



Idaho Commission for Libraries State Strategic Plan FY2020 - FY2024 Updated June 2019

INTRODUCTION

The Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) builds the capacity of the more than 850 public, school, academic, and special libraries in Idaho to better serve their communities through statewide programming and resources, like Read to Me and Libraries Linking Idaho (LiLI); consulting; continuing education; partnerships; and aid to underserved populations, such as the visually impaired through the Talking Book Service. The Commission is overseen by a five-member board. While services and library resources have evolved since the agency was formed in 1901, work continues to focus on providing the best library services that will meet the changing information needs of Idaho's citizens.

MISSION

The Idaho Commission for Libraries assists libraries to build the capacity to better serve their communities.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT / KEY EXTERNAL FACTORS

Each program lead at the Commission seeks feedback on a regular basis to improve programs. Most of the program consultants have annual work plans that tie into the strategic plan. For example, in 2017, the Talking Book Service contracted with a telephone polling service to solicit feedback from more than 2,500 patrons. Staff members are using that data, along with regular work conducted by the Talking Book Service Advisory Committee, to fine-tune their annual planning.

The Commission's foremost source of feedback about the need for information and library services for the citizens of Idaho is the Idaho library community. The Commission's development staff has ongoing interaction with library directors, staff, and governing boards during site visits, training sessions, and regional or consortia meetings. This feedback is also integrated into our discussions and planning. As a result

of continual needs assessment, this plan strengthens current successful initiatives and moves the Commission in new directions addressing five goals.

Key External Factors: The Idaho Commission for Libraries has utilized federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds, administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), along with matching state funds to operate the agency. If funding for LSTA is reduced or eliminated, the ICfL's ability to carry out its mission would be in jeopardy. About one-third of the Commission's budget is funded annually by IMLS and includes eleven positions and nearly all of ICfL's programs. Other key factors and a summary of some of the needs are provided under the applicable goal areas.

Goal 1: Build the institutional capacity of libraries to better serve their communities, is further supported by data from the [FY2018 Idaho Public Library Statistics](#).

Approximately 75 percent of Idaho libraries do not have ALA-MLS librarians on staff. While many public library directors and other staff without MLS degrees have received some training in library practices, many in smaller public libraries are new to the profession and particularly appreciate the variety of continuing education options and consulting services available through the Commission. Those needs have also been identified and rank highly for Idaho's school library personnel. Surveys and work in the field show approximately 99 percent of elementary school library staff are noncertified paraprofessionals, often without access to a district school library coordinator to help with professional development and planning for the needs of students and teachers. Each year, the Commission's School Library Consultant creates an annual training plan that builds on previous training while providing basic library skills for those new to school libraries.

Idaho's access to broadband internet is not keeping up with demand, especially in rural communities. The annual [2018 Speedtest U.S. Fixed Broadband Performance Report by Ookla](#) released on December 12, 2018, shows Idaho ranking 47 out of the 50 states for mean download speeds (with Montana, Wyoming, and Maine trailing behind us). BroadbandNow [currently lists Idaho as the 42nd most connected state](#) (the rank is based on the percentage of the population with access to 25+ Mbps broadband). The Commission was able to hire its first full-time Broadband Consultant in FY2017 and is seeing that pay off in terms of consulting services for E-rate and the Education Opportunity Resource Act (EOR), and technology planning assistance to smaller public libraries, in particular.

(Sources for Goal 1: Public Library Statistics FY 2016, Ookla Speedtest, 2018, <https://www.speedtest.net/reports/united-states/>.)

Goal 2: Support the role of libraries in preparing Idahoans to be college and career ready, addresses one of the state’s most pressing needs. In 2010, the Idaho State Board of Education set a goal that 60 percent of Idaho citizens between the ages of 25 and 34 would have a postsecondary degree or certificate by the year 2020. The Commission and the Idaho library community immediately joined countless businesses, agencies, and other organizations that are working toward this statewide goal. Reaching the 60 percent goal will require focused effort, investment, and improvement at all levels of our education system. Idaho libraries should be recognized for the role they play to ensure more children enter kindergarten with early literacy skills, for providing positive learning experiences for students during the summer and other out-of-school time, and supporting student learning through library resources and the guidance of trained librarians. Commission staff have also increased efforts to ensure more libraries offer STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) programs and resources through the popular Make It programs and Summer STEM from your library resources. Our partnership with the STEM Action Center has strengthened these offerings and ensured that all those who are interested in creating Maker Spaces and more can offer those throughout the state.

