

## VII. Operations Report

### A. State Librarian and Management Team Reports – Information item

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#### Report from State Librarian Stephanie Bailey-White

- I've been visiting libraries that received Facilities Improvement or Connecting Communities grants to generate positive publicity and meet in person with state and local stakeholders. Visits to the Eagle Public Library, Burley Public Library, Inkom Branch construction site, McCammon Branch, Oneida County District Library, Bonneville County Library District, Grangeville Centennial Library, Prairie River Library District in Lapwai, and Cascade Public Library all generated positive outcomes.
- I am working with Digital Inclusion Consultant Chelsea Summerlin to host a preconference session, "Navigating the Digital Frontier: Empowering Idahoans to Thrive Online," ahead of the Idaho Library Association Annual Conference. The session is open to libraries and other organizations and will be held Wednesday, October 4, in Twin Falls. Work continues to build relationships around digital access.

#### Report from Deputy State Librarian Dylan Baker

- The ICfL received nine public comments on the draft Digital Access for All Idahoans (DAAI) Plan during our recent 30-day public comment period (August 8 to September 8), which is comparable to other state digital equity plans for similar states. We are working with our contracted partner, Boise State University Idaho Policy Institute (BSU IPI), on revisions to the plan based on the public comments received, feedback from our Digital Access Steering Committee, and guidance from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration. We are on track to have the final plan ready for release in mid-October.
- Eleven ICfL staff members, including Stephanie, LeAnn, and myself, toured the Idaho State Correctional Institution (ISCI) in August to develop connections and seek opportunities for partnering with Corrections and their staff to better serve their residents. ISCI Head Librarian Robyn Patterson provided us with a thorough tour, and I am looking forward to future collaborations.
- The Management Team held an offsite mini retreat at the end of August with the support of HR Specialist Pete Nelson. Topics included updating our annual employee review process for consistency, reviewing job classifications, workload analysis follow-up, and planning for our upcoming annual staff retreat and training event.

#### Report from Financial Manager Jamie Smith

- **Budget:** The ICfL's fiscal year 2025 budget was successfully submitted on time. The correction period is from September 1 to October 20, and this is when the Statewide Allocation Cost Plan (SWCAP) will be added to the budget to capture the expenditures between agencies for their services and support (Attorney Generals, Risk Management, and this year, Information Technology Services). After October 20, we will know the full budget request that will go before the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee (JFAC).
- **Luma:** The entire agency and the Fiscal Team especially are working through Luma and all the changes that come with it. I've been hosting weekly "Luma Lunches" to demonstrate new processes, answer questions, and troubleshoot problems. This seems to be working really well!

I've also hosted weekly meetings for the Fiscal Team to work through Luma processes together, learn, and problem-solve.

- **Staffing:** I'm very happy to report that Clare McCabe joined the Fiscal Team in August as our Financial Technician. Clare worked with ICfL as a temporary Admin Assistant for six months prior to applying for the permanent position vacated by Nancy Holt's retirement. Clare has a breadth of knowledge in the grant and contracts field from her years of experience as a grants officer for a large medical facility in Seattle. Clare brings a great attitude and keen attention to detail to the team.

#### **Report from E-Services Program Supervisor William Lamb**

- **Connecting Communities:** The application window for this program was extended an additional week and closed on August 25. Many of the applications focused on utilizing the devices for educating aging populations and homebound patrons. Several libraries are creating classes for children and teens as well. Of particular note is the Ada Community Library's Victory Branch, which is looking to create a program for the incarcerated/re-entry population. In total, we provided 175 Chromebooks, logoed backpacks, headsets, wireless mice, and "how-to" guides to 13 library branches (listed in Board Document 24-19).
- **Connecting Idaho Students: Tablets to Teach and Transform:** This new program opened for applications on September 5, with a September 29 deadline. The purpose of this program is to expand access to e-books and digital resources in Idaho's classrooms. It will provide 200 tablets to school districts throughout Idaho as an incentive to sign up for Sora by Overdrive. Participating school districts will commit to training their staff on e-books through the Sora platform and on digital resources through LiLiSchools.org, so staff can pass that knowledge to students. As of September 21, we have received four applications requesting eight tablets, and we are working with one additional school district that we hope will apply. E-Resources Consultant Marina Rose is actively working to get this program promoted, and we anticipate additional applications coming in. If necessary, we will extend the application deadline and/or provide additional devices to the schools that have applied. Throughout the initial applications there is a common excitement to expand reading resources for students and introduce them to new ways to read and explore digital resources. Ensuring these devices get into the hands of schools is a top priority.
- **Digital Navigator Program:** Launched in July, this new program allows Idahoans to receive one-on-one help over the phone or to visit IdahoDigitalSkills.org to explore free, self-guided tutorials. The Digital Navigators help Idahoans find financial assistance to get online; learn to use computers, tablets, and phones; and find and use online resources, including library services. The Idaho Digital Skills website has self-guided learning resources, including computer and smartphone basics, Google Maps, Internet safety and privacy, online job applications, social media basics, and more. Digital Inclusion Consultant Chelsea Summerlin works to keep the website and services up to date. We are currently working on promoting the service, including sending bookmarks to all public libraries in Idaho and providing signs for libraries that attend the upcoming Idaho Library Association Annual Conference.
- **IT:** We are working to finalize updates to the wireless capabilities in our building. The existing infrastructure is many years old and needed upgrading. In coordination with the Office of Information Technology Services (ITS), we have been able to get new conduit drilled and installed between the main floor and the basement. Contractors are lined up to run new network cabling, and then ITS will install and configure new access points.

