

V. Operations Report**A. State Librarian and Management Team Reports, including 2024 ICfL Employee Engagement Survey Results – Information item**

Report from State Librarian Stephanie Bailey-White

- The management team reviewed ICfL Staff Engagement Survey results and created an action plan for the next six months based on feedback from staff. State employees are surveyed at least every other year, and the ICfL had a very high response rate. A summary of results are included in this board document. The action plan includes initiatives to improve communication by arranging two-day Crucial Conversation courses for all staff in November and December, increasing developmental goals in all employee reviews, revising the ICfL employee handbook and improving onboarding efforts, and maintaining efforts to foster the agency culture.
- I enjoyed attending the annual Chief Officers of State Library Agencies meeting in Huntsville, Alabama, October 21 to 23. Of note was a presentation about reauthorization of the Institute of Museum and Library Services and support for its budget, which is the primary source of ongoing federal funds for the ICfL and Idaho library community. Initial budget proposals show strong bipartisan support in the Senate, but the House budget falls short of what may be necessary to sustain and grow vital library programs.
- The ICfL's Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee budget hearing is scheduled for 8 a.m. on January 22. The format will be similar to last year's in that the Legislative Services Office budget analyst assigned to the ICfL will give the bulk of the presentation, and I'll make closing remarks. These hearings are live streamed at <https://legislature.idaho.gov>.

Report from Deputy State Librarian Dylan Baker

- Digital Inclusion Consultant Chelsea Summerlin and I attended the National Digital Inclusion Alliance's (NDIA's) State Digital Equity Implementation Workshop in Washington, D.C. at the end of October. This was an excellent opportunity to prepare for implementing our Digital Access for All Idahoans (DAAI) Plan and to connect with NDIA staff and our counterparts in other states.
- We opened applications for our DAAI grants on November 4 in AmpliFund, our new grant management platform. This was just two weeks after the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) announced our State Digital Equity Capacity Grant award. This was only possible with the planning and preparation of Grants Officer Jamie Thill, Chelsea, and others on the team. I have been presenting and sharing information about these grants to a variety of groups and organizations in Idaho and nationally.
- I worked with the Idaho Division of Human Resources (DHR) Training Team to schedule staff training sessions of the Crucial Conversations for Mastering Dialogue course for all ICfL employees. By scheduling two sessions of the two-day course (one in November, the other in December), we were able to include all our staff without impacting our day-to-day work or closing to the public. This training provides all our staff with robust communication skills and techniques for reinforcing our culture and customer service.

Report from Financial Manager Jamie Smith

- We reclassified an Administrative Assistant position into a Grants Specialist and hired Brian Butkus to take on the role. His first day was November 25, and he brings a great deal of experience to the role. I'm looking forward to having the help in the grant arena.
- We drew our first round of Digital Access for All Idahoans (DAAI) Capacity funds out of the federal award. Grants Officer Jamie Thill was able to launch the DAAI Capacity subgrants through the new grant management system, AmpliFund. These are the first grants to start in AmpliFund. After receiving applications through December 20, we will test scoring functionality in the system.
- The fiscal team is enjoying a slight lull in the workflow and utilizing the time to build up and update agency-wide resources and to clean up our SharePoint file structure.

Report from E-Services Program Supervisor William Lamb

- Most of the E-Services team is currently engaged in a revamp of our eBranch program. This program helps libraries across the state with maintaining a web presence. The ICfL hosts and provides some technical support for these websites. This revamp will ensure Idaho library websites meet web accessibility standards. Huge kudos to Library Technology Consultant and eBranch administrator Doug Baker and Graphic/Web Designer Haley Westbrook for all their hard work these last few weeks to find solutions.
- I'm pleased to announce that Allison Maier will be joining the E-Services team as our new Digital Navigator Project Coordinator. Allison will be leading the charge in expanding digital navigator service across the state as part of the Digital Access for All Idahoans Plan.
- The next round of our staff tech refresh is underway. This will complete the third and final year of getting all staff on an appropriate tech refresh cycle. From here forward all staff will receive new laptops every three years on a rotating basis.

