

Lincoln County Library District: Funding Model Review

Board Work Session #1 Agenda

Project Purpose

The District Board wants to re-examine the basis of the revenue distribution model that has been in use for many years. The need goes beyond trying for a method or formula that satisfies District members, partners, and service providers. The ultimate project purpose is for the Board to decide on a fund use structure and methods that best align with the legislative intent and purposes of the District.

Project Objectives

1. Understand the legislative intent of the District formation and its purposes.
2. Establish the principles and values the Board wants incorporated into funding options analyses.
3. Identify the optimal funding methods and/or formulae to support the intent, principles, and values.
4. Understand how various scenarios will impact the District members, partners, and providers.
5. Ensure that future funding structure and methods most effectively enable the legislative intent and purposes of the District.

Topic	Time	Lead	Purpose/ Outcome
Welcome and Introductions Project Purpose, Project Team	10 mins	MaryKay	Clarify the project purpose and objectives Clarify our roles for this Funding Model Review process
Current Funding Model Overview Description and why the Review --Questions, Clarification, Discussion	40 mins	MaryKay	Understanding the current funding model Understanding Board concerns
Break	10 mins	Everyone	Stretch
Framework Case study: In Search of an Alternative Funding Model Discussion and identification of underlying principles, values, and elements on which to base an optimum funding model	45 mins	Erin Ruth	Framework and Direction for intermediate staff work
Next steps Staff Intermediate Work <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop funding model concepts and scenarios in line with Board's direction Board Work Session #2 [TBA] <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review select funding model concepts and scenarios for the District	15 mins	Ruth, Erin	See Alternative funding models that are in alignment with Board direction Input and feedback about alternative funding models Clarity about the +/- of alternative funding models

Lincoln County Library District: Funding Model Review

Board Work Session #1 Agenda

Next Work Sessions: [TBA] and #4 [TBA] if needed <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Further deliberation and narrowing to optimum funding model		Erin	Identify the optimum funding model
Adjourn		MaryKay	

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR LINCOLN COUNTY, OREGON

In the Matter of

FORMATION OF LINCOLN COUNTY
LIBRARY DISTRICT

FINAL ORDER

WHEREAS the Board of Commissioners initiated formation of a library district as described in ORS 357.216 through ORS 357.286 by order dated August 10, 1988; and

WHEREAS after notice pursuant to law, a hearing was held before the Board on September 9, 1988, at 10:30 a.m., to consider the formation of the Lincoln County Library District; and

WHEREAS following the hearing the Board entered an order approving the formation of the proposed district, and further ordered that a final hearing on the matter be held on October 12, 1988, to consider written requests, if any, for an election pursuant to ORS 198.810(2); and

WHEREAS insufficient written requests for an election on the question of formation of the district were filed with the Board as required in ORS 198.810(2) to require placement of the question of formation on the next available ballot; and

WHEREAS the Board received testimony at the final public hearing on October 12, 1988, at 10:15 a.m., and considers the formation of the district to be in the public interest;

NOW, THEREFORE, THE BOARD HEREBY ORDERS AS FOLLOWS:

1. That the Lincoln County Library District is hereby formed pursuant to ORS Chapter 198.

2. That the purpose of the district is to provide library services in accordance with ORS 357.216 through ORS 357.286.

3. That the boundaries of the district shall be concurrent with the boundaries of Lincoln County, excluding therefrom the corporate limits of the cities of Newport, Lincoln City, Toledo, Depoe Bay, Yachats, and Waldport.

4. That pursuant to ORS 357.216 to ORS 357.286, and as ordered in the order on formation adopted by this Board on the 9th day of September, 1988, the officers of the district shall be a board of five members who shall be elected by zone, in

1 accordance with ORS 357.241(1)(a). The boundaries of the zone
2 shall be as set forth in Exhibit "A," attached hereto and made a
part of this order.

3 5. That copies of this order be filed pursuant to
4 ORS 198.780 with the Oregon Department of Revenue, the Oregon
5 Secretary of State, the Lincoln County Clerk, and the Lincoln
County Assessor.

6 6. That copies of this order be forwarded to the City
Recorder for each of the incorporated cities in Lincoln County.

7 7. That a copy of this order be forwarded to Carole
8 Dickerson of the Library Task Force.

DATED this 12th day of October, 1988.

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

11 
12 NORMA McMILLIN, Chairman

13 
14 FRANK ARMSTRONG, Commissioner

15 
16 ALBERTA BRYANT, Commissioner



Lincoln County Library District Community Profile and Feedback Campaign

2020

MLIS Capstone Project
By Lillian Curanzy

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

- 1.1 *Purpose and Context*
- 1.2 *Current Operations*
- 1.3 *Challenges*

2. Community Profile

- 2.1 *Description of Regions and Ballot Measure Results*
- 2.2 *Summary of Lincoln County*
 - 2.2.1 *Geography and Access*
 - 2.2.2 *Zoning and Land Use*
 - 2.2.3 *Economy*
 - 2.2.4 *Demography*
- 2.3 *LCLD Libraries and Current Library Users*

3. Feedback Campaign

- 3.1 *Marketing*
- 3.2 *Feedback Mode*
 - 3.2.1 *Survey*
 - 3.2.2 *Focus groups*
- 3.3 *Questions*
- 3.4 *Timeline*

Introduction

Purpose and Context

The Lincoln County Library District (LCLD) is a special taxing district that provides access to public library services to residents of the unincorporated areas of Lincoln County, Oregon. Since its creation, LCLD has worked to establish this access to the populous coastal region of the county. The time has come to evaluate how well the District meets the needs of those living in all areas of the county.

The 2020 pandemic continues to have considerable effects on socio-economic conditions both locally and globally. Lincoln County's economy is diverse; however, pandemic-related safety measures have greatly decreased revenue from tourism—a principle segment of the local economy. Library and other social services become increasingly important following economic disasters, especially in places with higher than average poverty rates. While the true impact of the pandemic is unknown at this time, this report acts as a benchmark for future comparison and action.

Community Profile

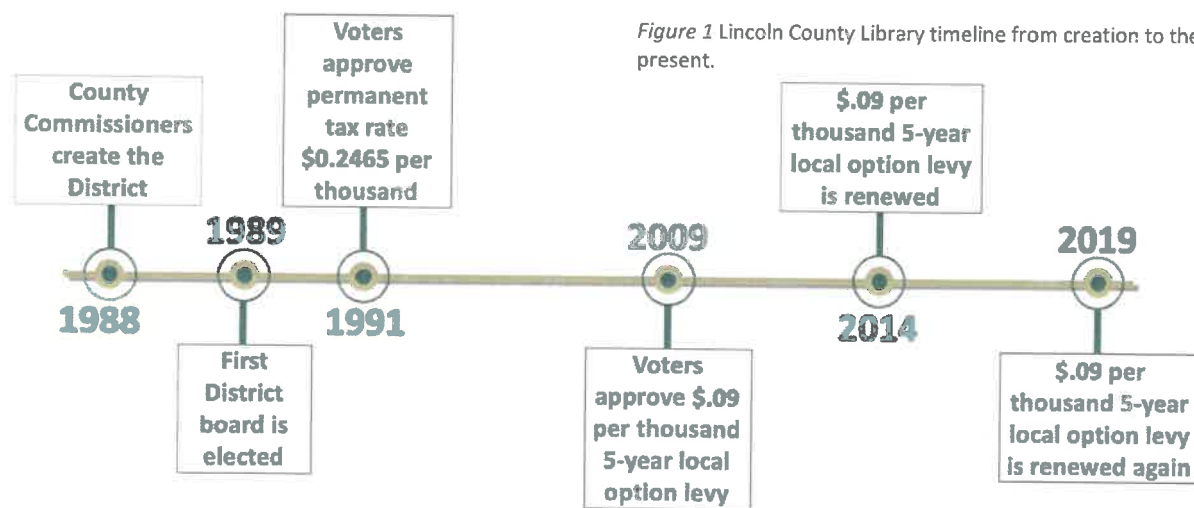
This profile will explore demographic information related to Lincoln County as a whole in addition to the characteristics of current library users who reside within the LCLD service area. It will establish demographic trends and compare those with current library users. This will identify populations who may not be utilizing LCLD services and inform priority groups for the next part of the project—a community feedback campaign.

