a Master's Degree in Bilingual Education. She has been the instructor for the Spanish family workshops in Jerome since they began. Her experience with the workshops was immediately evident because she readily talked about the changes she has made over time as she gained experience with the program.

In what was to become a quite fortunate occurrence, no parents and children attended this first workshop. Everyone at the library was highly apologetic to me when no one attended, but I was not disappointed at all and saw it as a wonderful opportunity to talk with Anna Rosa without all the distractions of her preparing for and then delivering the workshop. The lack of attendees allowed me a block of uninterrupted time with Anna Rosa, and from our conversation I learned some important things about the program and her teaching that I may not have learned if all had gone according to the original schedule. Specifically, I learned something quite important to the success of Jerome's Spanish Workshops that I might have otherwise missed. I learned about it when Anna Rosa and I sat down in the children's area of the library where the workshop would have been held and talked for about 45 minutes.

What had happened to cause the lack of attendance was no one in the library remembered to call the families on the list. It was a simple communication mix-up that

can happen in any organization that is busy serving patrons and implementing a variety of programs. Anna Rosa said that library staff had just discovered the list of attendees that day and realized that they had forgotten about making the calls. When Anna Rosa arrived at the library around 5:30 and was told of the mix-up, she immediately got on the phone and called several families on the list. She told me that a couple of these said that they might attend, but no one did.

Anna Rosa said it best when she remarked, "Hispanic families need to be called prior to each workshop to be reminded to attend. It's a different culture." She elaborated by saying the parents don't understand the importance of the information or the expectations for their children at school. She continued by elaborating and clarifying her previous statement. She talked about how once the parents are informed of the importance of the early literacy skills to their children's success in school and once they are aware of the expectations for their children upon entering school, they engage and become very interested in the content, but this can take some time since the parents are learning also. Learning takes time so things don't happen over night. She said, "It's a process." She also said that the families will arrive at 6:15 or 6:30 even when the workshop started at 6:00. She said in explanation of this behavior, "They come from a different culture."

But as I listened to her speak, I realized the needs of the Hispanic families weren't all that much different from some of the non-Hispanic families all across Idaho who have participated in the English version of the Family Workshops. The ICFL hired me during 2008-2009 to conduct a state-wide program evaluation of the ECRTR Family Workshops. As part of that project, I read the final reports from all of the Idaho libraries that implemented Family Workshops. Libraries across Idaho reported the need to make calls and send emails to remind participants to attend the English version of the workshops. So, yes, Hispanic families do come from a different culture; but based on my experience and the results of the previous program evaluation, their behaviors concerning their attending Family Workshops aren't all that much different from some White families attending the English versions. There is simply a group of people, no matter their ethnicity or native language, that need to be reminded. Parents are busy with work and their older children who need to be transported to school, church, and other functions. Furthermore, we can't expect all parents to automatically know the importance of quite specific early literacy skills when they have not been taught these skills themselves. So remembering and getting to a Family Workshop each week for six weeks can be challenging. I am in no way trying to negate what Anna Rosa was saying about this issue. I am only trying to contextualize her comments within my experience studying the ECRTR Family Workshop program throughout the state.

Throughout our conversation Anna Rosa used "It's a different culture" or "They come from a different culture" a number of times to explain Hispanic families' behavior. She did not say this in a disparaging way but rather in a very matter of fact way. As if she were saying, "If you are going to do these workshops in Spanish and want a lot of Hispanic people to attend, then this is the playing field that you will be given." I related a lot to what she was saying since I only moved to the West 20 years ago from Northern Indiana. I lived and taught school in a community about 40 miles outside of the South Chicago area. It was a suburban blue collar community but we were within a relatively short drive of the metropolitan area. In short, things were a lot different when I moved to

the rural West. The first thing I noticed is that I walked twice as fast as my colleagues who had been raised in the West, but I still walked slower than my colleagues who had grown up on the Eastern Seaboard. I also noticed that starting times for meetings were much more flexible than what I had previously experienced, and of course, at that time, western dress was more casual. So when Anna Rosa described Hispanic family behavior, the description resonated with me because I had experienced similar things in the White culture when I moved West. I really appreciated Anna Rosa's insights and candor. She had a deep understanding of the people around her, both White and Hispanic. She knew that people were different and that social institutions like library programs, schools, and even churches needed to recognize it and then adjust to these differences without making value judgments about the people and their behaviors.

As was previously mentioned, state-wide data revealed that recruiting and retaining families in the workshops had been a challenge for some libraries, especially Hispanic families. Jerome Library has had excellent success at recruiting and retaining Hispanic families in the workshops, and after my visits to the library and the conversations I had with Anna Rosa and the library director I can see why. During our conversation, Anna Rosa said to me that she and the library director had one day not long before walked across the street from the library to the Head Start program. She said they recruited some families for the workshops by doing this. She then mentioned how some Spanish speaking mothers were in the library one day when Anna was teaching a workshop and they came up to her and asked her what she was doing. She explained to them and they started coming. Anna Rosa also tells her students and parents at school about the workshops. And of course, Jerome leveraged their Jump Start program in the local schools to recruit families for the workshops. One of the most important realizations that I had as a consequence of my visits in Jerome was the importance of a multi-pronged, dynamic, and ongoing recruiting effort which doesn't stop once the list of attendees is made, but continues until the last workshop is concluded, no matter whether the target audience is Spanish or English speakers.

Anna Rosa and I also talked about the differences between the Spanish and English languages. She had had to adjust the scripts provided workshop presenters so that she had more time to talk about these differences with the parents. For example, in schools where Spanish is the dominant language, they don't spend nearly as much time with young children on phonics, that is letter-sound correspondence, as we do in the United States where English is the dominant language. This resonated with me since I visited Russia a number of years ago and spent time in their schools. They, too, spend very little time in the beginning grades on phonetics since the Russian language has a much more regular and less complex system of letter/sound correspondence. Anna Rosa provided another example that I had no idea about before her mentioning it. She explained how rhyming is not taught until the 4th grade in Mexico. It is considered a higher level skill. Of course, there are many rhymes in Spanish but educators don't focus on them in the early grades. Because of this, she said Hispanic parents don't understand rhyming's role and importance in English and thus they don't understand why it's important for them to practice rhyming with their young children. I quickly realized as we sat and talked that I didn't know as much about this important language/culture interface as I needed to know. I learned a lot in a short amount of time by talking with her, but I also realized I needed to do a lot more reading and study after I returned home.

Because of the complexities discussed above and her experience as a teacher and a Family Workshop presenter, Anna Rosa only uses the workshop scripts to glean overall objectives for each lesson and ideas for crafts and activities. Thus, she does not follow them closely but she said that they are fine and that she does fall back on them occasionally for particular things. She said they are good reminders of what needs to be covered and specific things that need to be said and emphasized. She was kind enough to provide me additional detail about how she uses the scripts and told me that she first looks at the lesson objective from the English script and then builds a lesson focused on that objective using Spanish materials and books. Anna Rosa said that the children's books written in Spanish that come from the ICFL to support the program influence the particular activities and approach she uses. Once she has taken the lesson objective from the English script, she then chooses the activities that align with the objective and book provided for that evening. She mentioned how different books have been purchased over the course of the iterations of the Family Workshops so she has had to adapt her lessons and activities to the new books. I could tell from her description that Anna Rosa is a very methodical and strategic teacher who wants all aspects of her presentation to meld and work together. She knows what Spanish speaking parents need to know and she adapts and customizes her lessons so that the purchased book, the activities, and what she tells the parents all focus on meeting the objective set forth in the English script.

When Anna mentioned that different books had been used over time for the workshops, she also said that it was good to mix things up and keep things new, especially since families can attend more than one round of workshops and thus receive different books each time. As she was saying this, I could see that she was summing in her head all of the opportunities a family could have to receive free books if they attended two rounds of workshops. She said that a few families had attended more than once and one family had attended both the English and Spanish workshops so they had received 12 books plus two for a total of 14. Families receive one book per workshop and if they attend all six workshops they get a bonus book at the conclusion of the final workshop.

Anna mentioned that she does workshops bilingually if she detects the need based on the attendees. She says she will have English speaking parents who want their children exposed to Spanish or she has families who are weak in Spanish and thus need support through English. She said that at each workshop there is usually a mixture of language strengths between English and Spanish and so she adjusts accordingly. I witnessed this first-hand when I returned to Jerome two weeks after my initial visit to observe a Spanish Family Workshop. There were native English speakers in attendance who had limited Spanish and there were native Spanish speakers who had limited English. Anna Rosa switched in and out of Spanish and English depending on the needs of the particular child she was talking with or the particular parent she was addressing. I have watched a number of bilingual teachers in my 30 year career in education, and although I am not bilingual myself, I can tell Anna Rosa is highly accomplished at her craft.

Our conversation that early evening was quite wide-ranging and I sincerely hope Anna Rosa enjoyed it as much as I did. Anna told me she really likes doing the workshops because she feels what the workshops provide the children and parents is very important. She talked about how the workshops teach the children to sit and listen. I immediately made a connection from her saying this to the extensive survey data the

ICFL has collected about the Family Workshops as part of the program evaluation. It was quite common in the surveys to find parents and caregivers talking about how important it is for their children to learn to sit, listen, and interact with their peers in a school-like setting, which the workshops provide. Anna Rosa elaborated on this and talked about how some of the children she encounters in her classroom and at the workshops don't come from homes where the expectations for school are understood, modeled, and practiced. This was another instance where she said, "It's a different culture." She related the story of one session where only one child and the child's parents attended. The mother and father sat on each side of the child on the carpet in the children's area of the library. As mentioned before, Anna Rosa and I were sitting in this area of the library talking and she motioned with her hands to the spot on the floor where the family had sat. She pointed to where the child sat and then used her right hand and left hands to show how the parents sat on each side of the child. The child was a kindergartener who was struggling in school with behavior and some academic issues. Anna Rosa spent the workshop time that evening going through what she had prepared and using the lesson to explore with the parents the types of behaviors expected of their child in school. The father told Anna Rosa later that the child was now doing fine in school. The father said to her that the child had "got it." She concluded this powerful example by reflecting on several aspects of it. She believed that the key to this success story was the fact that the mother and father sat down with the child and learned about the expectations at school. She said that by showing them that evening what was expected of their son in kindergarten, not only did the parents come to understand why their son was struggling but the child also came to see that his parents understood and therefore he was no longer so alone in school.

As I mentioned previously, Anna Rosa understands all of the parents and children she has in her workshops. Her knowledge of the cultures and languages she encounters is deep. She provided example after example of this as we talked. For example, she spoke about how children from some Hispanic families don't mesh well with the dominant culture of schools. This phenomenon is quite well known by educators and sociologists, and it occurs not just with some Hispanic families but also some White and Black families and with other ethnic groups found in the United States. Anna Rosa continued by illustrating her point with something that had happened during one of the family workshops. The family workshops involve a craft activity at the conclusion of each workshop. One evening, Anna Rosa had the children using scissors, and the Hispanic parents were shocked and concerned that their children would be hurt by the scissors. Anna said that she reassured them and explained to them that their children will be expected to use scissors in school so it is important for them to have practice at home before entering school. This example really surprised me. It illustrated for me how different cultures can be and how children can be well-nurtured and loved in a tightly-knit home where education, hard work, and accomplishment are valued but still not receive all of the necessary experiences needed to be prepared for school. But as I reflected on my surprise, I came to realize that I shouldn't be, because I had experienced something similar with one of my own children. My wife and I grew up in the flat agricultural lands of Northern Illinois and Northern Indiana. I was used to flat land punctuated by some low, rolling hills. When I moved with my wife and two children to Laramie, WY in the late 1980's, I lived among mountains for the first time in my life.

We enrolled our son, who was preschool age at that time, in a Montessori program in town. One day, they loaded the children and a group of parents, my wife and I included, into the program's old school bus and took us to a world class rock climbing location above town. We all piled out of the bus and my wife and I were quickly aghast at how all these preschool-age kids were allowed to climb all over the rocks. Now, of course, the kids were not allowed to climb too high or to go near cliff edges that were too steep, but my wife and I were in cold sweats before we finally settled down and realized that the kids were really quite agile and thus safe. The other parents and the teachers, who we all respected, reassured us several times that the children would be fine, and they were right. I really don't see any difference between my experience "on the rocks" and that of the Hispanic parents and the scissors. Sure, not every child in the United States needs to enter school having had rock climbing experience in the same way all children should probably know how to use scissors, but the example is a good illustration of how cultures differ leading to different experiences to which children are exposed.