Report from Development Services Program Supervisor Talela Florko

- Many of the Youth Services (YS) team members have been busy getting Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) program reports ready for the annual State Program Report. We submit the report to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) at the end of January each year. The report details the projects and activities supported with LSTA funds.
- Several YS team members attended conferences and trainings. Outreach and Community Engagement Consultant Kristina Taylor attended the Association of Tribal Archives Libraries and Museums conference in California. She presented with other western state library tribal consultants. Youth Services Consultant Staci Shaw attended and presented at the National Association for the Education of Young Children annual conference in California. Four YS team members attended the Idaho Early Years Conference and staffed a vendor table; Staci presented.
- The reports from libraries engaged in our summer reading program showed an increase of 30% in public attendance in their programs from last year, for a total of approximately 107,000 participants. Youth Services Consultant Jennifer Redford is coordinating six regional summer learning workshops for libraries over the fall and winter. The first two were held in Coeur d'Alene and Jerome and were well attended.
- We continue to send out monthly shipments for the My First Books program. Through this program, libraries receive books to give to participating families from October through May.

We also shipped 6,200 books, 10,000 bookmarks, and 11,000 themed literacy activity booklets to 100 libraries for Idaho Family Reading Week in early November.

- I continued training new Grants Officer Jamie Thill and will continue to train on the LSTA State Program Report submission. I'm also providing some onboarding training for new Grants Specialist Brian Butkus.

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

- **Talking Book Service (TBS):** Customer service representatives have been busy following up with parents of TBS patrons under the age of 18 regarding the new National Library Service (NLS) Parental Acknowledgement form requirement. Although fewer than 90 youth use the Idaho TBS, getting signed forms returned has been an arduous task. So far, we've heard back from approximately one third of the parents. We have communicated through email and mailings. We will keep working on this between now and the first of the year. After January 2, NLS may begin shutting down accounts until the forms are received.
- **Let's Talk About It (LTAI):** We hope to incorporate the America250 in Idaho initiative as part of the 2026 LTAI program. I have scheduled a brainstorming meeting with the Idaho Humanities Council in early January to start discussing ideas and to create a committee.
- **That All May Read:** These mini-grants aim to support libraries in enhancing their large print collections, expanding outreach efforts, and acquiring assistive technology to promote broader access to reading for Idaho residents. Each recipient library was tasked with completing a minimum of two promotional activities, with many participating in local farmers markets, summer community events, and visits to care facilities. In total, 28 libraries took part in the program, utilizing the funds to procure 924 large print books for circulation, 118 pieces of audiovisual equipment, and 167 e-books. Librarians expressed gratitude for the additional funds, noting their budgets often do not cover the costs associated with acquiring large print materials. Kathy Davis from the Benewah County Free Library District shared, "This grant opportunity allows us to focus a more intentional effort to make our patrons and staff aware of the resources which can assist those who experience vision impairments with the materials which allow them to continue enjoying reading materials."

Idaho Commission for Libraries 2024 Employee Engagement Survey Results



22/24 **RESPONDENTS** | **2024 ENGAGEMENT = 92%**

STRENGTHS

Government Accountability **95%**

Strategic Alignment **93%**

Work Life Balance **92%**

Staff are proud of ICfL's work

95%

Staff are making a positive impact on the citizens of Idaho.

Strategic Alignment

95%

Staff see a clear link between the work they do and strategic objectives.

Work Life Balance

95%

ICfL supports efforts to balance work and personal life.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

Survey Follow Up

36%

Only 1 in 3 think this survey will lead to change.

Pay & Benefits

45%

Fewer than half believe they are being paid fairly and pay is linked to performance.

Experience vs Expectation

59%

59% find the experience working at ICfL meets their expectations.