While there are many positive indicators, there is still much work to be done. Idaho lags behind the rest of the country on several key educational markers:

- About half of Idaho’s kindergarten through third-grade students were behind in their reading skills, according to the fall 2018 reading exam.
- Idaho’s high school graduation rate in 2018 stands at 80.6 percent, ranking below the national average of 85 percent (in 2017).
- Idaho ranks 50th in the proportion of students who graduate from high school on time and go directly to college and 49th in per-student spending.
- Hispanic students accounted for 18 percent of enrollment in Idaho K-12 public schools during the 2018-2019 school year. The recent increase in the Hispanic population is relevant because a large achievement gap exists between Hispanic students and non-Hispanic students and between low-income students and higher-income students.
- More than 7 in 10 students (77%) attend schools receiving Title 1 funds.
- Idaho is one of five states that provide no state funding for preschool or any other early education programs.
- Only 35 percent of three- and four-year-old children in Idaho are enrolled in some form of preschool or enriched day care. The national average is 47 percent.

(Sources for Goal 2: Idaho State Board of Education: [Idaho at a Glance](#), [Hispanics: An Overview](#), March 2019; Idaho Education Field Guide, 2015; Idaho Education News Ed Trends, May 2019)

Goal 3: Ensure equitable access to information and library services for Idahoans with disabilities, those in rural communities, English-language learners, people living in poverty, and other underserved communities, addresses the challenges of providing access to all Idahoans by removing barriers to information. Many of the statistics cited in the second goal are tied to the large number of Idahoans who are living in poverty. Nearly half (49%) of all K-12 students were eligible for free or reduced lunch in 2015. In 2016-2017, 10.5 percent of Idaho students were receiving special education services. Idaho’s mountainous and vast area make communication, traveling, and increasing access to broadband connectivity a challenge.

According to December 2017 Census Bureau reports, Idaho leads the U.S. as the fastest growing state. A forecasting model developed by the Idaho Department of Labor suggests Idaho’s population will grow at three times the national rate between now and 2025 – and nearly all the new residents will be retirees moving to the state. The forecasting model predicts that Idaho’s population will grow 15.3 percent from 2015 to 2025, reaching 1.9 million. The model also suggests an increasing urbanization trend in Idaho, with more than two-thirds of the population growth expected to occur in Ada, Canyon, and Kootenai Counties. By 2025, it shows the share of Idaho’s population living in urban counties increasing from 70.6 percent to 74.3 percent.

According to the 2017 “[Hispanic Profile Data Book for Idaho](#),” published by the Idaho Commission on Hispanic Affairs, Idaho Hispanics make up 12 percent of Idaho’s population and 18 percent of K-12 public school students. Hispanics accounted for 30 percent of the state’s population growth between 2010 and 2015 and 42 percent of K-12 public school enrollment growth between the 2010-11 and 2015-16 school years. In terms of education, Idaho Hispanic students are less proficient in basic subjects and less prepared for college and career than non-Hispanics, based on standardized test scores. Students in the English Learner program score the lowest on standardized tests. Compared to non-Hispanics, Hispanics in Idaho have higher unemployment and poverty rates. They also have lower average annual wages and household income. If information becomes available only in certain areas or only to those who can afford it, our economy and the basic foundations of our democracy, as well as each individual’s quality of life, are at risk. This plan helps address some of the barriers that are currently limiting access for all Idahoans.