As I mentioned before, after my first visit, I traveled to Jerome Library two weeks later to observe a Family Workshop in Spanish conducted by Anna Rosa. Just as I got off the interstate and was driving the two miles into town, a significant rain and hail storm started. By the time I arrived at the library, which is in downtown Jerome, the rain and hail were subsiding but the streets and sidewalks were flooded. Once I slogged into the library and found Anna Rosa in the children's area, I mentioned to her that the rain might keep some people away from the workshop, and she cheerily replied, "It's just water." She was right. The turn out for the workshop was excellent despite the weather. By the time the workshop was over, the weather had cleared and the sidewalk and parking lot were still wet but not flooded.

I want to describe what the workshop looked like. But I do need to say up front that it really wasn't all that different from the English language Family Workshops I've observed in various parts of Idaho where the presenters were engaging, enthusiastic about their subject, and well-prepared for the session like Anna Rosa was.

Anna has a wheeled cart she uses to bring her teaching materials to and from the children's area. The cart has wire pockets for books on the sides and shelves for white plastic tubs. The cart is made of metal tubing painted black. She had it close behind her in the children's area when she started the lesson at 6:05. I counted nine children sitting on the carpet. Anna told me after the workshop that she had waited until 6:15 the previous week to start the workshop (which would have been the first one). I think she was pleased that families were more timely tonight and she went on to add with pleasure in her voice that some were there by 5:40. Anna sat on the floor in front of her cart. She began by asking all the children their names, ages, grades, schools, and teachers. She did this in Spanish for most but she also used English for some. It is interesting to note that there were three older boys sitting at a table quite close to the area where the children and their parents were sitting. Anna engaged them at the beginning of the lesson and asked them their names, schools, and grades. She introduced them like she did the younger children sitting on the floor. These introductions acknowledged each child and by doing so provided a community building activity at the start of the workshop.

The book she had in her hand was *Give a Mouse a Cookie* in Spanish. The book had a picture of a cat and Anna pointed to it and clapped the two syllables to gato. They did this several times. After the workshop, Anna Rosa and I talked, and as we discussed

how she had clapped syllables to gato and other words, she added that she also focused on rhyming words during these activities. When she said this, I immediately recalled that during the workshop she had added words after they clapped the syllables to gato and that these were the rhyming words. My Spanish language ability is quite minimal so I was working hard during my observation to comprehend bits and pieces of what she, the children, and parents were saying; but when Anna Rosa told me afterward about some of things she was deliberately doing during the workshop, I recognized what she had said and thus was able to fill-in details that I had missed. She said that she had done both syllables and rhyming in this activity because she tries to take advantage of everything she does so that she gets the most in during the allotted time. She explained that both rhyming and syllables are not that important in learning how to read and write Spanish so she needed to explain this and emphasize this for the parents. Thus, after they clapped the syllables to gato and rhymed, she did an aside in Spanish targeted at the parents. During the aside, she explained to them what she had just done with the children and why.

Anna then read the book. She was sitting on the floor with the children. Anna code switched, that is changed from Spanish to English and back again, a number of times during her reading the story and continually pointed to the pictures and named things in the pictures. For example, she asked for the word for scissors in English. There were two girls in the group who were native speakers of English and probably not Spanish speakers. Anna may have been taking this into consideration, but I think she also wanted to bridge the two languages for even the Spanish speakers in the group. She then highlighted siesta by pointing to it with her finger and asked for what it meant in English (i.e., sleep). After she code switched on siesta she did a brief parent aside and talked to them about the importance of vocabulary, which was the topic for this particular workshop, and the importance of naming things for children. After the workshop we talked about the lesson and the importance of focusing on vocabulary. During this conversation she mentioned that Hispanic parents don't name things as often in children's environments as in other cultures. She said, "They just say, "Go get me that" or "Look at this."'" She recalled being raised that way by her parents. As she talked about this, I remembered that this phenomenon has also been identified in some United States White and Black subcultures, so once again Hispanic parents and families are not all that much different from other families.

This may or may not be important but I found it interesting. At this point, I noticed that there were eight older children at the tables surrounding the open carpet area where the children were sitting for the workshop. These older children, who were probably in 4th through 6th grade, were not participating in the workshop but instead quietly talking among themselves. There was also an older boy in a rocking chair quite nearby the children's area who throughout the workshop was surrounded by two or three other boys and they, too, talked quietly. I was quite surprised that these older kids were so close to the family workshop yet they didn't cause distraction. Anna Rosa and other library personnel told me that the library was very "kid friendly" and that kids hang around the library for hours at a time. Anna told me after the workshop that "the library is a safe place for kids" and her children had been at the library that day since 3:00 pm when they were released from school. Anna said that the library is very youth oriented. She said it wasn't very busy now but in the winter a lot of boys and girls are there reading and using the computers. She said, "They can buy hot chocolate for a dollar and drink it

right in the library. It's a lot different place than most libraries." In short, all of the children and youth that were in the children's area that evening knew how to behave and conduct themselves in a library where a meeting was taking place. It occurred to me that Jerome Library must do a wonderful job modeling for children and youth how to behave in public spaces so that all can enjoy them and take advantage of them.

About 15 minutes into the session, I counted eight adults and ten children instead of the nine mentioned above. Some parents did come in late. Eight children were sitting on the floor and two were being held by their parents or caregivers. But people arriving late has happened at every Family Workshop I've observed over the past two years, all of which have been English versions except for this one in Jerome. There are always late-comers and they are always welcome.

Anna finished the book and explained again what the book illustrated for the parents and then transitioned into explaining the craft activity for the evening. This was at about 6:25. There were three large pieces of heavy construction paper on the long table by where I sat. The papers were poster board size and each was a different color. Groups of adults and children were to draw pictures on the paper. Anna suggested to the parents and children to draw a neighborhood scene with a house, trees, animals, road, etc. The purpose of the activity was to draw their surroundings and name the objects in those surroundings. The long table was not big enough for all of the attendees to gather around so one group of two adults and 3 children took their red piece of paper and went to a round table on the other side of the children's area and sat there to do the illustration. It was only about 8-10 feet away from the main long table. Two adults and three children worked on the yellow sheet at the long table, and two adults and five children were at the orange sheet. If the number of children doesn't add up to the numbers previously provided, it's because some of the older children who had been sitting outside the circle rejoined the Workshop to participate in the activity.

At about 6:35 Anna called all of the children and adults back into the circle area, but not all groups were finished with their illustration. The groups were enjoying the activity and the time together. The illustrations were excellent and had elements that the adults had contributed but also many that the children had obviously contributed. Two groups continued to work and Anna called them all back again at 6:38. This was done in a very positive and cajoling way. The atmosphere was warm and accepting. After everyone had gathered, they all sang a song in Spanish about houses with hand signals. For example, one hand signal was for the roof. The others were for other parts of the house. After the song, Anna Rosa took each paper, held it up, and asked the children who had drawn it to come forward and stand around her. Anna traveled around each poster with her fingers while she talked about it, and as she did she made up an impromptu story based on the picture and named the items in the picture as the children followed along with her. She also asked the children who were standing around her questions about their picture and she directed an occasional question to their parents. The children and parents enjoyed this and there were smiles and laughter as Anna Rosa made up the stories and asked questions. When all the posters had been showcased, Anna Rosa handed out the *Give a Mouse a Cookie* books in Spanish and closed the session by thanking everyone for coming and reminding them of the upcoming session the following week. This was about 6:48.

Anna told me after the workshop that many Hispanic parents don't sit down one-on-one with their children to do coloring, writing, and reading. So one of the important purposes of the neighborhood illustration activity was to show parents how this is done around vocabulary building. She mentioned her upbringing and said that her parents hadn't done things like this with her, but she now understands having become a teacher and mother that such activities are important for preparing children for school. When she mentioned her upbringing, she did so in a non-judgmental way and used her experience as a child as an example of what she was explaining to me. She spoke warmly of her childhood and did not reflect on it in any negative way, but instead used it as an objective case of what she was discussing with me. During both of the times I visited the library and talked with her, I realized that she holds deep understanding of the Hispanic culture in Jerome, which is primarily of Mexican heritage.

But she is also quick to say that she doesn't know Mexico that well because she didn't grow up there. So she listens to the parents and learns from them. They will tell her words, songs, meanings of things that she doesn't know, etc. She said she welcomes this, loves learning from them, and enjoys seeing them get involved by sharing their knowledge about their culture and language. She said at one point in our conversation after the workshop that she doesn't want to be seen as "this educated person" but instead as just a parent who is much more like them than different from them. I realized from our conversations that she respects all of the people around her, and I saw ample evidence of this at the workshop where attendance was excellent, engagement was high, and parents and children readily volunteered answers. People felt welcomed and valued. You could tell because everyone laughed and looked at ease.

I do not wish for this description of Anna Rosa and her workshop to imply that only public school teachers with the extensive experience and education that Anna Rosa has can conduct high-quality Spanish language workshops. On the contrary, there are, of course, people who could do so who don't have Anna Rosa's background. But I do think the qualities and knowledge that Anna Rosa brings to her work at Jerome Library are integral to her success. She has deep knowledge of the cultures she interfaces with each day. She also knows both Spanish and English but is the first to say that her background in the nuances and subtleties of the Spanish language are somewhat limited at times because she did not grow up in Mexico or a Central or South American country. Her interest in learning the details of the culture and language reveals both her humbleness and approachability. She enjoys learning from others and actively promotes engagement with them so that they feel comfortable contributing their knowledge and suggestions to both she and the group. She also believes in and understands the importance of the Family Workshops and thus her enthusiasm during the workshop is infectious. In short, Anna Rosa knows and believes in her audience and her product. It's a win-win situation for all.

Partnering for Early Literacy: Hayden Library and Mountain States Early Head Start

I traveled to Hayden, Idaho to visit Hayden Library and Mountain States Early Head Start (MSEHS) which is located a few miles away in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Hayden Library is one of seven in the Kootenai-Shoshone Area Libraries network. It is a

modern, well-maintained facility located on a busy street in Hayden. MSEHS is located in a remodeled former public school building. The offices and early childhood center, which has classrooms, kitchen facilities, and meeting rooms, are modern, bright, and well-appointed. It is an impressive facility that is inviting and well-maintained.

The seeds of this partnership were planted over a decade ago when Karen Yother, the current Hayden Library Youth Services Librarian, received a grant from the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICFL) in the late 1990's that provided funding for outreach to a teen parent daycare program at Lake City High School. The daycare served children of teen mothers who attended the high school, and Nancy Woodrey was an employee in the daycare. It was here that Karen and Nancy met and began working together. A few years later Nancy moved to Mountain States Early Head Start and contacted Karen about partnering with them. Karen jumped at the opportunity and the partnership has thrived for the past 10 years. Karen has continued to be the primary contact and partner from Hayden Library throughout this span of time.

“Early Head Start (EHS) is a federally funded community-based program for low-income families with infants, toddlers, and pregnant women. Its mission is simple:

- to promote healthy prenatal outcomes for pregnant women,
- to enhance the development of very young children, and
- to promote healthy family functioning.” (<http://www.ehsnrc.org/aboutus/ehs.htm>)

Early Head Start programs are located throughout the country. They focus programming and services on pregnancy to age three. In Idaho there are six programs. Mountain States Early Head Start (MSEHS) being one of them. To operationalize the above mission statement, MSEHS provides support and programming for prenatal care, child development, and healthy family functioning through a combination model of service delivery, which includes home-based and center-based services.

Home-based services have always been a mainstay of the program. This is where family consultants visit the family in their home about once per week and provide early childhood screening and child, parent, and family education and support services. Another required part of home-based services, as defined by Head Start Performance Standards, are socializations which include both parents and children and are usually held at the MSEHS facility.

Instead of home-based services, a second option for parents at MSEHS is Toddler Time, which operates on a combination model. Children attend a 3.5 hour class twice each week in MSEHS classrooms and parents receive a home visit twice each month. Toddler Time has been provided by MSEHS for about 10 years and, while successful, was only able to serve eight children. Thus, it is currently being phased out. In its place, staff are working to enhance the socializations in the home-based model. This enhancement is called Stay and Play and allows all enrolled families to enjoy and benefit from enhanced classroom experiences at MSEHS. The two classroom experiences, Toddler Time and Stay and Play, will be highlighted in this case study because they are the activities around which much of the partnership between Hayden Library and MSEHS has revolved.