Feedback Campaign Recommendations

In order to engage with District patrons, it is necessary to identify appropriate methods of communication as well as possible locations, formats, and modalities. The rural nature of the District's service area requires a persistent, comprehensive approach

History

The Lincoln County Library District (LCLD) is a special taxing district that provides access to public library services to residents of Lincoln County, Oregon. In 1988, the County Commissioners created the Lincoln



County Library District, in 1989 a Board was elected, and in 1991 the voters approved a permanent tax rate of \$0.2465 per thousand. In 2009 the voters approved a \$0.09 per thousand 5-year local option levy to assure continuing service to Lincoln County residents. The 5-year local option levies were renewed in 2014 and 2019 at the same rate. The District's service area covers 1,194 square miles and the service population is 25,120.

Current Operations

The purpose of LCLD is to provide fee-free library access to residents of the unincorporated areas of the county. In theory, residents from outside the cities of Newport, Toledo, Yachats, and Lincoln City are able to

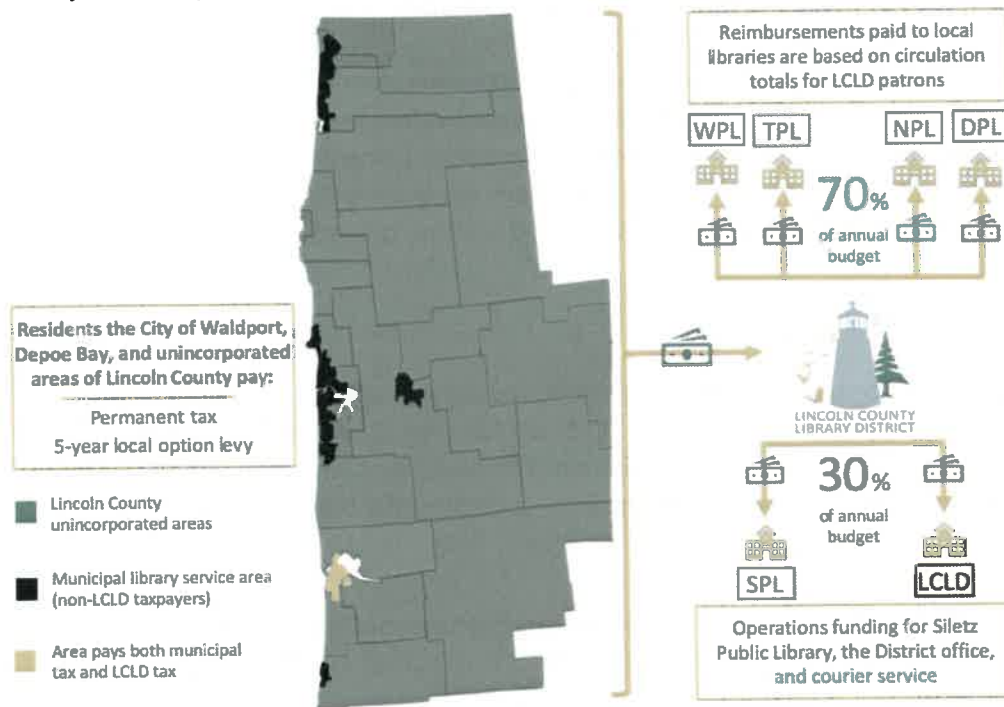


Figure 2 LCLD funding model shows the area of the county responsible for funding the District and how those funds are currently distributed. 70% of the annual budget is spent in the form of reimbursements to libraries in Waldport, Toledo, Newport and Lincoln City. The remaining 30% covers operating costs for Siletz Public Library and the district office as well as funding District services to local libraries.

utilize city libraries as a result of these tax-funded subsidies. The library services and access provided by LCLD include a free library card and use of all resources provided by city libraries located in Lincoln County.

In addition to distributing 70% of District revenue to city libraries, LCLD funds provide a countywide interlibrary courier service, cataloging support, and cooperates closely with the city libraries in the District. The District

contracts with and provides funding to the cities of Lincoln City, Newport, Waldport, Toledo, and Siletz to provide library services to residents of unincorporated Lincoln County and Depoe Bay.

Challenges

Need for Updated Funding Model

At the time that the District was created, the three public libraries in the county were located in Lincoln City, Newport, and Toledo. The City of Siletz has been in the district boundaries since the original funding election in November 1990. Waldport, and Depoe Bay annexed into the District in 1992 so their citizens could use the three city libraries without paying a non-resident fee. Currently Lincoln City, Newport, and Toledo have a verbal reciprocal agreement to allow residents of all three cities to use all three libraries without a fee. In the last 30 years Waldport and Siletz have established city funded libraries. The 70% of District tax receipts is

distributed to Waldport, Toledo, Newport, and Lincoln City while the Siletz Library is administered by LCLD using their portion of that 70%.

Currently, library reimbursements are based on circulation to LCLD residents and city library expenditures. In theory, those libraries that circulate more items to LCLD users would be entitled to higher reimbursement from the District. These circulation numbers are difficult to calculate or accurately estimate using the two systems, Chinook Library Network, and Oceanbooks. Consequently, we believe they have not been reported correctly for some time. While physical item circulation is an important statistic, it is likely that a more appropriate metric could better inform library reimbursement amounts.

Two Consortiums, One District

In 2012, two of the Lincoln County libraries, Newport and Driftwood, changed their library software and created a consortium with the libraries of Tillamook County. Due to budget limitations and the variable needs of different libraries, the new software was not implemented uniformly by the District libraries.

At this time, the libraries of Waldport, Toledo, and Siletz joined The Chinook Library Network (CLN). Administrated by LCLD, CLN provides a shared catalog to seven county, city, and community college libraries from Lincoln, Clatsop, and Tillamook counties.

The use of two library systems is problematic for several reasons. Complications related to resource sharing are the most noticeable to patrons who must rely on library staff to fill interlibrary loan requests for items owned by a library located less than 10 miles away. To avoid the delay caused by an interlibrary loan, patrons will visit the owning library themselves—costing their home library valuable circulation statistics.

Community Profile

Methods and Data Sources

LCLD serves 25 voting districts across the county. Visualizations in this report are presented in the context of these districts, their encompassing ZIP Codes, or census tracts. *Figure 3* shows these districts as numbered regions. Municipal library service areas are shown in black.

Most data were collected from open sources and compiled, visualized, and analyzed with publicly available tools. Population and demographic data are taken from Portland State University's Population Research Center and the 2014-2018 5-year estimates from the American Community Survey. Some demographic analysis is included from county-level economic and health services status reports. These reports provide additional context to census figures. Broad population data is supplemented by Lincoln County school District enrollment data supplied by the Oregon Department of Education.