(Sources for Goal 3: Idaho State Department of Education, Idaho Department of Labor via [Spokesman Review article](#), and Idaho Commission on Hispanic Affairs)

Goal 4: Support the role of libraries in economic and employment development, is a relatively new area of focus for the Commission and one that ties into our support of Idaho’s education system and goal #2. While Idaho’s unemployment rate is currently relatively low, many Idahoans struggle to find employment and often turn to their local library staff for help to apply for jobs online, prepare resumes, and locate job postings. In the long term, if we don’t have more students pursue post-secondary education options, Idaho will have an under-supply of educated workers. Studies show at least 60 percent of jobs nationwide will require a post-secondary credential in the years ahead. The lack of qualified workers in Idaho may cause businesses to stagnate or leave the state in search of a better educated workforce and keep downward pressure on wages. Additional data to support this goal includes:

- Through 2024, the Idaho Department of Labor forecasts total employment growth to be on track to exceed labor force growth by 49,000 people. Idaho’s rural counties tend to be hit hardest.
- Total employment in Idaho’s urban counties is growing more than twice as fast as the population of the state’s rural counties. According to the Idaho Department of Labor, the unemployment rate has dropped over the last seven years to 3.2 percent. Idaho’s per capita income is 80 percent of the national average and ranks 45th in the U.S.
- In 2016, Idaho had 21,000 people making minimum wage or less, representing about 4.6 percent of all hourly wage earners in the state. The nationwide average is 3.3 percent and Idaho ranks the ninth highest in the nation. Of those Idahoans making the minimum wage or less in 2015, 61 percent were women.
- The 2018 United Way report shows 40 percent of Idahoans are living in poverty or are asset limited, income constrained, employed (ALICE).
- The top three emerging degree areas for Idaho employers are computer science/technology, business and economics, and engineering.

The work ICfL staff have done partnering with the Idaho Department of Labor in recent years has laid the groundwork for libraries to begin to formalize plans to support economic and employment development.

(Sources for Goal 4: Idaho State Board of Education, 2014; Idaho Department of Labor Workforce Trends, May 2018; [ALICE: A Study of Financial Hardship in Idaho, 2018 United Way Report](#); Idaho Education Field Guide, 2015)

Goal 5: Model responsible and effective government practices addresses the way staff operate and work to continuously improve operations. Planning, budgeting, and implementing services are done by aligning resources and priorities to maximize the value of both public and private funding.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The following goals and objectives build on the capacity-building work the Idaho Commission for Libraries is known for and are based on extensive and ongoing needs assessment and continuous improvement processes. Performance measures and benchmarks were developed by project leads based on needs in the library community and expected outcomes.

Goal 1. Build the institutional capacity of libraries to better serve their communities.

- Strategy 1: Improve the library workforce.
 - Objective 1.1.1: The Continuing Education Consultant and Program Consultants will develop continuing education programs for library staff and trustees on an annual basis.
 - Objective 1.1.2: The Field Consultants will provide ongoing consulting services for public library staff and trustees.
 - Objective 1.1.3: ICfL staff will facilitate leadership development opportunities for library staff and trustees via leadership groups and other hands-on leadership-building techniques.
 - Objective 1.1.4: The Continuing Education Consultant and Grants Officer will provide grants for first time conference attendance, formal library education support, and leadership development annually.
 - Objective 1.1.5: The Continuing Education Consultant and Emerging Trends Consultant will facilitate access to an Idaho cohort of students pursuing their master's degrees in library science.
 - Objective 1.1.6: The Program Supervisor and Continuing Education Consultant will enhance the summer internship program to provide creative opportunities for young people to explore library careers, including the possibility of creating an official apprenticeship program.

- Strategy 2: Improve the libraries' technological infrastructure.
 - Objective 1.2.1: The Broadband Consultant will provide broadband consulting and E-rate and Idaho Education Opportunity Resources Act (EOR) support on an ongoing basis.
 - Objective 1.2.2: The Broadband Consultant will provide technology guidance and resources through a variety of means, including the Broadband Toolkit Improvement Program (BTIP), online technology guides, and presentations at regional and statewide conferences.

- Strategy 3: Improve library operations.
 - Objective 1.3.1: The Data Coordinator/Field Consultant will collect and share Idaho library statistics annually.
 - Objective 1.3.2: The Library Consultant for the Underserved will facilitate training on how libraries can use volunteers to build their capacity annually.
 - Objective 1.3.3: Staff will support adult programs in libraries (i.e., Let's Talk About It, financial literacy programs) annually.
 - Objective 1.3.4: The Librarian position will support [STACKS], Idaho's state publication repository program, annually.
 - Objective 1.3.5: The Northern Idaho Field Consultant and other staff will work with a library director advisory group to develop a best practices document that can be used as a tool for planning and gaining support in the context of library development by June 2020.