The partnership between MSEHS and Hayden Library has evolved over time as programming and needs at MSEHS have changed. For nearly a decade Karen has gone

“down” each week to MSEHS for Toddler Time. Hayden Library is a few miles north of MSEHS so employees of the two organizations talk about going up and down between the two. Children enrolled in Toddler Time receive home visits plus the class twice each week. Karen has “religiously” attended the Tuesday morning Toddler Time for a decade. Each week she brings books, puppets, and arts and crafts activities. Sandra Mengas, a long-time family consultant and Toddler Time teacher, said about Karen, “The only time she misses is when she is traveling.” Sandra also said, “Karen is part of the class and gets to know the kids and their interests.” Based on these interests she brings specific books and “even brings them more than one week so the kids can pursue their interest in a particular book.” Sandra said, “The kids recognize Karen as part of the Tuesday routine.”

Originally Karen’s contribution to Toddler Time was a standard story time but has evolved through the years as the program and children have changed. According to both Sandra and Karen, the children have difficulty sitting and listening to a story so Karen changed the session to better meet the needs of the children. Karen said that a few of the children can sit and listen to a story but most can’t so she made it more flexible and more of a book share. Of course, she still reads books to the children, but Karen said that there are weeks where they “don’t even look at books because they are playing outside or doing a craft.” This doesn’t bother her in the least since the program better fits the needs of the children. What’s important for her is that she is recognized by the children as “the library lady who brings books and fun stuff for us to do.” She said they “get back to the books sooner or later,” and she added with a playful laugh, “Sometimes after a craft, after the kids hands are clean, we go to the books and look at them.”

Karen’s flexibility appears to be a hallmark of this partnership and is probably a key reason why the partnership has such a long and successful history. Additionally, Sandra thinks highly of Karen as does Karen of Sandra so they have mutual respect for one another and have enjoyed working together for a long time. More about flexibility and relationships will be provided later.

As mentioned above, Toddler Time is currently being phased out. A different activity is replacing it, called Stay and Play, that will allow all children enrolled in the activity to receive weekly classroom socialization and educational programming. Hayden Library and Karen have integral roles in this new program also. Stay and Play utilizes educational play groups that convene once each week for five weeks. Children and their families attend the play sessions. About eight families are scheduled into each Stay and Play session which lasts 90 minutes. The one I observed started at 10:30 and ended at 12:00. They offer morning, afternoon and evening Stay and Plays, and participating families are expected to attend one of these each week. Currently, they are running three sessions each week but in July, 2010 they are going to five sessions as Toddler Time is phased out completely and the new model is fully implemented. Jana Brooks is the MSEHS staff member who is coordinating the Stay and Play program. She decides what will occur during the Stay and Play sessions, and she and Karen work closely together to integrate Hayden Library’ resources, both material and human, into the new program.

A meal or snack is provided for the families. When I observed there was yogurt, water melon, and cookies. Coffee, tea, and milk were also provided. The meal was served in the kitchen/dining room facilities of the Early Head Start center which are at one end of a wide, carpeted hallway that has classrooms on one side and offices on the

other. Round tables that held about six people had been set up in the dining area. Each child had a laminated place mat with their name and picture on it. One or two of these were placed at a table. When children and their families entered the dining room, the children were visibly excited to find their place mat and when they did they immediately sat down.

The MSEHS Center has several modern classrooms that are nicely equipped for early childhood education and play. The classrooms are next to each other on one side of the hallway on an outside wall of the building so they have natural light coming in through ample windows. There is also a well-maintained play area outside of the building. On the day I attended, the children played inside in two of the three classrooms. The two classrooms were connected to each other by an open door in a common wall between them. This way children could move from room to room without leaving the main classroom doors and walking out into the hallway and office area of the building. As children moved from one classroom to another, because of different things to do in each of the rooms, either their parents would follow them and monitor or participate in their play or parents would remain behind in the room and converse with other parents or MSEHS staff in attendance. The atmosphere was relaxed and pleasant and parents and children appeared to be quite comfortable.

My observations of Stay and Play began in the kitchen/dining room facilities of the Center. I had been in the dining room since about 10:00 am talking with MSEHS staff who came in and out of the room as they prepared for Stay and Play, so I decided to remain in the dining area and talk with the families who began arriving a little before 10:30. As time went along and fewer families came in to eat, I decided to walk down the hallway to the classrooms to observe the families playing and to talk further with some of them. Children were playing in the classrooms as their parents sat nearby in chairs or on the floor. I noticed that more families were in the classrooms than I had noted eating in the dining room so I asked Jana about this and she said, "Things are pretty flexible here." She meant that some people eat first and then go to the classrooms and play while others play some first, then eat, and then return to play more. I noticed that everyone in the classrooms had name tags on so I went over to a little table that had been set up by the door of one of the classrooms and picked-up a tag and noticed a sign-in sheet for the families.

I started moving between the classrooms and the dining area so that I could talk to as many people as possible, but by about 11:15 all the families had eaten and were playing in the classrooms, so I remained there for the remainder of Stay and Play. At 11:45 Jana asked for the children and their families to come to the carpet in one of the classrooms. The children sat on the carpet and the parents sat on chairs around the perimeter.

At the beginning of the program, Jana instructed the children to shake their sillies out to music on a CD. I counted ten children and nine parents. Of the nine three were males. Following shaking the sillies out, the children and parents sang along to a song about walking various places. This was done with a lot of enthusiasm so I imagine it was a regular part of the carpet sessions. This was followed by a very endearing song on the CD that provided introductions for each child present. Everyone sang along and when a blank came in the song a child's name was inserted until each child had been introduced. All but one of the children were very excited and enjoyed being in the limelight when

their turn came and their name was inserted into the song. The one girl who did not enjoy it hid behind a chair when her turn came. She appeared to be quite shy, but she soon came back into the group and began participating. As each child was named and introduced, the looks on the parents' faces showed a lot of pride. These three opening activities--shaking the sillys out, the walking song, and the introductions song--made a wonderful opening for the session. It settled the children while providing warm and friendly connections between all present.

Three more rhymes and songs followed, all of which were either chanted or sung with enthusiasm. Then the group sang the ABC song and finally they sang "If you're happy and you know it clap your hands...stomp your feet, etc." During all of this, the children and parents actively participated and appeared to enjoy the activities very much.

At 11:55, Nick, a youth services employee from Hayden Library, went to the front of the carpet and sat on the floor in front of the children with a red zippered bag. Nick is a junior at Lewis Clark State College in communications. He began working at Hayden Library when he was in high school and told me he has really enjoyed working there. He works 19 hours per week. Before he unzipped the bag, he asked the children for the color of the bag. He said "red" while the children followed him in unison. He then said, "I will unzip the bag," as he did so. He was deliberately voicing what he was thinking and doing. Nick invited the children to come up and reach into the bag to see what it contained. He had to coax them a bit but once he did they jumped up off the carpet, went to the bag, and reached in. With laughter and delight, they pulled out all sorts of puppets. The children were asked to name their puppet and Nick voiced the names. Puppets included kitty, bird, frog, chicken, bear, and several others. The children and some of the parents then played with the puppets for a minute or so.

To close the session out a few minutes after noon, the group sang a bye-bye song that was on the CD. Nick led this song and the children and parents played with their puppets while singing. Nick had a frog puppet on his hand and moved it to the music while hamming it up quite a bit. He was very comfortable and effective in front of the children. He hadn't had much time in front of the group but he accomplished a lot in the time he had. As I talked with he and Jana after the session, they told me that the library sometimes does a full puppet show but today they didn't.

After my visit to MSEHS, I traveled the few miles north to Hayden Library to talk with Karen. During our conversation, I told Karen that Nick was a natural. She smiled and appeared pleased when I said this and added, "He is great." It's possible that Nick is a natural in front of young children and his pacing, voice, and what he says to the children just come naturally to him, but it is also just as likely that Karen and other youth services staff at Hayden Library have been wonderful role models for Nick and from them he has learned some or all of these things. I also mentioned that the MSEHS carpet session looked a lot like a library story time. When I said this, she smiled and agreed and then diffidently provided an example of where she had recently helped with the MSEHS sessions. Karen said that Jana had asked her if it was all right to have all the songs, chants, and rhymes that were to be used during the session on the CD instead of having some of them be things that Jana had to perform by herself as the children and parents followed her lead. Karen said that she replied, "Definitely yes," and continued by saying to Jana that that is the way she does it each week at the library. In other words, Karen uses the CD as a mechanism to help carry the musical and chanting components of her

story time instead of feeling as if she has to perform them for the children and adults in attendance. Karen also mentioned that Jana establishes the routine for each Play and Stay session and that she has worked with her on achieving the right balance of regular, repetitive components of the session, since routine is important, and new things to mix-up the presentation to keep the children's interest.

Karen's and Hayden Library's involvement with MSEHS doesn't stop with Toddler Time or the new Play and Stay program. The library participates in a number of other MSEHS activities. For example, MSEHS has monthly family nights and Hayden Library has been an active participant in them since about 2004. Hayden Library provides the book mobile and an activity. It takes a person to staff the book mobile and another to do the activity. Karen said that at first people did not go to the book mobile so she worked with MSEHS staff to make it a more integral part of family night activities. It was decided that the families would eat, then do an activity, and then go to the bus. In other words, the book mobile became an activity just like any other planned for the evening. Karen said that after this the book mobile was used a lot more and people started looking forward to going to it during the evening.

When I spoke with the MSEHS program director, Chris Gee, she mentioned that they have fall, winter and spring celebrations to which Hayden Library contributes time and resources. The library brings the book mobile, provides hand-outs and other resources, and conducts activities. Chris mentioned one particular winter celebration where the library provided hot chocolate and activities on the bus. She appeared to be pleasantly surprised at the library being willing to risk books and book mobile to a potential flood of spilled hot chocolate. To her this willingness exemplified Hayden's commitment to their program, and she expressed sincere appreciation for this.

At the time of my visit, MSEHS was in the process of expanding to Rathdrum, Idaho by opening an office there. I mentioned this to Karen and she said that she was coordinating with the Rathdrum library, another library in the Kootenai-Shoshone Area Library network, to establish support services from it to the new MSEHS program. Karen currently oversees youth services for all seven libraries in the KSAL group.

And finally, MSEHS is starting a men's group called Men and Kids (MAK), and Nick will conduct it since both staff at MSEHS and Hayden Library believe that the male role modeling that he will provide will be important. Karen said that men do attend meetings and events at MSEHS (such as Stay and Play) but they oftentimes won't say much. She said that the all-male group and Nick's modeling will allow them to speak out. Karen was excited about this new group.

The description presented thus far shows a dynamic partnership between Hayden Library and MSEHS built on mutual trust, flexibility, communication, and personal relationships established over a number of years. Because of the strength and dynamism of this partnership, it easily adapts to changes that come from either side of the relationship, and as these adaptations are made, the programs at Hayden Library and MSEHS improve. It is a textbook example of continuous improvement within organizations aided by synergy between organizations. In the end, however, this is a story about people sustaining over considerable spans of time a commitment to improving the lives of others. Karen has been an employee of the KSAL group for over a decade during most of which she has partnered with MSEHS. Similarly, many of the

people I talked with at MSEHS have been employed by that organization for over a decade, some of whom have worked with Karen for many years.

What I came to realize is that Karen and the MSEHS staff have a common mission even if it has never been formalized on paper. It is first and foremost their unwavering commitments to improving other peoples' lives. This commitment stems from a passion for the work the organizations undertake. The MSEHS people are passionate about their work. I could see it in the quality of facilities they had been able to construct over the years and their ongoing adjustments to their program to continually make it better. Karen, too, has undeniable passion for her work. She said to me when we talked at Hayden Library that she is passionate "about summer reading, libraries, and helping children to become literate." I don't doubt her one bit since there is ample evidence that she has devoted her working life to these pursuits. I further sensed her passion for her work when she excitedly described to me an idea she had just learned at a conference from which she had just recently returned. She had learned about the Picturing America Project and had wonderful ideas about how to infuse the project into the MSEHS Stay and Play sessions. She talked about centers where pictures would be showcased and books related to the pictures would be available. As she excitedly described her ideas for the program, she provided what appeared to me a completely spontaneous example of using pictures of flamingoes. She said the children could look at the pictures, then talk about the colors of the flamingoes, and then read a story about them. She said, "How often do these kids see flamingoes?" She was already envisioning how her centers could open the world to these young children.