Library user information is taken from the two library systems operating in the District. Data collection and management practices vary by library; therefore, some user data are missing or require additional normalization. Because user records are purged on different schedules throughout the district, those users whose library accounts expired over five years ago are not included in patron dispersal or age analyses

Description of Regions and Ballot Measure Results

The 2019 ballot measure to extend the expiring 5-year tax levy was included in a November special election. The library measure was the only one on the ballot for the majority of voters. Typically, special elections draw



Table 1 Voting districts in Lincoln County that are included in Lincoln County Library District Elections. District numbers correspond with map regions¹.

#	District	Yes%	Turnout	#	District	Yes%	Turnout
11	Agate Beach	61.11%	29.51%	3	Rose Lodge	64.46%	24.40%
23	Alsea	78.99%	37.86%	4	Schooner Creek	71.32%	34.86%
20	Bayview	78.36%	50.27%	18	Seal Rock	71.63%	43.82%
19	Big Elk	71.43%	12.17%	24	Seaview	75.40%	41.51%
6	Depoe Bay	69.25%	41.40%	8	Siletz	73.60%	25.38%
13	East Toledo	64.74%	31.56%	17	South Beach	75.80%	29.51%
16	Eddyville	70.09%	26.77%	2	Sunset East	70.92%	37.86%
15	Elk City	71.88%	29.36%	1	Sunset West	73.08%	50.27%
7	Fogarty Creek	73.22%	40.61%	21	Tidewater	63.49%	12.17%
12	Fruitvale	65.69%	34.15%	22	Waldport	77.37%	41.40%
5	Kern	76.69%	40.41%	25	Yachats	82.50%	31.56%
10	Otter Rock	76.40%	49.17%	14	Yaquina	70.19%	26.77%
9	Rock Creek	72.55%	33.44%	Average		72%	35.53%

Figure 3 Numbered regions are the voting districts that determine LCLD funding. These districts receive fee free library services through the District.

lower voter turnouts than general elections. Voter turnout rates varied by region. Overall, the results to extend the 5-year tax levy that supports the District were positive. The approval rate is well above 60% in each voting district. Agate Beach, Rose Lodge, and East Toledo returned the lowest rates of approval. Agate beach is geographically close to a public library (Newport) Yachats, Alsea, and Waldport have the highest approval rates. These districts are similarly situated at the south end of the county. Though Waldport has a city library, Waldport voters overwhelmingly approved extending the levy with an above average voter turnout. Yachats has a volunteer-run city library that is not a part of the District.

Summary of Lincoln County

Geography and Access

Lincoln County has a long narrow shape that emphasizes its coastline. Unsurprisingly, the population is concentrated on the coast and along main thoroughfares—Highways 20, 18, and 34. Figure 4 displays principle roads in the county and significant state forestlands and private timberlands. Despite the population distributions outlined in Figure 5, there are far-flung communities found in more remote areas of the county.

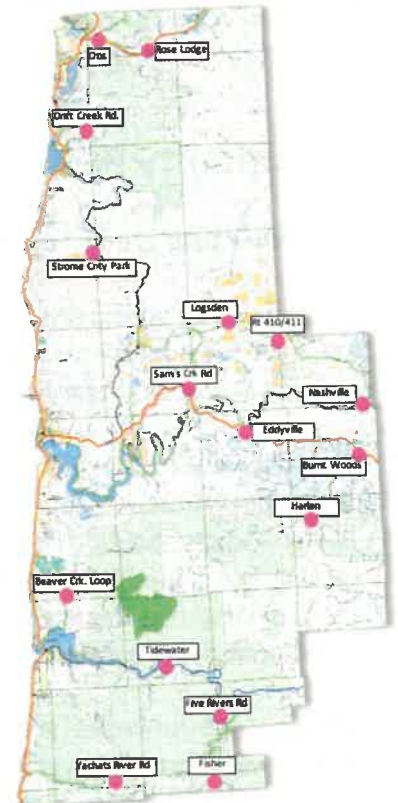


Figure 4 Map of Lincoln County with major roads, national forestlands, urban boundaries. Remote populated areas are marked and labelled.

Broadband

Some of these isolated communities—and a few less isolated communities—do not have access to high speed (25/3 mbps). The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) provides broadband mapping that can be filtered by service type and speed. Based on this resource, 100% of Lincoln County has access to at least two high speed internet providers. Residents of Lincoln County would likely disagree with this finding and further research quickly reveals that industry leaders and open broadband activists strongly question the accuracy of the federal agency's data collection practices^{2,3}.

Zoning and Land Use

The Siuslaw National Forest takes up 27% of Lincoln County's 634,580 acres. Additional timberlands, grazing lands, lakes, streams, and clearings are all included in the forestland designation equating to 90% of the county⁴. Rural and agricultural lands combined make up only about 4% of the county. Only 3% of the county is zoned urban. Lincoln County is also home to the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians which owns a little over 15,000 acres.

Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) is a federal program that provides funds roughly equal to \$2.77/acre of federally owned land. The purpose of this program is to offset the loss of tax income by local governments due to the presence of untaxable federal lands. In 2019, Lincoln County received \$326, 406—approximately 1.5% of the county's property tax revenue^{5,6}.

Economy

Based on the most recent economic summary report prepared for the Lincoln County Commissioners in 2014, Lincoln County's economy grew 12% between 2003 and 2013 despite the global economic downturn in 2008. The report highlights the significance of ports to the strong economies of Newport, Depoe Bay, and Toledo. A lack of a harbor or port is attributed to Lincoln City's lower median income⁷.

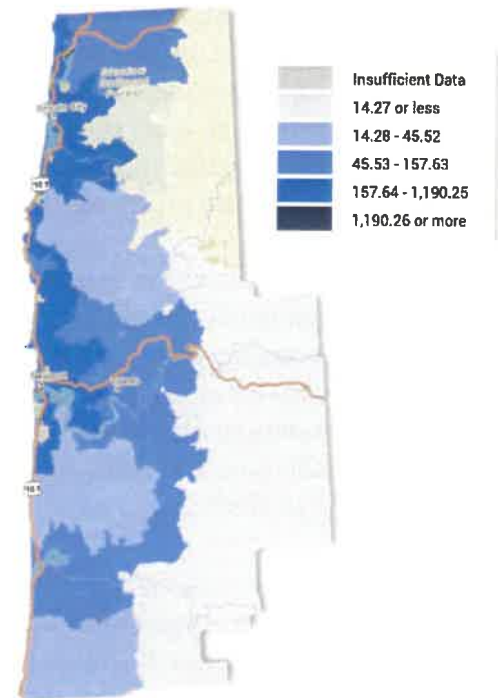


Figure 5 Population density per sq. mile in Lincoln County by ZIP Code.

Location	Median income (household)	Poverty rate (individuals)	Percent change in income 2012-2018
U.S.	63,179	11.8%	+23%
Oregon	59,393	12.6%	+19%
Lincoln County	46,061	13.6%	+10%
Depoe Bay	54,241	7.1%	+25%
Lincoln City	38,010	20.9%	+28%
Newport	45,250	17.2%	-4%
Siletz	41,676	23.4%	+12%
Toledo	57,975	16.1%	+28%
Waldport	46,367	14.9%	+29%
Yachats	49,293	4.2%	+16%

Table 2 Income and poverty rates for 2018 are estimates from American Community Survey estimates 2014-2018. Percent change in income is calculated using 2012 and 2018 incomes.