Performance Measures for Goal 1:

- 80 percent of library staff and trustees participating in continuing education programs will indicate they have made changes in their library procedures or services as a result of training activities.
Benchmark: 85% reported changes were made in FY2017.
Additional output measures: Events sponsored each fiscal year. Number of participants.
- The number of libraries with improved access to broadband will increase annually.
Benchmark: Percentage of libraries with broadband speeds greater than 10 Mbps. Percentage of E-rate libraries with broadband speeds of 100 Mbps or greater.
- The number of interlibrary loans requested through LiLI Unlimited will increase by two percent annually. Note: LiLI Unlimited underwent a major restructuring and was renamed ShareIdaho in FY2018.
- Idaho libraries will see increased use by Idahoans.
Benchmark: 8,169,435 visits to public libraries were reported in FY2018 (a 1.74% increase over last FY).
 1,017,002 Idahoans of all ages attended public library programs in FY2018 (a 5.12% increase over last FY).

Goal 2. Support the role of libraries in preparing Idahoans to be college and career ready.

- Strategy 1: Improve users' formal education.
 - Objective 2.1.1: The School Library Consultant will provide consulting and training opportunities to school library staff annually.
 - Objective 2.1.2: The School Library Consultant will facilitate access to library mini-grants to improve student learning annually.

- Strategy 2: Improve users' general knowledge and skills.
 - Objective 2.2.1: The Youth Services team will support Read to Me early literacy turnkey programs annually.
 - Objective 2.2.2: The Youth Services team and School Library Consultant will minimize the summer slide by supporting library summer reading programs in public and school libraries annually.
 - Objective 2.2.3: The Make It team will support Make It at the Library and other STEM-based out-of-school programs and training annually and leverage outside support when possible.
 - Objective 2.2.4: An internal team will develop and deliver library programs that support 21st century learning skills annually.
 - Objective 2.2.5: The Youth Services team will develop and support programs aimed at beginning readers through young adults annually.

- Strategy 3: Improve users' ability to discover information resources.
 - Objective 2.3.1: An internal team will develop promotional efforts to publicize LiLI Databases and other information resources annually.
 - Objective 2.3.2: An internal team will develop partnerships with other agencies and organizations to coordinate and leverage college and career ready programs and services and reach more Idahoans.

- Strategy 4: Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources.
 - Objective 2.4.1: The Librarian will provide support and training for the LiLI Databases statewide on an ongoing basis.
 - Objective 2.4.2: The Youth Services Consultants and School Library Consultant will support access to online books through statewide contracts and promote access to Open eBooks annually.

Performance Measures for Goal 2:

- Library summer reading participation will increase by 3 percent annually.
Benchmark: 107,458 youth participated in summer learning programs in FY2017; 83,952 youth participated in FY2016.
- Use of the LiLI Databases will increase annually.
Benchmark: New databases will be added to LiLI in FY2019 and new baseline stats will be collected.

Goal 3: Ensure equitable access to information and library services for Idahoans with disabilities, those in rural communities, English-language learners, people living in poverty, and other underserved populations.

- Strategy 1: Improve users' general knowledge and skills.
 - Objective 3.1.1: The Talking Book Service team will improve access to materials in alternate formats for those unable to read standard print.
 - Objective 3.1.2: The Talking Book Service team will increase awareness about services for persons with disabilities among library staff collaborating with agencies and organizations serving this clientele.
 - Objective 3.1.3: The Youth Services team will support outreach services (particularly Read to Me & Summer Reading) for those who face barriers getting to libraries.
 - Objective 3.1.4: Program staff will develop partnerships with other agencies and organizations to coordinate and leverage programs and services and reach more underserved Idahoans.

Performance Measures for Goal 3:

- The number of youth participating in library outreach programs will be maintained or increase annually.
Benchmark: Number of children participating in the My First Book outreach program. Number of youth participating in Summer Reading Outreach.
- There will be an annual increase in the number of Idahoans registering for Talking Book Services.
Benchmark: Number of new users registered for Talking Book Services.
Outputs: Number of Talking Book Patrons. Talking Book Circulation.

Goal 4: Support the role of libraries in economic and workforce development.