Passion can lead to rigidity at times, but that is not the case here. Just the opposite has occurred. All parties are flexible and willing to negotiate in order to better achieve the goal of improving peoples' lives. Chris said, "Hayden's openness to create and work with us has always been greatly appreciated and a strength of the relationship." She added that there has always been "willingness on both sides to embrace new possibilities." Obviously, in the case of the partnership between Hayden Library and MSEHS, when passion for the work they do is combined with their open and flexible personalities, the foundation of a long-term, dynamic partnership is solidly in place. I believe this is why the partnership has lasted as long as it has and has resulted in so many good things for others.

McCall Library Summer Reading Program

I traveled to McCall, Idaho each Tuesday for five weeks during June and July of the Summer of 2010 to participate in the McCall Library Summer Reading Program for children. The program ran for five weeks and I attended all of the sessions. The library also conducted a summer reading program for teens but I focused only on the program for elementary school-age children. The program served children from first to fifth grade. The theme for the 2010 program was water and the title was "Make a Splash."

The theme and title came from the Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP) located in Mason City, Iowa. The CSLP is a "consortium of states working together to provide high-quality summer reading program materials for children at the lowest cost possible for their public libraries" (page vi, 2010 Collaborative Summer Library Program Manual). The consortium started in 1987 with ten Minnesota regional

library systems and has grown dramatically in subsequent decades. The list of 2010 participants included 48 state libraries or the agencies responsible for libraries in the state and one library district. Of course, the Idaho Commission for Libraries is a program participant. Participants receive materials, programming ideas, promotional ideas, and an extensive manual that guides libraries through development, promotion, and delivery of a summer reading program.

I didn't sit idle at the Summer Reading program. Instead, I was immediately put to work, which was great. I arrived early each week and helped set-up tables or get materials together for the give-aways or the activities. I stayed after each session and helped clean-up. Each week I had an assigned station during the activity time where I helped a group of children complete the activity. I also did a brief book talk one week and also pulled names out of the hat to select weekly winners of various prizes. I wore a neon green visor so that parents and children recognized me as part of the Summer Reading program staff. And on the last day of Summer Reading, after a child had won the grand prize, a four person raft, the winning child came up to me and asked me to take it down from on top of the library shelves where it had been on display by the children's area throughout Summer Reading. All the sessions began in the children's area so the raft was seen each week and the children were excited at the prospect of winning it. My being asked to bring the raft down off the shelves told me I was recognized as part of the program by the children. I had never participated in a library summer reading program before and so not only was it fun but it was also a great way to get an inside look at how the program was put together and delivered.

As was discussed in the introduction to the case studies, a primary focus of the McCall Summer Reading study was the Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) scores of the participating children compared to similar children from the McCall area who did not participate in Summer Reading. Summer reading programs are very popular all across Idaho and librarians and library volunteers spend considerable time developing, promoting and implementing the programs. From my work with Idaho libraries the past two years, I have come to realize that summer reading is a highlight for most librarians. They simply love it. It is often the biggest event that they put on all year and they truly enjoy doing it. I'll provide an example for illustration. On one of my visits to a rural Idaho library during early spring, two librarians and I were talking about a variety of things and summer reading came up in the conversation. They described with smiles on their faces and obvious pride in their voices how they delivered a summer reading program the previous summer out of the back of an SUV in a remote, small town in their service area. This was in addition to their summer reading program at the main library in what would still be considered a quite small town. They laughed with delight as they told the story about how they drove up, opened the tail gate of the SUV, and started summer reading. They said that a "good number of children showed up every week" so they kept going back, and that they had plans to return again the following summer. I think the enthusiasm with which Idaho libraries develop, promote, and implement their summer reading programs is evident in the fact that according to the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICFL) approximately 69,472 children participated in Idaho library summer reading programs in 2010. That's a lot of children in a state as sparsely populated and as rural as Idaho.

Since considerable time and energy are devoted to summer reading by libraries all across Idaho, it is important to explore what impact these programs might have on children's literacy. Such impacts are difficult to measure, however, since they can take many forms and might not be noticeable until years later. Also, establishing a causal relationship between participation in summer reading and changes in reading ability, reading behaviors, or reading attitudes is nearly impossible. For example, let's posit that children who attend summer reading score higher on a measure of reading ability than similar children who do not attend summer reading. What is meant by similar is that the comparison group children are of the same age, gender, ethnicity, first language, and socio-economic status as that of the participating children. In other words, an attending child is matched on as many variables as possible with a non-attending child. Even with all of this matching, we still can't say conclusively that the summer reading program was the "cause" of the increased reading scores in those attending. The reason for this is because there might be and probably are other just as important variables that the children were not matched on that could account for the difference in scores. For example, how much reading is valued and practiced in the home might be the causative variable. Those parents who bring their children to summer reading might value and practice reading more in their homes and this causes the increased scores, not the summer reading program itself. This is just one example. There might be other variables that are the true causative agents. We just can't know until we do more controlled experiments, but these are quite difficult and expensive to do.

So what we are left with is correlational data. If a relationship were to be found between summer reading attendance and reading ability, reading attitude, or amount of reading, then all we can say is that there is a relationship between the two. We can't conclusively say that summer reading causes changes in the other variables. The following example illustrates this. Ice cream sales, armed robberies, and shark attacks are positively correlated. In other words, as ice cream sales go up so do the number of armed robberies and shark attacks. Are ice cream sales causing the armed robberies and shark attacks? Not likely. But is the converse possibly true? Namely, that armed robberies and shark attacks cause ice cream sales. Equally not likely. What is probably the causative variable is weather, although we can't know this for sure either. But as the weather warms during the summer months, ice cream sales increase, people travel to the ocean for summer vacations and outings, and more armed robberies occur during the summer. Thus, a relationship between the variables exists.

Given the limitations of correlational research, why even undertake it? There are two reasons. First, it may be the only approach possible given ethical constraints. For example, how could you randomly select and then assign a group of students to participate in summer reading and then withhold participation in the program from a second group of students who had been randomly selected from the same population? This would be unethical. Second, correlational research is a good place to start a research program. Why launch into expensive and time consuming experimental studies when the nature of the relationships between key variables is not known. Starting with correlational research to ascertain these relationships and then systematically moving into more rigorous research designs that explore the causal underpinnings of the relationships makes the most sense and is probably the most cost effective. So, exploring the relationship between summer reading and reading performance is important since it will

provide valuable information for librarians, stakeholders who fund libraries, and anyone interested in literacy development in our society. What is of equal importance, however, is that we remain vigilant and careful about how we interpret the information, and by doing so guard against over-interpreting it by assuming causation where none may be.

Meg Lojek is one of the youth librarians at McCall Library. She was responsible for the children's Summer Reading program and it was she who I communicated with and it was she who assigned me my duties. She is another example of a personable, highly motivated, highly committed, and highly enthusiastic youth librarian who enjoys planning and implementing her summer reading program each year. Meg had a wonderful library volunteer, Karen (pseudonym), who was an integral part of the planning and delivery of the program. The volunteer was a retired elementary teacher who told me when we first met that she had "a passion for libraries." She was a key player in planning, setting up, and delivering the sessions. Her passions for libraries and literacy were evident. Meg also had several middle school youth volunteers who helped with the children's Summer Reading program. These middle schoolers participated in the teen reading program which was held on the same day as the children's Summer Reading program. The teen program was in the morning and ended at about noon. This allowed the middle school volunteers to stay after the teen program and help prepare for and then deliver the children's program that started at 1 pm. There were three females who attended each week and they were wonderful help.

McCall Library is not a large library. It is a very nice facility, modern and well-maintained, but it is crowded with shelves and computers. It is a heavily used public library and most likely the collection is large because of this. If a lot of people use the library you have to have a large collection to meet the demand. An average of 61 children attended each week with a low of 54 one week and a high of 70 another. These attendance figures include only the children who were on the official enrollment lists and who signed-in each week. There were usually additional children in attendance who were below the age for the Summer Reading program. They tagged along with their older brother or sister, and it wasn't hard to pick them out sitting on the carpet in the children's area where the program started each week. On any given Summer Reading program day, I counted 4-7 such children.

The carpeted children's area is not large, probably about 12 feet by 15 feet, so each week we were tightly packed into the space. The children sat on the carpet and filled it from one side to the other while the parents who stayed for Summer Reading stood around the periphery of the carpet. On most days the periphery was filled with parents, adding to the crowding of the space. The arrangement worked fine, but it was another example of an Idaho library being pushed to capacity because of popularity of programming. According to the ICFL, Idaho ranks in the top ten states for per capita use of public libraries but in the bottom ten states for per capita funding of libraries.

Because of the tight space, each week we set up tables on the sidewalk leading to the front doors of the library where the children and their parents lined up to sign in and receive the give-away for attending that particular day of Summer Reading. One of the middle school student volunteers worked at the table each week greeting the parents and children, handing out the give-aways, and marking-off the attendees on the attendance roster. Also, because of space constraints, most all of the activities were done outside on the front lawn of the library because there just wasn't enough room inside. Luckily the

weather was dry, sunny, and warm all five weeks. The front lawn of the McCall Library is very well kept, but all of it except a small portion to one side is directly in the bright summer sun, the small portion being shaded by trees on one side. In some instances the sun was a Summer Reading friend during activities and in other instances it was foe. More about this later.

One of my weekly duties, in addition to just helping out wherever help was needed, was collecting and tabulating the coupons the children dropped into the fish bowl as they entered the library for Summer Reading. The fish bowl sat on the circulation counter which was located at the front of the library just inside and directly facing the front doors of the building. Children and parents had to pass the bowl on their way to the children's area where Summer Reading always started. One coupon represented one hour of reading during the week; so, for example, when a child read 15 hours, he/she dropped into the fish bowl 15 coupons the size of a typical raffle ticket. Children put their names and phone number on each coupon. Each week during Summer Reading, right before the program started, the coupons were taken out of the fish bowl and put in a paper sack. Then during the program, the sack was brought out, shaken, and five to ten coupons were drawn for door prizes. Lots of books and other things were won and the children loved all of the prizes. Their love for the prizes is known because Meg did an exit evaluation on the last day, and when the children were asked what they liked most about Summer Reading, prizes were the most often mentioned.

The exit evaluation was done very well so that a maximum number of adults and children would complete the half-sheet forms. Achieving high response rates is important any time a survey is conducted. Without high response rates, the information received may or may not be representative of the entire group who could have taken the survey. The parent evaluation was also available on the web. On the last day of Summer Reading, an additional table was set up across the sidewalk from the sign in table. As parents and children signed in for attendance, they were directed to step across the sidewalk to complete the exit evaluation. There were forms for the children to complete and forms for parents to complete. For the younger children, most of their parents helped them complete the form, but for those children whose parents were not present, I helped a few and so did one of the middle school volunteers. For the most part, older children completed their own. Once they completed the evaluation, the child was then eligible to go into the work room at the back of the library behind the children's area and pick out a free book. Meg had set up a book exchange for the last day of Summer Reading so all sorts of books had been brought to the library and the children had fun choosing a book from the long table that was filled. The book exchange was a great incentive for parents and children to complete their evaluations. Meg included gently used books as well as new ones from the Fred Meyer grant through the ICFL.

It is not necessary to describe each of the five weekly sessions in great detail. They were all highly interactive and followed a similar format and routine each week. The Collaborative Summer Library Program Manual provides all sorts of ideas for activities, projects, and games and Meg used some of these, but she also went well beyond the manual and drew heavily upon local resources. She told me she looks at the Internet for a lot of her ideas.

Each week the session began with the children sitting on the carpet in the children's area of the library. Meg introduced the topic for the week by showing pictures,

a video, and/or leading a brief activity, such as singing the water cycle song, which Meg told me she found on the Internet. Books were always introduced and showcased that were related to the topic. This took the form of a brief book talk about each book. The books were on display on a shelf right behind where Meg sat on the carpet in front of the children. Some of the books were new and had been purchased or provided by the ICFL to support the water theme for Summer Reading while others were pulled from the existing collection. One week I did brief book talks on two nonfiction books about marine life. One was about manatees and the other about a number of different sea creatures. The book talks were followed by the weekly prize raffle that the children always enjoyed. The more a child had read during the week, the more tickets he or she could put in the fishbowl, thus increasing their chances of winning a prize that week. It was a great way to provide incentives to read more. When a name was called everyone clapped and the child got up from the carpet and walked over to receive the prize. In the case where books were the prizes, and this was often, the children stepped into the work room behind the children's area to choose the book they wanted. The books were on display on the long work table in the room.