However, since the publication of the 2014 economic summary, income distribution has shifted. Previously, Newport had the highest median income among the seven most populous cities and towns in the county. The most recent estimates show significant gains in median income among all but Newport, the only city to see a decline⁸. *Table 2* illustrates this change.

Poverty rates are higher than national, state, and county averages in 70% of these seven areas. These rates are higher among single parent households and highest in those with single female heads of household and children—47% countywide⁹. A notable attribute of Lincoln County's economy is the high percentage of households that receive Social Security and Retirement benefits. Out of 40,696 residents 16 years of age or older, only 46% are currently in the workforce. Conversely, 74% of households receive Social Security and/or Retirement benefits¹⁰.

The same natural resources that draw a substantial retirement community also attract a sizeable tourist population throughout the year. As a result, Lincoln County's service industry is the dominant sector of the economy, employing 21% of the workforce. Educational services, health care, and social assistance industries are a close second at 17%¹¹.

Demography

According to the latest estimates from Portland State University's Population Research Center, Lincoln County's population was 48,260 in 2019, up 50 from the previous year¹². Families make up 59.3% of the 21,110 households in the county. Of these families, just under 30% include a person 65 years of age or older. Almost 20% of families in Lincoln County have a member who is under the age of 18¹³. Of the non-family households, 78% are residents who live alone. Almost 40% of these single residents are 65 years of age or older. Since older residents are likely to have limited mobility, there is a higher risk of loneliness and its negative mental and physical effects.

Oregon's median age is 39.1 years. *Table 3* displays Lincoln County's median age by ZIP Code. Population centers within those ZIP Codes act as familiar proxies in this table. Disability and poverty rates are included to examine any relationships between the attributes that may present an unmet need. The town of Eddyville and its encompassing ZIP Code have one of the lowest median ages and the highest poverty and disability rates. The next highest rates are nearly 50% lower than those found in the Eddyville region. While it might seem likely that higher median ages would correlate to a higher incidence of disability, reporting practices may not reflect the true prevalence among older residents. Those who are retired would have no need to file for disability benefits in order to receive Social Security assistance. Therefore, residents of employment age would have more reason to claim their disabilities with the appropriate federal agencies. The reverse of this trend is visible among regions with the highest median age. This analysis highlights two vulnerable communities: isolated older residents and those of employment-age who are unable to work due to a disability.

Region	Median Age	Disability Rate	Poverty Rate
Blodgett	53	17.27%	14.03
Depoe Bay	58	22.71%	10.55
Eddyville	43	58.13%	41.87
Logsdan	64	20.49%	12.07
Neotsu	51	16.98%	11.19
Newport	45	17.16%	17.34
South Beach	59	23.84%	8.18
Lincoln City	51	20.49%	19.69
Otis	49	19.68%	20.96
Otter Rock	64	20.93%	8.37
Seal Rock	64	29.74%	13.81
Siletz	43	28.48%	22.71
Gleneden Beach	65	19.56%	3.79
Toledo	43	17.75%	13.77
Waldport	58	30.75%	16.83
Tidewater	53	29.35%	20.04
Yachats	58	24.37%	12.01

Table 3 Median age, disability, and poverty rates in Lincoln County by ZIP Code, 2014-2018 estimates. High medians and rates are highlighted red, lows are blue.

Ethnicity, Race, and Language

Lincoln County is overwhelmingly white and English speaking. The Latinx population is the largest minority in the area followed by American Indian and Alaskan Native¹⁴.

The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians is a significant population in the county. This community is significant both historically and culturally. Reservation lands are located north and east of the City of Siletz.

Race and ethnicity information collected by the school district shows an increase in diversity among enrolled students than the county-wide numbers¹⁵. *Table 4* displays the higher percentages of Latinx students—22.6%. This is an increase of 13.5% when compared to the Census results. Additionally, the

Race or Ethnicity	LCSD Only	Total
American Indian/Alaska Native		
Native	4.5%	5.7
Asian	0.8%	1.9
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander		
Islander	0.3%	0.7%
Black/ African American		
American	0.4%	1.2%
Hispanic/Latinx	22.6%	9.1%
White (non-Hispanic)	62.3%	83.4%
Multiracial	9.1%	N/A

Table 4 Lincoln County School District (LCSD) student race and ethnicity percentages from school year 2019-2020. The total LCSD K-12 student enrollment for this period is 5,631.

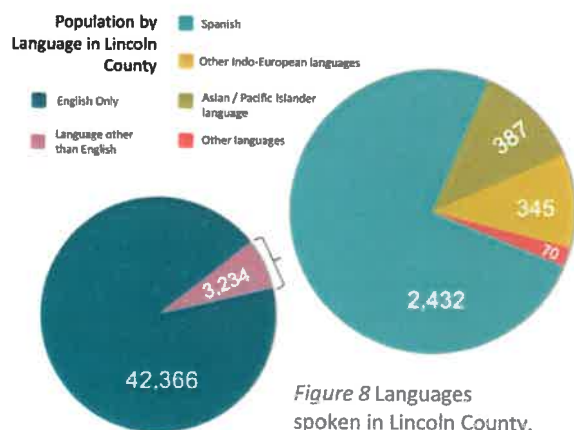


Figure 8 Languages spoken in Lincoln County.

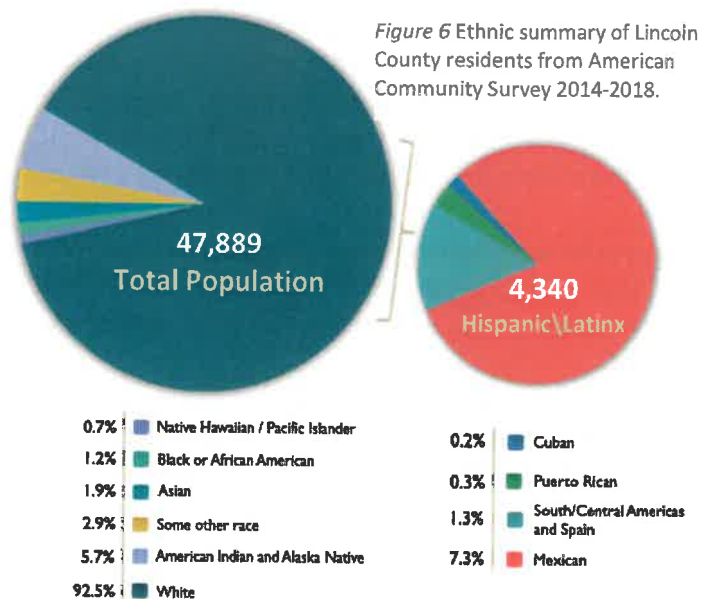


Figure 6 Ethnic summary of Lincoln County residents from American Community Survey 2014-2018.

inclusion of a multiracial designation allows for the representation of more than 500 students. There is no multiracial equivalent within the Census. The distribution of Hispanic and Latinx populations are displayed in *Figure 7*. Like the majority of the general population, Lincoln County's Latinx community is concentrated on the coast. More narrowly, in the county's central coast region in and around Newport. In terms of the LCLD service area, South Beach and areas north of Lincoln City are key areas to provision multilingual communication when implementing the feedback campaign

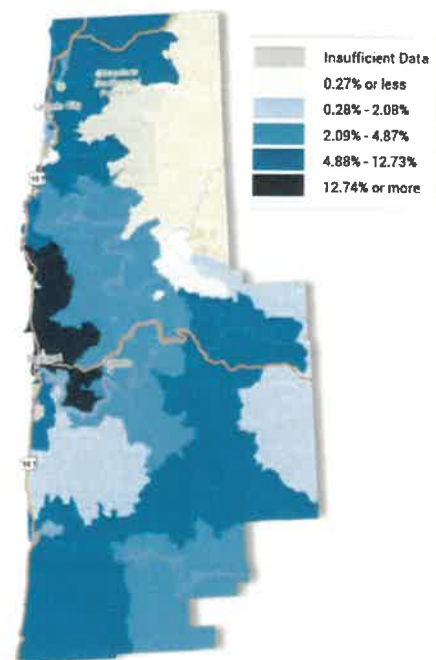


Figure 7 Latinx population map shows higher density communities around Newport. Map is arranged by ZIP Code.