- Strategy 1: Library staff are knowledgeable about economic and employment resources and programs.
 - Objective 4.1.1: The Program Supervisor and Continuing Education Consultant will provide continuing education opportunities for library staff focused on economic and employment resources and programs annually.
 - Objective 4.1.2: The Program Supervisor and Continuing Education Consultant will develop a suite of turnkey training curricula on workforce development themes which library staffs can deploy in their libraries by June 2021.
- Strategy 2: Library users increase their awareness of employment support via libraries.
 - Objective 4.2.1: The Program Supervisor and Librarian will curate a suite of employment resources from partners which can be selectively and contextually applied in libraries by June 2020.
- Strategy 3: Idaho employers consider library services and resources as key elements in sustainable business development.
 - Objective 4.3.1: The Program Supervisor will initiate and cultivate partnerships with state agencies, nonprofits, and businesses to develop plans for better employment support via libraries. Organizations could include: Department of Labor, Department of Corrections, Idaho Rural Partnership, University of Idaho Extension Service, the Idaho Community Foundation, and others.
 - Objective 4.3.2: The Program Supervisor will identify by name a range of potential partners for libraries, identify exemplary models of partnering, and facilitate introductions annually.

Performance Measures for Goal 4:

- 80 percent of library staff attending continuing education programs focused on workforce development will report they are better prepared to facilitate access to economic and employment resources.
- By FY2021, 10 libraries will implement workforce development programs, trainings, and workshops in their libraries.
- In FY2020, at least 10 libraries either link to the online curated set of resources or create their own set of resources on the library's website.
- Co-branded and co-facilitated business development opportunities among employers, partners, and libraries total at least 10 by FY2021.

Goal 5: Model responsible and effective government practices.

- Strategy 1: Align resources and priorities to maximize the value of both public and private funding.
 - Objective 1.1: All staff will integrate agency values into all initiatives and activities, both within and outside the agency: continuous improvement, learning organization, customer services, collaboration, relationships, and library ideals on an ongoing basis.
 - Objective 1.2: Management team will invest in professional development and leadership opportunities for agency staff on an ongoing basis.
 - Objective 1.3: All staff will foster innovation, flexibility, and results-oriented planning for effective and efficient programs and services for the agency's clientele on an ongoing basis.
 - Objective 1.4: Management team will review existing positions to maximize opportunities to meet the goals in the strategic plan.
 - Objective 1.5: The Volunteer Coordinator will work with the ICfL staff to identify tasks, recruit, and train volunteers to help achieve goals outlined in the strategic plan.

- Strategy 2: Increase the awareness of Idaho libraries as essential community resources in the 21st century.
 - Objective 2.1: The ICfL Communications Team and Public Information Officer will develop and implement a strategic, intentional approach to communicate a consistent message about the value libraries contribute to Idaho.

- Strategy 3: Implement practices and processes to comply with the Executive Orders (EO) on Cybersecurity and Red Tape Reduction Act.
 - Objective 3.1: The Administrative Manager and IT Staff will monitor progress of implementation Cybersecurity EO 2017-02 in partnership with the Office of the Chief Information Officer.
 - Objective 3.2: The agency Rules Review Officer will review the ICfL's administrative rules to identify outdated regulations annually.

Performance Measures for Goal 5:

- During the 2019 Legislative Session, the ICfL staff reduced 413 words from our administrative rules and are in the process of reducing them further. There are currently 25 restrictive words in the one chapter.
Benchmark: The word count in ICfL's administrative rules went from 2,986 words in 2012 to 2,573 words in April 2019, a decrease of 13.83%.

TIMELINE

This plan was intended to support the Idaho library community over the next four years and is supported with annual project plans. All funded projects are reviewed and evaluated annually based on the evaluation plan.

EVALUATION PLAN

The Idaho Commission for Libraries will continue to use a combination of techniques to evaluate the success of the activities in meeting our goals and project priorities:

- Evaluate all projects and services using outcomes-based assessment questions.
- Monitor activities and sub-grant projects. Commission projects are evaluated by an appropriate method chosen by the lead consultant. Sub-grant projects are evaluated through interim and final narrative and financial reports.
- Conduct surveys or assessments as needed.
- Incorporate outcome-based and/or independent evaluations for appropriate projects.