After introducing the topic for the week, showcasing the books, and choosing the prize winners, Meg had a guest presenter. The presentations included an information component followed by an activity. Once the activity was finished, the children returned to the carpet area to discuss the activity and be released to another room in the library where a Mystery Reader read from a chapter book. Mystery Readers included public school teachers, the principal of the local elementary school, and a local fireman. The room where the Mystery Reader read was not any bigger than the children's area of the library, so it was packed each week. But this shows the popularity of the Mystery Readers. The children excitedly crowded into the room to see who the reader was and to listen to the next installment from the chapter book. Following are brief overviews of the weekly presenters and activities:

Week 1: Mark (pseudonym) the Science Guy and Experiments

Mark was a science teacher from the local high school. He did an engaging presentation around Powerpoint slides he developed about the properties of water such as surface tension. He asked a lot of questions and gave a lot of examples to illustrate what he was saying that were related to the children's day-to-day worlds. The children enjoyed the presentation. This was evident because they remained attentive and engaged. After the presentation Meg explained the activity for the day and provided clear instructions for how the children were to go about completing it. The activity for the day was exploring water. Outside of the library, on the front lawn, the following stations had been set up: Sink and Float, Choosing Fabrics to Make a Rain Coat, Water Music, Chalkboard Evaporation, Painting with Ice Cubes, and Penny Drop. I was the adult at the Sink and Float station. At my station, there was a children's plastic swimming pool with about six inches of water in it. I had a paper bag full of objects. The children reached in or I handed them an object and they predicted whether it would sink or float before they put it in the water.

For Water Music, glass cups were filled with water and food coloring. Children tapped them to hear the different notes depending on the amount of water in the glass.

Chalk board evaporation was a simple but very effective illustration of the principle. Children dipped their fingers in water and then wrote or drew on a chalkboard. In the warm sun and dry mountain air of July in McCall, their tracings quickly evaporated away. At the Painting with Ice Cubes station children dipped ice cubes in powdered paint and drew a picture on paper. The station illustrated water changing from solid to liquid. And finally, the Penny Drop demonstrated the stickiness of water and how this causes surface tension. Children took eyedroppers and carefully dropped droplets of water onto pennies. They made predictions and then counted how many drops they could get on the penny before the surface tension broke and the water ran off.

Week 2: Painting with Fish

This was painting with fish week. Meg invited outdoor educators from the Idaho Department of Fish and Game to conduct a fish painting workshop. The educators provided a brief program in the children's area about Idaho waters and fish and then the children went outside on the lawn at the front of the library to do the activity. The Fish and Game folks brought rubber fish and dead fish of the types that would be found in Idaho waters. Yes, there were dead fish lying on tables in front of McCall Library in the hot Idaho sun of a warm July day. It was an activity I won't soon forget and neither will the children, because it was really a lot of fun. The children painted the fish with Tempera paint and then pressed fabric onto the fish to make an imprint of the fish's body. When done with the right amount of paint and the proper paint consistency, the amount of detail that ends up on the fabric is quite surprising. For example, scales, fins, and eyes show up. The children practiced one time with paper and then having completed this practice run they did a second painting using a piece of fabric. Clotheslines had been strung between various points on the building and the few trees to one side of the lawn to hang the impressions to dry.

Overall, the activity went well with a few minor glitches. The hot sun on the fish caused the paint to dry too quickly so the children had at times trouble getting a good impression. Also the number of children far outnumbered the number of fish, dead or rubber, so some children had to wait while others did their practice with paper and then their final fabric impression. A little shade and more fish and these shortcomings could be easily addressed. After completing the fish activity, the children went back in the library to hear the Mystery Reader for the day read two more chapters from the book.

I was impressed with how involved the children were. They took to the fish like fish to water. Whether it was a rubber fish or a dead fish they were handling them and didn't seem at all squeamish about pressing down pretty hard on a lifeless fish. They showed considerable interest in the details of the fish which was the purpose of the activity. On the exit evaluations the fish activity was one of the children's favorites.

Week 3: Ocean Commotion with Mrs. Smith (pseudonym)

The theme for this week was the water cycle. A popular public school teacher known by many of the children was the presenter. McCall has one elementary school and most of the children who attend Summer Reading attend this school so teachers are highly recognizable and popular. As the children entered the children's area, playing on

the pull down screen at the front of the carpet was a video of the ocean that showed very attractive pictures of sea creatures and ocean habitats. Meg talked about the video, asked the children questions about it, and then presented a lesson on the water cycle. She did an excellent job explaining the cycle and how important it is. Her visuals were a great complement to what she was saying. Children readily volunteered answers to her questions and a number of others either asked questions or made comments. She then introduced the water cycle song that she found on the Internet at www.proteacher.org. The following lyrics were sung to the tune "She'll be comin round the mountain."

Water travels in a cycle, yes it does.
Water travels in a cycle, yes it does.
It goes up as evaporation
Forms clouds as condensation
Then comes down as precipitation,
Yes it does!

She had these lyrics on a poster board that she held up as she sang the song. The children readily chimed in and the song was sung several times.

Following this, Meg introduced the guest teacher who then did a visualization activity and songs and chants with the children about water and weather. The visualization activity was used as a warm-up. The teacher read a paragraph about an approaching thunderstorm containing lightning, heavy rain, hail, and winds. The children were then asked to create a mental picture of the approaching storm and provide sights and sounds of the storm. After this, the teacher asked the children to stand up and she instructed them in how to make the sounds of a thunderstorm when she directed them with hand and eye signals. For example, clapping was thunder and stomping feet represented the height of the storm. Different children were assigned different things to do and then cued by the teacher to come in as the storm progressed. It was a fun activity and the children produced an excellent thunderstorm.

There was no outdoor activity or craft this week. The program instead had a music and movement focus that worked quite well at teaching important concepts and content while also keeping the children engaged and interested. After this the children were directed to move to the other room where the mystery reader was located.

Week 4: Edible Aquifers

The theme for this week was aquifers. On display at the front of the children's area was an excellent poster diagramming an aquifer that the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality had provided. Meg reminded the children that they had learned about the water cycle the previous week and she sang the water cycle song with them again. They enjoyed it and the review was an excellent and needed part of the lesson. She then introduced the guest speaker for the day who was from the McCall water department. He spoke about where the local water supply comes from and how it is filtered, treated, and delivered to their homes. After this the children went outside to the front lawn and constructed edible aquifers. We had set up a number of tables on the front lawn and children spread out to the various tables to do the activity. An adult or one of

the middle school volunteers was at each table. There were a lot of tables since no more than 5 children at a table was considered ideal for this particular activity, because it involved a number of steps and discussion as they were completed. Meg had recruited additional adult volunteers to work the tables.

Each child was given a clear plastic drinking cup. They were to layer in various ingredients to construct the layers of an aquifer. All the layers were edible so the children could eat their aquifers after making them. Children placed in the bottom of the cup as the first layer crushed ice with a bit of soda water followed by chocolate chips, gummy bears, more crushed ice, ice cream, and chocolate sprinkles on top. They then sprinkled a bit of Kool-Aid on the top that symbolized contaminants on the surface of the Earth. They were then given a plastic straw. They put the straw into the cup to drill a well through the layers of the aquifer. They sucked on the straw to simulate a well pumping water and were told to observe the effects on the Kool-Aid. Finally, more soda water was poured on top to simulate precipitation and its effects on the aquifer. This was a fun activity for the children and they enjoyed eating their projects. The sun once again was a bit of a distraction since the chocolate chips and ice cream did not hold up well under the heat, but other than this the activity went well and all the volunteers did a great job at their tables. Meg had sent all of us a pdf file of the activity in advance so that we could study the steps and what we were to talk about as each was completed. Once again, the program ended with a trip to the separate room in the library where a new Mystery Reader was waiting to read the children the next chapters in the book.

Week 5: McCall Outdoor Science School (MOSS) on Conservation

This was the final week of Summer Reading. Meg invited outdoor educators from the McCall Outdoor Science School (MOSS) to teach about conservation. MOSS is a partnership between the University of Idaho and the Palouse-Clearwater Environmental Institute. It is located on the McCall Field Campus of the University of Idaho which sits on the shores of Payette Lake. Nine months of the year, fall, winter, and spring, MOSS offers 3-5 day residential outdoor science school experiences for Idaho 5th and 6th graders focused on learning about natural resources. Students come from all types of schools including public, private, charter, and homeschool students. The school also offers teacher professional development workshops along with other environmental education programming.

Two female elementary education majors from the University of Idaho presented. They were working and studying at MOSS for the summer. They did a brief presentation about conservation, explained and demonstrated the conservation game that we would play outside, and then all of us went outside to the front lawn. It was an interactive game that kept the children moving and interacting, but without speaking. Depending on what hand and arm signals the child expressed, they were one of the stages of life of a frog, such as an egg, tadpole, or adult. Children were directed to find another person in the same stage as them by looking for a child who was displaying the same signal. When, for example, two tadpoles found one another they played a game of rock, paper, scissors. The person who won went to find another tadpole and repeated the game until they had beat all the tadpoles. When they did, the child would move up to the next stage toward an adult frog. The losers dropped back down to the egg stage. You can see how hard it

would be to get to the adult stage. Children were directed to keep count of how many times they achieved adult status, and when the game was over and all the children reconvened in the children's area of the library to discuss it, children were polled to see how many times adult status had been achieved and the winner was applauded. The game illustrated how species strive to survive and that many more young are born than achieve adulthood because of habitat constraints, disease, predation, etc. After this lesson was over and the grand prize was drawn, the students heard the final chapters of the book being read aloud by the final Mystery Reader. The book, too, was then given away to a lucky winner.

So, that was the five weeks of the McCall Library Summer Reading program. The amount of time spent finding and setting up the speakers and activities was considerable, but the results were excellent. Attendance, engagement, and enthusiasm remained high throughout the five weeks. I took all of the exit evaluation forms the parents and children completed and tabulated the responses for Meg and sent her the results in tabular form. Fifty children and 39 parents completed evaluations.

When children were asked to "Name one thing you liked about the Make a Splash library program this year," the most common response was "prizes." Thirteen children listed this followed by four each naming "painting fish" and "Mystery Readers." Following are additional tables reporting student survey data that may be of interest to readers. Each table is headed by the question that was asked on the survey.

Table 1: Did the program encourage you to read more this summer?

| Response | Number of Respondents |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Yes | 41 |
| No | 5 |
| Amount remained the same | 2 |
| Left question blank | 2 |

Overwhelmingly the children said that the program encouraged them to read more. I totaled the number of reading coupons submitted and there were 1,329 total hours of reading across the five weeks. There were 100 children who attended one or more of the sessions. Of these, 86 submitted coupons. Thus reading was quite widespread in the attendees although the amount of reading ranged widely with a low of one hour read by five children to a whopping 100 hours read by one child. The average time spent reading was 15.5 hours but the standard deviation was high at 15.5. Thus, a better way to characterize the amount of reading done is by cumulative percentages. Of the 86 children who submitted coupons, 42 of them or 48.8% read ten or fewer hours. It follows, then, that the remaining 44 children (51.2%) read more than ten hours. These findings were corroborated by the 39 parents who completed surveys. Parents were asked "Did this program encourage your child to read more this summer?" All 39 respondents said 'yes.'

When asked, "What was your favorite program and why?" the most common response from the children was "Painting with Fish" followed closely by "Mark the Science Guy and Experiments."

Table 2: What was your favorite program and why?

| Response | Number of Mentions |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Painting with Fish | 16 |
| Mark the Science Guy & Experiments | 13 |
| Edible Aquifers | 9 |
| Ocean Commotion w/ Mrs. Smith | 5 |
| Book Exchange | 2 |
| All were favorites | 2 |
| Moss—Conservation | 0 |

Edible Aquifers came in third. Only “MOSS-Conservation” failed to receive votes. This makes sense since the MOSS program was on the last day of Summer Reading and the children and parents completed the surveys before they had participated in the MOSS program. My impression of the MOSS program and activities was that the children enjoyed them. The life cycle of a frog game described above was especially well-received by the children.