Language diversity is in-keeping with the county's broad ethnic makeup.

However, the available data does not fully represent the Spanish-speaking population or those who speak languages indigenous to Central and South America.

LCLD Libraries and Current Library Users

This part of the profile is meant to briefly analyze the distinct communities of each LCLD library and how their rural users (those living in unincorporated regions) are represented. Each library in the district uses LCLD as a patron type. This patron type is applied to both adult and juvenile cardholders and designates that the patron lives in Lincoln County but outside the library's service area.

A key takeaway from a government report examining national library usage by household indicates that distance plays a significant role in frequency of use. Usage is highest (52% nationwide) when households live within a mile of a public library. This number decreases to 34% (and below) when residents live 10 miles or more from a library¹⁶.

Area	Avg. miles to library
West (region)	1.9
Oregon	2.1

Table 5 Shows average distance to public libraries from households in the Western United States and Oregon.

A later national study evaluates regional differences in the average distances from households to public libraries. After dividing the country into four large regions, average distances were calculated by region and state¹⁷. In the context of Lincoln County, distances between libraries and distances to the nearest public library from remote areas of the county will dictate potential opportunities for service expansion.

In performing a similar—though much simpler—analysis, the populated areas marked in *Figure 4* were used to track the library-library and area-library distances within the county. Since only LCLD libraries were included,

Region	ZIP Code	Count
Alsea	97324	13
Blodgett	97326	47
Depoe Bay	97341	1529
Eddyville	97343	180
Logsden	97357	109
Neotsu	97364	507
Newport	97365	1115
South Beach	97366	752
Lincoln City	97367	1098
Otis	97368	1560
Otter Rock	97369	156
Rose Lodge	97372	2
Seal Rock	97376	813
Siletz	97380	715
Gleneden Beach	97388	568
Toledo	97391	1383
Waldport	97394	2421
Tidewater	97390	214
Yachats	97498	467

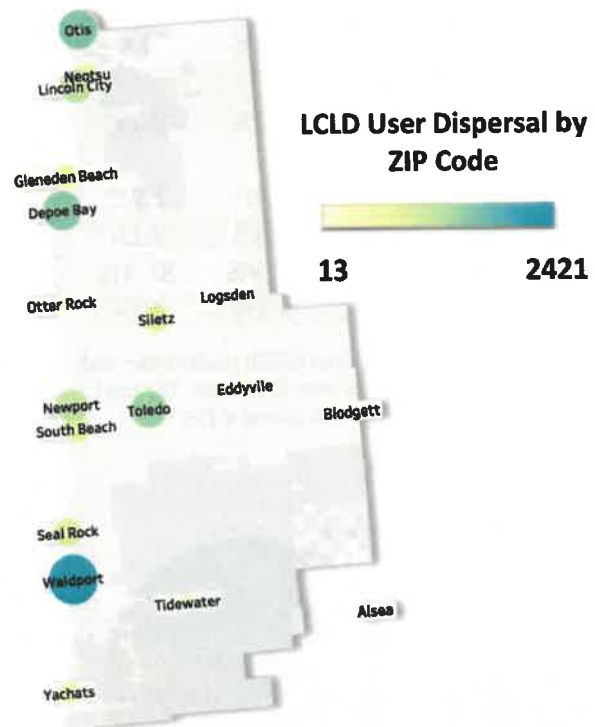


Table 6 Shows library users with the LCLD patron type, indicating residence within unincorporated areas of the county. Counts (total number of registered LCLD patrons) are given by ZIP Code. The presence of Newport, Toledo, and Lincoln City addresses may be attributed to the use of post office boxes by rural residences or staff error selecting patron type when creating patron account.

academic libraries and Yachats Public Library were not part of the calculation. This analysis yields an average distance of 10.35 miles from populated areas to a public library within the LCLD district¹⁸.

This figure is much higher than the Oregon average taken from the U.S. Department of Education study. An analysis of the home ZIP codes of LCLD library users (shown in Table 5) indicates that distance is a barrier to library use in Lincoln County, as well.

LCLD Libraries

This section describes the residents of Lincoln County who currently use its libraries. Each branch represents a different community with various geographies, demographics, services, and collections. Unless otherwise noted, patrons included in this portion in the profile are LCLD patrons living outside the county's incorporated areas. Service area populations and registered patron totals are taken from the 2018-2019 Oregon Public Library Statistical Report. Newport Public Library's registered patron total is updated to exclude patron accounts that had expired before April 2020.

As a rule, libraries are very careful to limit the amount of patron personal information that is gathered and preserved. "Data for data's sake" can be a dangerous philosophy with potentially serious implications for library users. The recent cyber-attack perpetrated against Tillamook County illustrates this risk. Additionally, data collection related to identifiable information or circulation history impedes vital efforts to guarantee the intellectual freedom and privacy of library users.

It is necessary to collect some user information in order to establish patron identity and provide services. Home or mailing address, birthdate, and total counts of registered patrons are the only datapoints used in this profile. No other information is necessary for the delivery of library services. In fact, birthdate is not a required field in patron accounts at Lincoln City's Driftwood library, further limiting the amount of personally identifiable data in the system. Ages analysis can be helpful when designing programs and developing collections. Low usage rates by an age group may reflect a lack of appropriate programs or library materials. Maps and charts depicting the information discussed below can be viewed online^{19,20,21}.

Siletz Public Library (SPL) is the most recently constructed library in the District. It was built to serve the rural communities of the central county to the north Toledo. The City of Siletz has one of the lowest median ages in the county (43 years). Similarly, the library has the youngest dominant age range of all the LCLD branches—10 to 20 years old. SPL's service area has a population of 3,007. Out of 2,350 registered patrons (78% of the service population), 26% are LCLD patrons. These patrons live in each region of the county but mostly occupy the areas around Siletz, Logsden, and Toledo.

Toledo Public Library (TPL) has a service area population of 5,725. 50 % of this service area hold a Toledo library card. Like Siletz, Toledo has one of the lowest median ages in the county (43 years). Though the dominant age range for library users is 60-70 years, the next highest range is from 10-20 years. The combined total of these two ranges is aligned with Toledo's overall age demographic. Among TPL's LCLD patrons, there is representation from most of the south county. The majority of TPL's LCLD patrons live in the Toledo, Newport, and Eddyville areas. The high volume of Newport area patrons can be attributed to a reciprocal agreement between Toledo and Newport libraries not to charge city residents for library cards but to designate them LCLD patrons instead.

