

FY21 Welcoming Libraries Grantee Project Summaries

Ada Community Library – Hidden Springs Branch:

A grantee for the second time, Ada Community Library is focusing their efforts this time on making their library more accessible to patrons who are neurodiverse. They will: “Conduct a diversity audit of [their] picture and board book collections to determine how many materials [they] have that feature neurodiverse characters; Modify [their] current children’s programming to accommodate for the needs of [their] neurodiverse patrons; Improve the accessibility of [their] library’s physical space to make the space, information, and programming accessible for people who are neurodiverse.”

Coeur d’Alene Public Library:

There are five components to Coeur d’Alene Public Libraries’ plan for the WL Grant: 1) ability inclusion – installation of an accessible children’s garden outside the children’s library, including a sensory garden with plants children can touch, smell, see, taste, and hear and an herb garden that features plants with calming smells, such as lavender. The children’s garden will be a programming space and a grounding space for children with anxiety and/or sensory processing disorder; 2) ability inclusion – installation of communication boards in local elementary schools and park. These boards help nonverbal children express their emotions and needs. They show faces expressing emotions; 3) indigenous inclusion – installation of signage in snchitsu’umshtsn, the Coeur d’Alene language, throughout the library. This will not only acknowledge those who are the original caretakers of this land, it will signal this is a place that welcomes and values Indigenous people, their cultures, and their knowledge; 4) indigenous inclusion - the Dewey Decimal System is not inclusive of Indigenous peoples. There are methods of cataloging and organizing materials by Indigenous creators that better reflect their subject matter. We will conduct an audit of how Indigenous books, music, and film are cataloged and adjust their records as needed. We will begin this diversity audit with our cataloging in the children’s library; 5) diversity and equity promotion - establish the “Mirrors and Windows Book Club.” In this book club, we will read a different Own Voices children’s book each month. Each participant in the book club will receive their own copy of the book to keep. The books will always feature a diverse character or subject matter.

Coeur d’Alene High School Library:

Based on feedback from their schools’ accreditation evaluators, the librarian learned “learned that our students are not always nice to each other, and some of our students are made fun of and bullied because they are different...I thought our school was a welcoming place and the students were kind to each other. We are now taking the next step and creating a student diversity and inclusion group. Our first thought was a book club for our students and staff, and this is where we will begin. We’d like to students to take ownership of this club, so we will take their input into consideration as we move forward.” The library “will use books on different diverse topics to help our students see life from other points of view, include adult guest speakers who have

experienced what our students are experiencing and can offer advice and support, include our district mental health specialists for support resources for our students, and partner with our public library who already has a Rainbow Club. They will attend our meetings and hope to unite our community youth outside of our school.”

Glenns Ferry Public Library:

Through a WL Grant, the Glenns Ferry Public Library (GFPL) will conduct a community assessment with a special focus on “the kids who needs are not currently being met” by the library. Previous community feedback/requests lead the librarian to believe that sensory materials and storytime programming for children with sensory processing disorders may rise to the top of the needs list after the assessment is complete. Assessment results will also help guide GFPL “design [their] new space [that] will be focused on non-traditional learning opportunities.”

Gooding Public Library:

“We have recently conducted a community audit of needs and of our collection. In doing these audits we determined that we need a more diversified collection. We will be working with partners and asking for their input as we update our collection of books and music. We will be modifying our story times to include more diverse books, music, and special guests as part of our programming. These guests will come from many different backgrounds, beliefs, and cultures. Staff members will take two classes/webinars on diversity and inclusion. It will also be a focus of a staff meeting.”

I.B. Perrine Elementary Library:

The I.B. Perrine Elementary Library will focus on creating or modifying current children’s programming in their school library to better meet the needs of students at her school who have limited vision, who are on the autism spectrum, or students with a sensory processing disorder. The librarians’ focus will be on purchasing specialized equipment for these students to enhance their library visit experience.

Lewiston City Library:

With their second WL Grant, Lewiston City Library will continue working on their ongoing goal to develop a sensory friendly meeting room to better serve children 0-18 that are living with disabilities. “We have partnered with the Green Apple Project, a non-profit group that supports children and their families living with autism. Together, we have surveyed parents, caregivers, and Intervention Specialists on what they would like to see added to the sensory friendly meeting room. We are eager to continue this work as we have found that there are not enough sufficient public facilities available in our area for families and caregivers to bring children living with unique abilities. The sensory friendly meeting room is used daily by families and caregivers and they have expressed great appreciation in our efforts to make the children in their care feel welcome at our library.”

Meridian District Library – Cherry Lane Branch:

MLD will provide voiceover Spanish language translation and closed captions for its virtual Kindergarten All-Stars videos. The Kindergarten All-Star videos are a selection of nine videos that demonstrate core competencies of kindergarten readiness, including letter recognition, shape recognition, early STEM, writing, cutting with scissors, and peer-teacher interaction. “These videos have garnered steady viewership and positive feedback from the community. Although our ultimate goal is to offer an expanded selection of virtual early learning programs in Spanish, Russian, and Arabic, we hope this initial focus on Spanish Kindergarten All-Stars videos will serve as a pilot we can present to possible community partners and funders to demonstrate what this project could look like with additional support.”

Nampa Public Library:

“As {Nampa Public Library works to} increase library staff understanding of the educational, informational, and recreational needs of those in the deaf/limited hearing and blind/limited vision communities, [NPL wants] to support these underserved youth and their families to find easily accessible library resources and services.” [NPL] will conduct a Collection Diversity and Inclusion Audit of [their] A.B.L.E Collection for children ages 0-18. [Their] goal is to improve the representation of materials in [their] A.B.L.E collection that “mirror the experience” of youth with visual limitations in our community; NPL will improve the accessibility of [their] library’s virtual space for youth and parents with hearing limitations with a focus on captioning software that will allow NPL to caption [their] current and all future, pre-recorded and live-video programming.