If it were just me saying McCall Library’s Summer Reading program was a success, it would only represent one person’s opinion, but the exit surveys completed by parents and children were overwhelmingly positive. When parents were asked “Name one thing you did not like about the program this year,” only three of the 24 respondents provided comments that could be interpreted as minor criticisms and three others mentioned the limited space in the library. All others either left the item blank (10 respondents) or used the question as another opportunity to praise the program. Children’s responses on their surveys were similar. They praised the program and made suggestions like making it go longer in the summer and providing more prizes.

In closing, an important purpose of this description of McCall Library’s Summer Reading Program is to provide context for the Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) scores that can be found in the final section of this report. In order to better understand any score differences between the children who participated in Summer Reading and those who did not, readers need to have an understanding of what occurred during Summer Reading. But as discussed above, it is very important to keep in mind that correlation is not causation, so any differences can’t be solely attributed to participation in the program.

Analysis of Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) Scores

Three of the four case study libraries worked closely with their local public schools so that Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) scores could be obtained for children who participated in library programs and for a comparison group of children who did not. The schools should be commended for doing this important work since it takes time and resources to compile data sets.

Comparison group children were matched to the participating children on as many salient variables as possible. Matches were made on gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, service code, and English proficiency. Socio-economic status was determined by whether a child received free lunch, reduced price lunch, or did not receive support for lunches. Service codes included General Education, Title I, and Special Education. English proficiency was a binary variable in the data sets with a “yes” meaning the

student had limited English proficiency (LEP) or English was their second language (ESL).

Schools provided the data to the lead evaluator, Dr. Roger A. Stewart, after the library contacted them. Two of the three data sets did not contain student names, student identifying numbers, or any other student identifying information. One data set did contain student identifying information; so prior to receiving the data, Dr. Stewart signed a confidentiality agreement with the school district, and subsequently took all necessary precautions to keep the data secure. Even in the cases of the data sets that did not contain student identifying information, Dr. Stewart was extremely careful to keep the data secure. Upon submission and final approval of this report, all the data will be destroyed.

In the cases of Jerome Library and Snake River School Community Library, participants were those who attended Every Child Ready to Read Family Workshops in English or Spanish. For McCall Library, participants were the children attending the Summer Reading program. In the following sections, the IRI scores for each library will be presented and discussed, but first a description of the Idaho Reading Indicator will be provided.

About the Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI): Idaho requires an early reading screening assessment in grades kindergarten through third, and has done so since 1990. Until 2009-2010, the State required the IRI be given three times each year (fall, winter, and spring) to all children in these grades. During 2010-2011 the assessment is required only fall and spring. Idaho has established performance targets for the IRI and results are publicly available. Results are publicly available for each school and grade level but not for individual teachers or students.

The IRI uses different subscales depending on the grade level and time of year. The subscales reflect the skills children acquire as they begin to experience formal reading instruction. Table 1 shows the subscales for each grade level by time of administration. The acronyms for the subscales are defined and discussed below the table. The required subscales are brief assessments that when taken together total no more than 10 minutes. They are individually administered so children go to a separate testing area to be given the assessments.

Table 1: Idaho Reading Indicator Subscales by Grade Level and Time of Administration

| Grade | Fall | Winter | Spring |
|-----------------------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|
| Kindergarten | LNF*, LSF | LNF and LSF | LNF, LSF |
| 1st Grade | LSF, R-CBM | LSF and R-CBM | LSF, R-CBM |
| 2nd Grade | R-CBM | R-CBM | R-CBM |
| 3rd Grade | R-CBM | R-CBM | R-CBM |

* Bolded subscales count toward the child's score. Those not bolded are administered for baseline data collection if early in the year and progress monitoring if later in the year.

Letter Naming Fluency (LNF)—children name as many letters as they can in one minute. The letters are presented to the child on a standard 8 ½ x 11 page.

Letter Sound Fluency (LSF)—children pronounce as many of the sounds of letters as they can in one minute. Letters are presented on a standard 8 ½ x 11 page.

Reading Curriculum Based Measure (R-CBM)—children read as many words as they can in one minute from a grade level passage. The number of words correctly read in a minute is the score (words correct per minute or wcpm). Children read three passages and the median score is the score that is recorded.

The sequence of subscales follows the development of children's early literacy skills. For example, in kindergarten in the fall, students are asked to name letters but in the spring they are required to pronounce letter sounds. In the winter administration during kindergarten, students name both letters and letter sounds and the highest score of the two is counted. This same reasoning holds for first graders. They pronounce letter sounds in the fall but by spring they are required to read from connected text. During the winter administration their highest score from LSF or R-CBM counts toward the assessment. Allowing the choice of the highest score during winter of both kindergarten and first grade is necessary since children are oftentimes in transition during this time. In the case of kindergarten, once children have mastered naming letter sounds they are sometimes faster at this skill than the earlier skill of naming letters. This same phenomenon occurs during winter of first grade. Students who have started to read connected text can sometimes obtain a higher score on the R-CBM than they do on the LSF subscale.

Idaho reports IRI scores using three performance categories. Category 1 is considered below grade level performance. Category 2 is considered near grade level performance. And Category 3 is considered grade level or above performance. Only Category 3 is considered acceptable. If a child scores a one or two on the IRI, it is considered below criterion performance. This three tier scoring structure will be used in the analyses for Snake River and Jerome, but categories one and two will be collapsed into a single category. This is done because the resulting two category structure, pass/fail, provides a stronger foundation for descriptive and inferential statistical analyses since the sample sizes were quite small. Raw scores will be used in the analysis of McCall Library Summer Reading program data.

Snake River School Community Library Every Child Ready to Read Family Workshops in English: If you recall from the case study provided earlier, Snake River embeds the ECRTR Family Workshops in their story time program for preschool age children. These story times are scheduled during the daytime of the regular work week so any school-age children who attend public schools will most likely not attend story time. In short, Snake River's ECRTR Family Workshop program focuses almost exclusively on preschool age children so measuring performance upon entry into kindergarten is the most logical point at which to assess program impacts. Thus, in the following discussion of IRI results, only kindergarten IRI scores will be provided.

Table 2 provides the demographic profiles of children who participated in the Family Workshops and those in the comparison group. Scores were available for 20 children who participated in Family Workshops. There were many more than this who participated but not all who did enrolled in Snake River Elementary School where the scores were accessible. So the 20 participants should be considered a small sample of those who did participate. How representative the sample is of all the children who participated can not be known.

Table 2: Demographic Profiles of Participants and Comparison Group Children: Snake River Kindergarten

| Characteristic | ECRTR Family Workshop (n=20) | Comparison Group (n=20) |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Gender | 6 female; 14 male | 6 female; 14 male |
| Ethnicity | 18 White; 1 Hispanic; 1 Other | 18 White; 1 Hispanic; 1 Other |
| Meal Status | 14 None; 6 Free/Reduced | 13 None; 7 Free/Reduced |
| Service Code | 20 General Education | 20 General Education |
| Limited English Proficient or ESL | 20 No | 20 No |

The matches between participants and comparison group children were nearly perfect with only one difference in meal status. Meal status is a measure of the child’s socio-economic level (SES), and SES is one of the stronger predictive variables for early literacy performance in school. Thus having an additional low SES student in the comparison group could make that group’s scores lower when compared to the Family Workshop group.

Snake River provided fall scores for one entering class of kindergarteners. Table 3 provides the frequency distribution for the scores computed as either pass or fail. In other words, if a child fell into categories 1 or 2 these were considered failing scores. If a child scored in category 3, it was considered a pass. Reducing the number of categories was important since the sample size was only 20 per group. When 20 is divided into three categories there will be fewer in each category than when 20 is divided into just two categories. Maximizing the potential number in each category is important from a statistical standpoint since very small numbers in a category can invalidate some statistics or cause a loss of power in the statistics to reveal statistically significant differences between groups.

Table 3: Frequency Distribution of Pass/Fail Fall IRI Scores by Group: Snake River Kindergarten

| Group | Pass | Fail |
|------------------------------|------|------|
| ECRTR Family Workshop | 15 | 5 |
| Comparison | 9 | 11 |

Three quarters (75%) of the Family Workshop participants passed the fall IRI upon entering kindergarten. This compares with 45% of the comparison group. This large differential was nearly statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level ($X^2 = 3.75$; $df = 1$; $p = .053$). No cells had expected counts less than five so the assumptions for the chi-square test were met and no continuity correction was necessary. What statistical significance tells us in this context is that the results found for these groups would probably be similar to the results found if the entire population of participants could be included in the statistics. Interpreted a different way, the difference in pass rates means that children in the Family

Workshop group were 3.67 times more likely to pass the fall kindergarten IRI than those in the comparison group.

Cautions about confusing correlation with causation have been made earlier, but those cautions will be stated here again. There is no evidence at this time that attending ECRTR Family Workshops causes the difference in pass rates. There is only a relationship between the two phenomenon. It might be that parents who attend Family Workshops are more concerned about their children’s early literacy development and it is this concern and perhaps what they do in the home to foster early literacy development that cause the higher pass rates upon entering kindergarten. Or it could be one or more other variables that have not been mentioned. The exact causative agent is not known and can not be known using the matched comparison group design that was used here. But what can be concluded is that children who attended the Family Workshops were much more likely to pass the fall kindergarten IRI.

Jerome Library Every Child Ready to Read Family Workshops in English and Spanish: Jerome offers the Family Workshops in both English and Spanish. They present their workshops after regular business hours, therefore children of a wide age range attend with their parents. IRI scores were provided by Jerome Joint School District for children in kindergarten through 3rd grade, but only kindergarten and 1st grade scores will be reported and analyzed here. This is because scores were reported for only six second graders and two third graders. These groups are thus too small for even descriptive statistical analyses. Scores were provided for fall, winter, and spring of one academic year. Students had participated in the Family Workshops sometime during the previous two years before the date of the IRI scores.

The focus of the case study was on the Family Workshops in Spanish, but only six students’ scores were reported who attended the Family Workshops in Spanish. Four of these were 1st graders and two were kindergarteners. Again, these group sizes, even when combined, are too small for reliable and valid statistical analyses. Thus, all Family Workshop attendees will be combined into two grade level groups. One for kindergarten and one for 1st grade.

Tables 4 and 5 provide demographic profiles for kindergarteners and 1st graders in Family Workshop and comparison groups.

Table 4: Demographic Profiles of Family Workshop and Comparison Group Children: Jerome Joint School District Kindergarten

| Characteristic | ECRTR Family Workshop (n=17) | Comparison Group (n=17) |
|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Gender | 12 female; 5 male | 12 female; 5 male |
| Ethnicity | 12 White; 5 Hispanic | 12 White; 5 Hispanic |
| Meal Status | 11 None; 6 Free/Reduced | 9 None; 8 Free/Reduced |
| Service Code | 15 Title 1; 2 Special Education | 15 Title 1; 2 Special Education |
| Limited English Proficient or ESL | 13 No; 4 Yes | 13 No; 4 Yes |

Table 5: Demographic Profiles of Family Workshop and Comparison Group Children: Jerome Joint School District 1st Grade

| Characteristic | ECRTR Family Workshop (n=16) | Comparison Group (n=16) |
|--|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Gender | 7 female; 9 male | 7 female; 9 male |
| Ethnicity | 11 White; 5 Hispanic | 11 White; 5 Hispanic |
| Meal Status | 7 None; 9 Free/Reduced | 7 None; 9 Free/Reduced |
| Service Code | 15 Title 1; 1 Special Education | 16 Title 1 |
| Limited English Proficient or ESL | 11 No; 5 Yes | 14 No; 2 Yes |

Matching was done well in both groups but the process did result in some differences that need to be discussed. In kindergarten (Table 4) the different counts under Meal Status should be recognized. Meal Status is one of the strongest predictors of early literacy performance, with children on free or reduced price lunch as a group scoring lower on average than those who are not on a meal plan. So the comparison group having three more children who qualify for free or reduced price lunch could make the performance of that group lower. In short, whether the Family Workshop and comparison groups are entirely equivalent at the kindergarten level is an open question but they appear to be close.