Waldport Public Library (WPL) serves a population of 5,658. 85% of this population hold a library card. Despite having their own municipal library, this service area pays the LCLD tax levy. As seen in *Table 1*, Waldport returned the second highest approval rate for the 5-year levy extension. This, coupled with high library usage, paints a picture of strong public library support in the area. Waldport's median age is 58 and its LCLD patrons' dominant age range is 65-75. Unlike Siletz and Toledo libraries, WPL does not have a parallel spike in young LCLD users. This indicates that Waldport's younger population lives mostly inside the city limits. The majority of WPL's LCLD users live close to Waldport. Other large populations of LCLD users live in Seal Rock, Tidewater, and Yachats.

Newport Public Library (NPL) serves a population of 18,021. Based on the calculated patron total, 86% of NPL's service area have library cards. Of these, 28% are LCLD patrons. The highest volume of NPL LCLD patrons live in Waldport, but there are sizable numbers in Seal Rock, Depoe Bay, Toledo, and Siletz. Newport has a relatively low median age of 45 years. Among LCLD patrons, the dominant age range is 65-75 years. This leading age range aligns with a high rate of Waldport users.

NPL is a significant outlier within the Public Library Statistical Report and has been for a number of years. NPL claims a number of registered patrons that is almost equal with its service population. This draws the accuracy of these numbers into question. Therefore, this profile offers an alternative. If the calculation described at the top of this section is altered to exclude all expired accounts as of April 2020, the total percentage of registered NPL patrons drops from 86% to 39% and the LCLD patron percentage changes from 28% to 30%. Regardless of the actual number of registered patrons, the percentage of LCLD patrons remains fairly constant.

Driftwood Public Library (DPL) in Lincoln City has a service population of 15,055. 43% of the population are library users. Of these users, 53% are LCLD patrons. DPL does not collect birthdates to identify their patrons, so no age analysis is available for this location. DPL's LCLD patrons are largely located in the area surrounding Lincoln City, Otis, and Depoe Bay. Very few LCLD patrons live in other areas including Siletz and Logsdon. This may be due to the way the LCLD designation is applied to DPL patrons (lack of reciprocal agreements used by NPL and TPL), the use of P.O. boxes, or limited road infrastructure between central county and Lincoln City.

Feedback Campaign

Goals

The goal of this endeavor is two-fold. Feedback collection will allow the District and local libraries to better serve their users. Increased interaction with community members will spread awareness of the existence of the District and its purpose. Awareness of the District will bolster library consciousness in general.

Marketing

A feedback campaign creates various opportunities to interact with current and potential library users. By initiating a marketing campaign just before or concurrent to feedback collection, the District can easily meet its awareness goal. Though they positively affect each and every library patron regardless of LCLD designation, District services are performed out of sight and are largely unknown to users. As a result, points of contact between the District and the public are limited.

However, the courier service can be leveraged to distribute information and contribute to District promotion. The courier shifts hundreds of library materials between LCLD libraries each week. For a limited amount of time, paper inserts placed in items transported by the courier can be used to thank users and share

information. *Figure 10* presents an example of what information a courier insert may contain. A link to the feedback survey, the District website, and a statement of LCLD's purpose are some basic details to include. Placing inserts in courier items will temporarily divert staff time and require buy-in from local libraries.



Figure 9 Courier insert example.

Another way the courier can draw more attention to the District is through the courier vehicle itself in the tradition of library outreach vehicles. The District owns a large, white panel van that displays the District name and generic library symbol. Wrapping the van with more dynamic LCLD branding and an exciting message is a passive way to increase District presence across the county.

Additional marketing that specifically addresses the feedback campaign including survey questions, tabling locations, and incentives can be communicated through various local platforms.



Figure 10 Example of colorful LCLD van.

Local Radio Programs

Lincoln County Connections

Hot Topics

Newport Today

KYAQ

Online Locations

LCLD Website

Public Library Websites

Social Media

Local Online Newspapers

Beachconnection.net

Newslincolncounty.com

Oregoncoastdailynews.com

Yachatsnews.com

State and Local Print

Newport News-Times—Newport

News Guard—Lincoln City

Oregon State Grange

Ruralite

It is important that marketing and feedback collection materials be offered in Spanish. Additionally, there is an opportunity to partner with Oregon State University's Extension Services to record a bilingual statement. KYAQ's Sunday Spanish language segment is the ideal platform for this statement. A partnership with Centro de Ayuda in Newport will allow the District to expand its respondent pool and incorporate the needs of the Spanish-speaking community into local library services.

Financial Impact

Staff time is the most significant investment of this feedback campaign. The campaign can be scaled up or down based on initial response rate or financial limitations. Costs associated with printing, advertising, and postage will vary based on survey modality and how robust the marketing campaign becomes. If the District decides to include an incentive to support higher response rates, this can also be done fairly inexpensively. A well-promoted raffle can ignite interest and free candy can draw respondents to an even table.

Feedback Modes

Community feedback collection is driven by surveys and a survey will be the main data collection method for this campaign. There are some aspects of feedback collection for which surveys are not optimized. Ideally, a few feedback methods are used concurrently. Some methods, like a survey, are passive and some are engaging, establishing relationships between District staff and community members. In order to simplify this process, the campaign will encompass the entire county and embrace responses from residents of both incorporated and unincorporated areas. However, residents of unincorporated areas should make up the majority of the sample. The target sample size for a county-wide feedback campaign is at least 379 respondents.

Survey

While guidance pertaining to library services is a main outcome, best practices outline the use of general language when phrasing questions. This allows respondents to consider the questions as they relate to their whole lives and not feel limited when completing the survey. A short length of 7-10 questions supports a high response rate and reduces analysis time.

Online

This modality is low cost, supports wide distribution, and streamlines response analysis. In addition to linking to the survey from the District website and social media, cooperation with LCLD libraries will boost responses and diversify respondents. External partnerships will extend the survey's reach. The Lincoln County School District can help the campaign reach children and their families. Local institutions and agencies that provide access to public computers like Oregon Coast Community College and WorkSource Oregon can link to surveys from their landing pages.

Paper

Since portions of the county have no access to a computer or the internet, a paper survey is necessary in order to reach the most diverse group of respondents. City libraries are friendly locations for passive survey responses, though samples from these locations will be limited to current library users.

In addition to dispensing surveys at city services like laundromats and food pantries, rural businesses are an option to provide paper surveys and a drop box for completed forms. Bless Your Heart Café and Bakery in Burnt Woods, Rose Lodge Market, and several mobile home parks are all located in unincorporated areas of the county. Utilizing popular boat launches, RV parks, and recreation areas as distribution locations allows the District to meet rural non-library users where they are, especially in the summer months.

A mailed survey is especially important for non-library users who are homebound or otherwise difficult to reach. Addresses can be obtained from the Lincoln County Assessor's Office for residences that fall in the LCLD service area. These addresses can be easily cross-referenced against a list of predefined criteria—like low internet connectivity—in order to reach residences that may not discover the survey on their own.

In-person Events

Summer in Lincoln County offers a variety of weekly, annual, and monthly events. Many are free and attract visitors from unincorporated areas of the county. In-person events are an opportunity to provide passive and engaging feedback collection at the same time. Depending on the event, staff may decide to focus on collecting responses to a single question, like "Describe your ideal community," and provide means to answer the question in an interactive way. Sticky notes on a poster-board or colorful pens on butcher paper are popular ways to achieve this.

Conversations with community members can take place inside and outside of the library to collect anecdotal representations of the challenges patrons face to reach the library and navigate information in their daily lives. In many ways this the most meaningful approach to understanding how local libraries can best serve their rural communities.