**Report from Partnerships and Program Supervisor Amelia Valasek**

- **Facilities Improvement Grant:** In August and September, the ICfL finalized grant agreements with the 15 libraries that were selected for funding. We plan on issuing the first round of payments to sub-awardees by early October. Additionally, we are finalizing plans for the operating portion of the project. In general, we will contract with a consultant(s) to provide technical assistance and support on topics and processes related to facilities and capital projects. This assistance will be available to both our subgrantees as well as to the broader library community through a series of webinars, ongoing office hours, and an in-person workshop. As the details of this project are still being finalized, more information will be available at the next board meeting.
- **Youth Services:** Since the August board meeting, several members of the Youth Services team have been on the road in East and North Idaho conducting site visits and hosting trainings for the School Library Access (SLA) grant program. The SLA trainings are designed for school librarians at both the elementary and secondary level and cover a range of topics, such as early childhood development, best practices in collection development, and how to design circulation policies that best serve the needs of young readers. Leading these trainings were our School Library Consultant Jeannie Standal, as well as our Youth Services Consultant Staci Shaw. They were joined on various legs of the trip by Project Coordinator Kristina Taylor, Program Specialist Josie Bradford, and Admin Assistant Brendy McConnaughey. While on the road conducting training, our team was also able to carry out more than 20 site visits to school and public libraries across Eastern and Northern Idaho.

**Report from Talking Book Service (TBS) Program Supervisor LeAnn Gelskey**

- **Talking Book Service:** State Librarian Stephanie Bailey-White, Management Assistant Allison Maier, and I have been working on the new TBS calendar. The theme for 2024 is a celebration of 50 years of TBS in Idaho. We've looked through archival photos and old notes to create a historical timeline. The calendar will also feature recommended reads, including locally produced titles. Watch for your copy later this fall.
- **More TBS:** I met with ICfL Graphic/Web Designer Haley Westbrook to start brainstorming for a new TBS website. She is also drafting ideas for a new logo. More information forthcoming.
- **Let's Talk About It:** The grant deadline for 2022-2023 is September 30. We have until the end of the calendar year to utilize any remaining funds, with a focus on book replacements and theme development.
- **That All May Read:** Final grant reports were due on September 15. Once again there was a lot of positive feedback. I am always amazed at the great work being done by librarians throughout the state. A lot of thought went into developing programs and resources based on community needs and wants. Here are a few success stories:
  - **Gooding Public Library:** "We were able to set up an 86-year-old patron with a tablet to borrow. He only owns a flip phone, so this was quite the leap to use a tablet. He was having a difficult time holding large print books because of the weight of them, and this has allowed him to continue reading."
  - **Lewiston City Library's LEW On the Go:** "One of the benefits of having a mobile library is being able to bring library resources to patrons who are unable to visit a traditional library location. At a special community event, a patron was surprised and excited to see a mobile library set up. She inquired about two new books that she was contemplating purchasing but were too expensive for her and explained why it was challenging for her to visit the traditional library location. She explained how the outreach stop was both a

perfect time and location for her to interact with the library. She was then very surprised and excited that we had the two new books she was looking for in large print. While this story is just about one patron, a similar occurrence has happened at other mobile library stops and will continue to happen into the future.”

- **Bonneville County Library District – Ammon:** “One gentleman in our area could still read large print, but only for short periods of time and his wife was homebound. We were able to get them set up with Talking Books and provide large print books for them. We also set up the husband on Libby and ordered some books for him to enjoy.”
- **Eagle Public Library:** The number of children’s large print and audio assistive books borrowed increased by 625% after the creation the children’s large print space.
- **TBS Studio:** Since the last report, TBS Program Specialist Rachel Welker and the volunteers have built and uploaded six titles to the National Library Service catalog. They are currently recording another seven titles.