At the 1st grade level, differences occurred in Service Code and Limited English Proficient or ESL. One special education student was included in the Family Workshop group but not in the comparison group. Special education students historically score lower than regular education students, but not in every instance does this occur. Additionally, three more Limited English Proficient students were included in the Family Workshop group than in the comparison group. These students also historically underperform students who are not learning the English language. When taken together, the two areas where matches were not perfect may cause the Family Workshop group to score lower than the comparison group. This bias toward lower scores in the Family Workshop group could mask the effects of the Family Workshops.

Table 6 provides IRI results for kindergarten Family Workshop participants and the kindergarten comparison group.

Table 6: Frequency Distribution of Pass/Fail IRI Scores by Group and Time of Administration: Jerome Joint School District Kindergarten

| Group | Fall | | Winter | | Spring | |
|-------------------------------------|------|------|--------|------|--------|------|
| | Pass | Fail | Pass | Fail | Pass | Fail |
| ECRTR Family Workshop (n=17) | 9 | 8 | 13 | 4 | 14 | 3 |
| Comparison (n=17) | 6 | 11 | 9 | 8 | 13 | 4 |

Upon entering kindergarten 52.9% of Family Workshop participants passed the IRI compared to 35.3% of comparison students. This was not a statistically significant finding ($X^2=1.07$; $df=1$; $p=.30$), which means the percentages of children passing the IRI could be the same in the two groups if we were able to compute the statistic on the entire

population of Family Workshop and comparison group students. So caution is necessary when interpreting Table 6 since the results can not be assumed to hold for a larger population of similar students. Keeping this in mind for this small sample, Family Workshop participants were twice as likely to pass the IRI upon entering kindergarten than comparison group students.

Similar trends hold for the winter administration of the IRI. Thirteen (76.5%) of the Family Workshop participants passed the winter IRI compared to 52.9% of the comparison students. Again, this was not a statistically significant finding ($X^2=2.06$; $df=1$; $p=.151$), so the results found with this sample can not be generalized to the larger population. Looking at the odds ratio for the winter data, students in the Family Workshop group were 2.9 times more likely to pass than students in the comparison group.

For the spring administration of the IRI, performance of the two groups converged with 82.4% of the students in the Family Workshop condition passing and 76.5% of the comparison group students passing. As would be expected with such similar performance between the groups, this was not a statistically significant difference ($X^2=.18$; $df=1$; $p=.671$). Family Workshop students were 1.44 times more likely to pass than comparison group students. This is a negligible differential between the two groups.

The progression throughout the kindergarten year of increasingly larger numbers of students passing the IRI is common throughout Idaho. Students entering kindergarten have relatively low pass rates but by the end of the school year most pass. The pass rate for spring for the entire state during 2009-2010 was 80.3% (<http://www.sde.idaho.gov/ipd/iri/IriAnalysis.asp>), and Jerome Joint School District usually exceeds the state number. For example, during 2009-2010, 86.6% of Jerome’s kindergarteners in the spring passed the IRI (<http://www.sde.idaho.gov/ipd/iri/IriAnalysis.asp>). Most likely there is a test ceiling effect that emerges on the spring IRI, meaning that the test is relatively easy for most students during the spring and thus most students pass. A recommendation for the future is to employ a more sensitive instrument to measure a broader range of early literacy skills. By doing this, any differences between the Family Workshop group and the comparison group could be monitored more accurately over time. Another recommendation is to construct larger groups so the statistical tests have more power to detect statistically significant differences.

First grade scores were also provided for one academic year. These students also had attended the Family Workshops sometime during the two years previous to the date of the scores. Table 7 provides the pass/fail frequencies for the Family Workshop and comparison groups by time of assessment.

Table 7: Frequency Distribution of Pass/Fail IRI Scores by Group and Time of Administration: Jerome Joint School District 1st Grade

| Group | Fall | | Winter | | Spring | |
|-------------------------------------|------|------|--------|------|--------|------|
| | Pass | Fail | Pass | Fail | Pass | Fail |
| ECRTR Family Workshop (n=16) | 15 | 1 | 14 | 2 | 14 | 2 |
| Comparison (n=16) | 10 | 6 | 11 | 5 | 11 | 5 |

None of the differences between the Family Workshop participants and the comparison group were statistically significant. The difference in pass/fail frequencies for fall was close to significance but expected cell counts were less than five in two cells thus making a continuity correction necessary. When this was done the test was not significant. This points up the importance of increasing sample sizes in the future so the statistical tests can be robust enough to detect such differences.

Family Workshop participants were nine times more likely to pass the fall IRI than members of the comparison group. Family Workshop participants were 3.2 times more likely than comparison group members to pass the winter and spring IRI's. Although the advantage afforded by being in the Family Workshop group diminished over time, it was still substantial at the end of the year. But these samples were quite small and the statistical results were not statistically significant so the findings can not be generalized to the larger population and the results are probably not reliable. It is thus important in the future to conduct similar research with larger samples so that results are known to be reliable and can be generalized to the population.

A comparison of the results from Jerome's kindergarten and 1st grade provides interesting insights and recommendations for future research. The advantage of attending Family Workshops was apparent upon entry into kindergarten but this advantage, as measured by the IRI, did not remain at the end of the academic year. The Family Workshop advantage did, however, hold throughout the 1st grade year, although it lessened as the academic year progressed. Two important things stem from these patterns. First, as has been mentioned before, more than the IRI should be used for assessment. A more comprehensive test of early literacy development should be used. This is in no way meant to disparage the IRI. It is a screener and therefore is meant to provide only limited information. Second, large cohorts of children should be followed from kindergarten through 3rd grade. Only cohort studies using more sensitive and comprehensive instruments will fully show the trajectory of Family Workshop children in comparison to similar children who did not attend Family Workshops.

McCall Library Summer Reading Program: Children's scores on a variety of measures of reading tend to drop over the summer. In other words, when children are tested in the spring at the conclusion of one school year and then tested again in the fall upon returning to school, their spring to fall scores drop over this span of time. This phenomenon is more pronounced for children who come from homes that are lower on the socio-economic scale. Also less proficient readers tend to drop more over the summer. Thus, it is extremely important to find ways to foster more reading over the summer to see if this will help support reading performance over this critical period. It is hypothesized that library summer reading programs, like McCall Library's, will help promote reading and thus reduce the drop in scores over the summer.

Children who attended McCall Library Summer Reading were compared to children who did not attend. The IRI was the measure used for comparative purposes and change scores from spring to fall were the focus. Although children up to 5th grade attended Summer Reading, since change scores were the focus, only children who had been in kindergarten, 1st, or 2nd grade during spring were included in the data set, because it was these children who would be given the fall IRI at the beginning of the school year following the Summer Reading program. To illustrate, if a child were a kindergartener

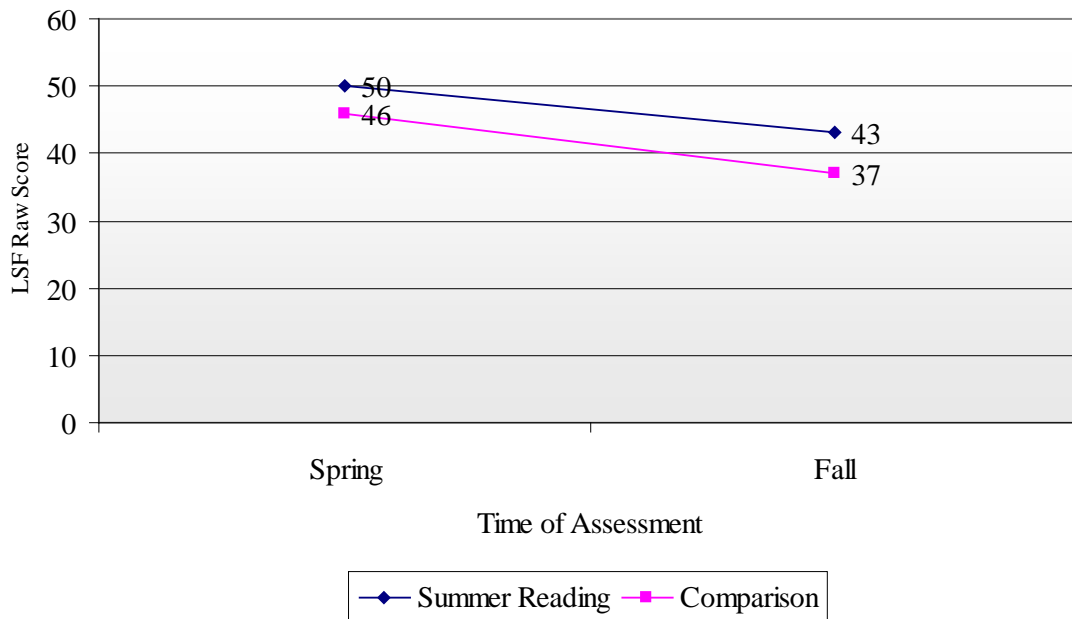
during spring 2010, then the child would become a 1st grader during fall 2010. His or her IRI scores could be compared across the spring and fall semesters thus taking into account any change in score that occurred over the summer.

Before results are provided, it is important to discuss the equivalence of the assessments spring to fall at each of the grade levels. In the case of kindergarten, during the spring the children are administered the Letter Sound Fluency subscale of the IRI (See Table 1 in this section for a listing of the subscales and when they are administered.). This same subscale is then given in the fall of the 1st grade year. Thus, the spring and fall administrations of the IRI at the spring kindergarten and fall 1st grade testing points are directly comparable. At the other grade levels at the spring and fall testing points, the Reading Curriculum Based Measure (R-CBM) is given during the spring and fall. Thus the same subscale is given but the passages the children read change as the child moves from one grade level to the next. For example, a child who is in the 1st grade during the spring reads a passage for the R-CBM that is less difficult than the passage this same student is given in the fall of 2nd grade. Thus the scores are not as directly comparable as in the case of kindergarten, but that is not a serious problem for this study. Of particular interest was the amount of drop over the summer so no matter the differential difficulty of the passages given to the children spring and fall, what is of interest is whether the group attending Summer Reading dropped less than the group not attending.

Results from the study were mixed and all of the results have to be interpreted cautiously because of the small sample sizes involved in all of the calculations. Characteristics from small samples can diverge quite dramatically from the larger population, so the results reported here may or may not hold if the entire population were to be included. It is also important to note that a purely matched design was not used in the analysis of the McCall Summer Reading program. More data for the comparison group was provided than just the number of children who attended Summer Reading. So to take advantage of the potential for larger group sizes, comparison groups were formed that in aggregate had similar characteristics to the Summer Reading groups, but were usually larger in number than the Summer Reading groups.

Repeated measures ANOVA was used to test the hypothesis that the Summer Reading Group dropped less spring to fall than similar children who did not attend. Specifically, the group by time of assessment interaction term was the focus of the analyses. Figures 1, 2, and 3 show the drops from spring to fall by grade level.

Figure 1: Kindergarten Spring and 1st Grade Fall LSF Raw Score



As has been previously discussed, a significant number of kindergarten children throughout Idaho achieve high spring LSF scores regardless of socio-economic status and ethnicity. The same pattern holds true for children who attend school in the McCall area. Therefore, the comparison group was comprised of all kindergarten children in the data set who did not attend Summer Reading. Additional evidence supporting the assertion that the Summer Reading group and the remainder of the kindergarten students were quite similar comes from several statistics. First, there was little difference between the spring achievement of children who attended Summer Reading and those who did not. A *t* test exploring differences on spring LSF scores between Summer Reading students and those who did not attend showed no significant differences between the groups [$t(40) = .72, p=.48$]. Furthermore, the range between low scorers and high scorers in the spring was quite similar in each group. In other words, all of the students, regardless of the group, left kindergarten at similar levels of achievement. Additionally, the ethnicity profile and the percentages of children on free or reduced price lunch were quite similar across the two groups. Thus, using the entire group that did not participate in Summer Reading was possible. The Summer Reading group had 13 students in it and the comparison group had 29.