When in-person events are scheduled, these venues will be ideal for reaching rural residents.

- Yachats Commons
- Siletz Valley Grange
- Salmon River Grange

Questions

1. **What do you like most about where you live?**
2. **Describe your ideal community.**
3. **How is this ideal community different from where you live now?**
4. **What is a significant challenge in your life?**
5. **What would improve your chances of overcoming this challenge?**
6. **Is there a particular subject or skill you would like to learn?**
7. **Do you live in an unincorporated area of Lincoln County?**
8. **If yes, where do you call home? Ex. Depoe Bay, Rose Lodge, Elk City, Seal Rock, Logsden, etc.**

Focus Groups

Enlisting the help of existing advisory and community groups will provide deeper, more nuanced feedback. Some potential groups to partner with are: Friends groups and volunteers from District libraries, Lincoln County School District staff and students, library staff, local chambers of commerce, and local service groups.

Timeline

Due to increased demand on staff, feedback collection time should be limited to four weeks. Late spring to early summer is the ideal time to begin collecting feedback. Summer Reading season is a busy time for staff, but it draws large numbers of respondents to libraries and public spaces in general. Here on the coast, there are events just about every weekend that draw people from all areas of the county.

The image shows a screenshot of an online survey titled "Lincoln County Library District Community Feedback Survey 2021". The header features the Lincoln County Library District logo, which includes a lighthouse and the text "LINCOLN COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT". Below the title, there is a sub-header: "Take a few minutes to answer some questions about your Lincoln County community. We appreciate your feedback!". The survey consists of several sections with questions and text input fields for answers. The questions are: "What do you like most about where you live?", "Describe your ideal community.", "How is this ideal community different from where you live now?", "What is a significant challenge in your life?", "What would improve your chances of overcoming this challenge?", "Is there a particular subject or skill you would like to learn?", "Do you live in an unincorporated area of Lincoln County?", and "If yes, where do you call home? Ex. Depoe Bay, Rose Lodge, Elk City, Seal Rock, Tidewater, Logsdon, etc.". Each question is followed by a "Your answer" text input field. The survey is presented in a clean, modern layout with a light blue and white color scheme.

Figure 11 Online surveys streamline response and analysis but are not universally accessible. The paper version will have the same questions.

References

- ¹Lincoln County Clerk. (2019). Official abstracts of votes for the November 5, 2019 special election.
- ²Taglang, Kevin. (2020). Congress tells FCC to fix broadband maps now. *Benton Institute for Broadband & Society's Weekly Digest*. Retrieved from
- ³Kahan, John. (2019). It's time for a new approach for mapping broadband data to better serve Americans. *Microsoft on the Issues*. Retrieved from <https://blogs.microsoft.com/on-the->

issues/2019/04/08/its-time-for-a-new-approach-for-mapping-broadband-data-to-better-serve-americans

⁴ORS 477.001 (2019)

⁵U.S. Department of the Interior. (2019). *Fiscal year 2019 payments in lieu of taxes national summary*. Retrieved from https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/uploads/2019_national_summary_pilt_0.pdf

⁶Lincoln County Board of Commissioners. *Lincoln County, Oregon fiscal year 2019-2020*. Retrieved from https://www.co.lincoln.or.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/finance_amp_accounting/page/511/2019-20_adopted_budget.pdf

⁷Husing, Onno. (2014). Ten year update on Lincoln County, Oregon's economy. Retrieved from https://www.co.lincoln.or.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/planning_amp_development/page/3815/introduction_to_economic_study_august_2014.pdf

⁸U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). American Community Survey 5-Year estimates, 2014-2018. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/news/updates/2019.html>

⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁰*Ibid.*

¹¹*Ibid.*

¹²Portland State University (2019). College of Urban & Public Affairs: Population Research Center, Population Estimates and Reports. Retrieved from <https://www.pdx.edu/prc/population-reports-estimates>

¹³U.S. Census Bureau (n8).

¹⁴*Ibid*

¹⁵Oregon Department of Education. (2019). *Student membership report, school year 2019-2020*. Retrieved from <https://www.oregon.gov/ode/reports-and-data/students/Pages/Student-Enrollment-Reports.aspx>

¹⁶Glander, M., T. Dam, A. Chute. (2007). *Households' use of public and other types of libraries*. (NCES 2007-327). Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2007327>

¹⁷Donnelly, Francis P. (2015). Regional variations in average distance to public libraries in the United States. *Library & Information Science Research*, 37(4), 280-289.

¹⁸View Distance to Library Map: <https://tinyurl.com/LCLD-distance>

¹⁹View LCLD Age by Library Visualization: <https://tinyurl.com/siletz-age>

²⁰View Patron Distribution Maps: <https://tinyurl.com/LCLD-patrons>

²¹View Community Profile Maps: <https://tinyurl.com/lcld-community-profile>



Strategic Plan 2021-2024

Lincoln County Library District Strategic Plan 2021-2024

Vision: We envision collaborative and innovative library services that connect all the residents of Lincoln County.

Mission: The Lincoln County Library District provides leadership to assure equitable service and materials for the libraries and residents of the District.

Focus Area Priority #1 District As Connector

Goal #1 District residents will have improved access to library materials delivered to their local libraries.

Objectives:

1. The District will have a new courier van in service by June 30, 2021

Activities:

- a. Work with ORCPP for best deal.
- b. Order van
- c. Brand the van

2. A funding formula and intergovernmental agreements between LCLD and the cities will be in place by January 2023.

Activities:

- a. Create timeline
- b. Review possible funding formulas by March 31, 2021
- c. Create projections using possible funding formulas by May 31, 2021
- d. Present to library staff and city staff by September 30, 2021
- e. Adopt a formula and send estimates by December 31, 2021
- f. Intergovernmental Agreements with cities signed by June 30, 2022
- g. Reimbursements under new formula begin in December 2022

3. A shared integrated library system (ILS) for the District will be available to residents by June 30, 2024.

Activities:

- a. Write Library Services and Technology Act(LSTA) grant for ILS feasibility study
- b. Contract with consultant for ILS feasibility study
- c. Review findings of study
- d. Decide on best option and pursue
- e. Migrate and operationalize system.

4. LCLD will conduct a needs assessment with Lincoln County library staff to determine training needs by June 2022.

Activities:

- a. Review State Library of Oregon continuing education needs assessment as basis for LCLD needs assessment.

5. Ongoing discussions, based on the November 2020 Operations, Governance and Facilities Needs Assessment, will take place with the Library Commission of the City of Yachats through June 2023.

Activities:

- a. Make the District available for discussions with the Library Commission as requested.

Focus Area Priority #2 Marketing

Goal #1:

1. Lincoln County residents and policy makers will have a better awareness of library services available through the Lincoln County Library District and partner libraries.

Objectives:

1. Website usage will increase by 10% by December 31, 2021
2. LCLD will have a recognizable brand on all District materials and services.

Activities:

- a. Graphic designer will be retained to finalize logo, select colors & fonts, create templates for letterhead, business cards and other branded materials, and create a consistent style guide.

- b. Signage for courier van and office will be created and placed.
- c. Business cards will be created for District staff and Board members.

Focus Area Priority #3 Lifelong Learning

Goal #1 District residents will have access to county-wide library programs that foster lifelong learning

Objectives:

1. District residents will have the opportunity to participate in an “everyone reads” program in partnership with city libraries by June 2021.