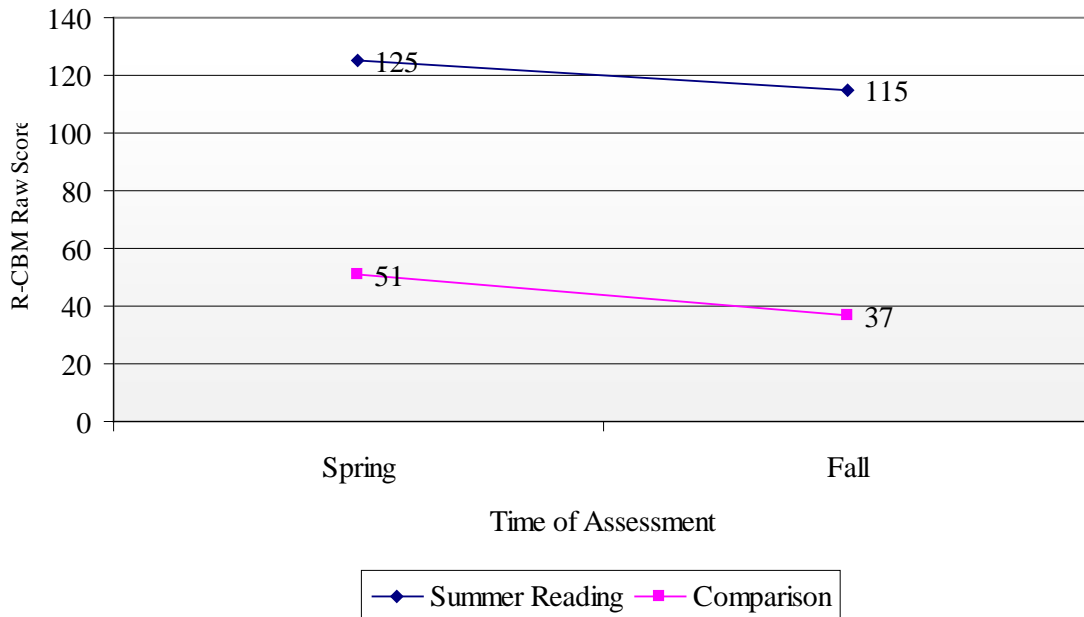
The drop over the summer was a little greater for the comparison group when compared to the Summer Reading participants. The Summer Reading group dropped an average of seven points and the comparison group dropped an average of nine, but this slight differential was not a statistically significant difference, which means that the drops could have been equal across the two groups [$F(1,40) = .34, p=.56$].

The children who were 1st graders in the spring and then moved to 2nd grade in the fall present an interesting case. The group that attended Summer Reading had much higher scores than the group who did not attend (See Figure 2). Because of this strong

bias, it was not possible to construct a subset of the non-participating group that was similar to the participating group. For example, in the spring of 1st grade all but three of the 12 children who attended Summer Reading correctly read 110 words per minute or more (i.e., 110 wcpm). Just the opposite occurred in the group of these children who did not attend Summer Reading. Only three of these children read more than 107 wcpm. Thus it was impossible to construct a subgroup out of the children who did not attend that matched on spring IRI performance the group who did attend. Groups were, however, matched on lunch status with each having approximately 25% on free or reduced price lunch. All of the children were White and none were special education or limited English proficient. The comparison group contained 31 children.

But even with this matching, the scores were still very different between the two groups on the spring R-CBM. It needs to be noted that these are clearly not equivalent groups with the children attending Summer Reading manifesting much higher reading scores than those who didn't. A recommendation is that McCall Library and the local elementary schools redouble their efforts to recruit for Summer Reading children leaving 1st grade and entering 2nd grade who are average and below average readers.

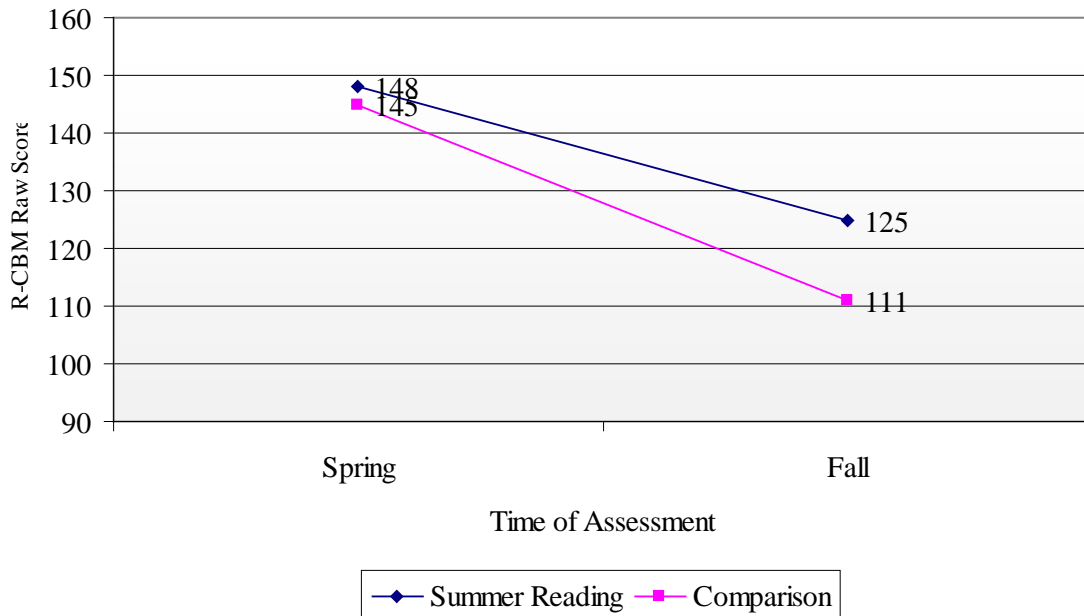
Figure 2: 1st Grade Spring and 2nd Grade Fall R-CBM Raw Score



The repeated measures ANOVA showed no statistically significant difference in the drop in scores between the two groups [$F(1,41) = 1.19, p=.28$]. This is graphically shown in Figure 2. The attending group dropped an average of ten wcpm spring to fall and the comparison group dropped an average of fourteen words. This four word difference was not statistically significant, which means the drops could be the same in the two groups if the entire population were included.

The group of children who were 2nd graders in the spring and moved to 3rd grade in the fall was the final group analyzed. Figure 3 shows the relationship between spring and fall for this group.

Figure 3: 2nd Grade Spring and 3rd Grade Fall R-CBM Raw Score



Matching these groups was more successful than that achieved for the 1st graders, but the resulting groups were still not completely equivalent. Pretest means were quite similar and were not statistically different [$t(38) = .18, p = .86$]. The Summer Reading group had two Hispanic members out of ten in the group (i.e., 20%), whereas the comparison group had three Hispanic members out of 30 in the group (i.e., 10%). There were no special education students or limited English proficient students in either group. The Summer Reading Group had 60% of the members on free or reduced price lunch (i.e., six of ten in the group), whereas only 33% of the comparison group fell into these categories (i.e., 10 of 30 in the group). Thus, the Summer Reading group was lower on the socio-economic scale than the comparison group, and as has been discussed before students from lower socio-economic backgrounds usually drop more in reading performance over the summer. But this rule of thumb did not hold in the case of these 3rd graders. The drop over the summer was greater for the comparison group when compared to the Summer Reading group, and the difference was statistically significant at the more liberal and less rigorous $p < .10$ criterion [$F(1,38) = 3.12, p = .086$]. The Summer Reading group dropped an average of 23 wcpm spring to fall whereas the comparison group dropped 34.

As has been said before, these results do not establish a causal relationship between attending Summer Reading and dropping less over the summer, but the results do show a meaningful and important relationship between attending Summer Reading and reading rates holding up better over the summer months. This finding for entering 3rd graders is important for two reasons. First, the State-established criterion for success on the 3rd grade spring IRI is for every student to read at least 110 wcpm. This is a challenging benchmark and schools struggle to achieve it each year. Thus, having children enter 3rd grade in the fall with reading rates as high as possible will help teachers

and schools achieve the spring benchmark. Second, the 3rd grade is considered the last year in elementary school where the emphasis is on learning to read. In subsequent grades, the emphasis is increasingly on reading to learn. In other words, in 4th grade and beyond students spend less time learning how to read and practicing their reading skills and more time independently reading literature and content area texts. With this shift comes greater expectations for children to be able to efficiently read on their own and to draw important information from their reading. Thus, it is important that children begin the critical 3rd grade year positioned as well as possible for high reading achievement throughout the school year.

Recommendations from Case Studies and Idaho Reading Indicator Analyses

Recommendations will be handled in two parts: those from the case studies and those from the Idaho Reading Indicator analyses. The need for splitting the recommendations into two sections stems from the very different research designs underpinning the case studies and the IRI analyses. Recommendations from the case studies will be discussed first.

Case Study Recommendations: Making recommendations from single case studies is problematic. Such recommendations are implicit generalizations from a single case, and making generalizations from a single case is like building a foundation on shifting ground. In short, what holds for one case may not hold for others, and thus recommendations from that single case may not generalize to others. For example, the case study of Snake River School Community Library's ECRTR Family Workshops showed a variety of characteristics that appeared to underpin the program's documented success. So should Idaho public libraries adjust their programs to better reflect these characteristics, and in so doing assume that they will achieve similar success? The answer is no. Snake River is a unique program within its own unique setting. Thus recommendations from this particular case may or may not be appropriate for other Family Workshop programs. So what can be learned from these cases? The following recommendations provide an answer to this question:

- Readers should read the case studies for information; and as they do, compare the descriptions of the programs to their own programs, looking for new ideas, ways to improve, and equally important, ways that their programs are superior to the case studies. When superior performance is detected, then that information needs to be shared with other Idaho libraries so all can benefit. When areas for improvement are detected, then efforts should be put in place to address the weaknesses, and these efforts and their results should be shared with Idaho libraries. In this way, the case studies become a catalyst for ongoing discussion and improvement of library literacy programming. The ICFL could act as the mechanism for this to occur. Since ICFL staff travel to local libraries, regularly talk and meet with local library staff, and continue to expand and improve the ICFL website, they can become the nucleus around which such conversations occur and are sustained. But the ICFL will need resources with which to take on this important catalyst and clearinghouse role. As has been discussed in previous

evaluation reports, both the ICFL and local libraries in Idaho are rapidly being pushed beyond capacity.

- Brief case studies such as those in this report have inherent limitations concerning the amount of detail and insight they can provide. An alternative would be longer case studies, but then conducting them and writing them become a more time intensive and thus expensive enterprise. Also longer case studies take more time to read and thus some will choose not to read them. An excellent compromise would be to develop a series of videotapes of exemplary practices and programs that would be resident on the ICFL website. These videotapes are important for another reason other than efficiency and quality of information delivery. In all of the case studies, the librarians were engaged in very complex teaching behavior. It is difficult to describe this complex behavior in words. Videotapes could showcase the teaching in a very efficient format. A series of 30 minute videos of the programs chosen for the case studies plus other exemplary programs would be highly informative.

Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) Analyses Recommendations: Making recommendations from the analyses of the Idaho Reading Indicator scores also has limitations. First, sample sizes were quite small in all of the analyses which reduced the power of the statistics to detect statistically significant differences between groups. As was discussed in the IRI section of the report, when statistical findings are not significant this means that the results found in the sample may or may not hold in the population, and since this important question can not be known, the default of no difference between groups must be concluded. Keeping this limitation in mind, a few recommendations can be made.

- Larger sample sizes are needed, and in order to obtain them more libraries and their local public schools will need to participate. This is more difficult than what might appear at first thought. Test scores are highly sensitive data that take time to collect, and both schools and libraries are short on time and staff. Thus getting the scores in a timely fashion and in a useable form poses a greater challenge than one might expect.
- Correlation is not causation and the research design for the IRI analyses produced correlational data. Thus, it is not possible to know whether attending Family Workshops or Summer Reading were the causative variables in differences in reading performance between participating children and comparison group children. In the future, it would be ideal to implement more rigorous experimental or quasi-experimental designs that provide stronger causal inferences, but these designs are difficult and expensive to implement in such diverse environments as public libraries and public schools. So given these constraints, extensive longitudinal research following children through the grades might begin to build a more solid empirical foundation for the effects of ICFL sponsored programs on literacy achievement in the schools. This recommendation is appropriate for all of the programs studied. The Family Workshop programs and Summer Reading programs would benefit from such

longitudinal data, and Hayden Library and Mountain States Early Head Start have each put a lot of time and resources into their early childhood program partnership so high quality longitudinal data showing outcomes would inform their programs also.

- The Idaho Reading Indicator is a fine early literacy screener but it has limitations beyond this rather narrow function. The use of a more comprehensive measure of early literacy development might provide greater sensitivity to detect program effects.