Activities:

- a. Serve as fiscal agent for author program
- b. Coordinate publicity between libraries

2. LCLD will work with partner libraries to provide summer reading program for the children in Lincoln County by June 2021.

Activities:

- a. Coordinate planning cooperative summer activities with partner libraries
- b. Use funding from State Library of Oregon Ready to Read Grant for programming at all libraries.

3. LCLD will conduct a needs assessment with Lincoln County residents and libraries to determine the most effective approach to fostering lifelong learning June 2022.

Activities:

- a. Create and deploy community survey.
- b. Create programming based on survey results.

LINCOLN COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT CONTRACT

This Contract is made and entered into this 5th day of August, 2004, by and between **LINCOLN COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT**, hereinafter "District," and the **CITY OF NEWPORT, CITY OF LINCOLN CITY, CITY OF TOLEDO**, and the **CITY OF WALDPOR**, hereinafter "Cities."

WHEREAS the District has determined that county-wide cooperative Library Service is in the public interest and finds that such service can be provided economically and effectively through contracting for that service with an established public library; and

WHEREAS the parties understand that it is the desire of the District to ensure a "maintenance of effort" by the Cities with monies provided under this contract so as not to reduce base operating expenditures for each City's public library with the funds provided under this contract while, conversely, it is the parties' understanding that the Cities desire to maintain their autonomy in making decisions under the local budget law concerning resource allocations for library services; and

WHEREAS the parties to this agreement are capable of providing and are willing to provide library services to Lincoln County Library District residents on a non-fee basis, and

WHEREAS, District reimbursement to the Cities for their services under this agreement should be based on the amount of service they provide to District residents;

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority provided in Chapter 357 of the Oregon Revised Statutes, it is mutually agreed as follows:

1. **Provision of Library Services.** Each City shall provide library services on a non-fee access basis to any resident of the Lincoln County Library District. District residents shall be entitled to those library services within a City's boundaries to which the City's residents are entitled by virtue of having a library card. This does not preclude the charging of fees for special services including, but not limited to, interlibrary loan, photocopying, or other services on an equal basis with fees charged to Cities' residents.

2. **Level of Library Services; Deficiency Procedure.**

A. Each city shall maintain services and facilities meeting or exceeding the Oregon Library Association's Standards for Oregon Public Libraries, current version, except in times of a declared City fiscal emergency. Those standards are identified in Exhibit "A," attached hereto and incorporated herein. If a City fails to maintain this level of services and facilities due to a declared City fiscal emergency, the City shall correct the deficiency as soon as the City has declared the fiscal emergency over.

B. If the District believes that a City's services and/or facilities fall below the standards set out in Exhibit "A" during a time when there is not a declared City fiscal emergency or that the City's declaration of a fiscal emergency was not in good faith, then the District may initiate the following procedure:

(i) The District shall notify the City in writing of the alleged deficiency or lack of good faith, including stating in detail the District's basis for the District's allegations and providing any evidence the District has in support of the allegations.

(ii) Following such notice, there shall be a joint open hearing conducted by the District Board and the City Council of the City. The hearing shall be held on a date set by mutual agreement of the District Board and the City Council and at a place designated by the City Council. At the hearing, the City shall have a full opportunity to present such evidence as it deems appropriate in response to the allegations of the District.

(iii) At the close of the hearing, the District Board shall deliberate and make a final determination on whether the City's services and/or facilities fall below the required standards or on whether the City's declaration of a fiscal emergency was not in good faith. If the District Board makes a final determination of a deficiency for either reason, then the determination shall include specific changes in services and/or facilities the City can make to correct the deficiency.

(iv) The District Board thereafter shall put its final determination in writing, including specific findings of fact and conclusions supporting its determination and the specific changes in services and/or facilities the City can make to correct the deficiency, and shall deliver a copy of the written final determination to the City.

(v) If the deficiency is not corrected within thirty days after receipt of the final written determination, the agreement may be terminated by the District as to such City, by written notice of termination from the District to the City specifying the date of termination.

3. Reimbursement to Cities for Library Services. District shall reimburse Cities for services under this contract from a reimbursement fund which shall be created and maintained by District. District shall deposit into the reimbursement fund a minimum of seventy percent (70%) of the District's revenues. District revenue means taxes, forestry receipts, and uncollected taxes from previous years, except that this definition shall not apply to revenues from grants, donations, and bequests the specific terms of which require the use of revenues for other purposes. In addition, the District shall annually appropriate another ten percent (10%) of the District's revenue for direct services to the Cities' libraries. These direct services may include, but are not limited to, courier and OCLC services.

The District shall deposit the required portion of revenues into the reimbursement fund as received. The District shall make payments to Cities from the reimbursement fund as follows, in accord with the distribution formula set out in paragraph 4 of this agreement:

A. Subject to the receipt of tax revenues, one-half will be provided to the Cities no later than December 15 of each year.

B. Thereafter, the District shall make payments to Cities from monies in the reimbursement fund monthly, as received.

C. Each City shall submit a report to District describing how its library meets or exceeds the standards set under this agreement in Exhibit "A." Each library shall measure its library services and facilities against each standard to demonstrate it fulfills its contractual obligations. Measurements shall be made from the most current available data supplemented by any alterations in facilities or services existing at the time of the report. The report shall be provided to District on or shortly after November 15 of each year. Receipt of the report is a prerequisite to receiving reimbursement payments under this paragraph. Cities agree to allow District staff and representatives access to City records, if requested, to audit and confirm this information.

4. District Formula. The distribution of monies in the reimbursement fund to Cities under paragraph 3 of this agreement shall be based on the following formula, calculated as of October 31 of each year, with the "Siletz" share being retained by District for use as it deems appropriate.

A. Sixty-five per cent (65%) of the monies shall be distributed in proportion to each City's library's District circulation during preceding Fiscal Year as compared to the total of the Cities' libraries' District circulation during the preceding Fiscal year. Circulation shall be determined in accord with reporting requirements agreed to by the Cities; and

B. Thirty-five per cent (35%) of the monies shall be distributed in proportion to each City's library's operation costs as set out in the latest available Statistics of Oregon Libraries as collected and published by the Oregon State Library.

5. **Direct Services.** From time to time, on the mutual written agreement of the City Managers of all of the Cities and of the District Librarian, the District may, from monies in the reimbursement fund, provide certain direct services as defined in the agreement, rather than Cities individually providing the services. In the event of such an agreement, the agreed cost of the shared services shall be withdrawn by the District from the reimbursement fund, for use by the District to provide the shared services, and the balance of the reimbursement fund shall be distributed to the Cities in accord with the distribution formula set out in this paragraph.

6. **Annual Reporting.** Cities and District shall complete and file with the Oregon State Library an annual report in accordance with ORS 357.520.

7. **Term of Agreement.** This agreement shall automatically renew annually unless District or Cities or any individual City shall give notice to all other parties in writing not later than March 1 of its intent not to renew the agreement beginning the next July 1.

8. **Termination.** Any City may terminate its participation in this agreement upon thirty (30) days written notice to the District. District may terminate its participation with any City in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 2 of this agreement.

9. **Payments On and After Termination.** In the event of any termination during a fiscal year, the amount of compensation to be paid to the City under this agreement shall be prorated for the fiscal year based upon the date of termination. Thereafter, the funds allocated to such terminated City shall be allocated to the remaining participating Cities on the pro rata basis set out in paragraph 4 as increased reimbursement for services provided to District residents.

10. **Annual Review.** District shall annually review this agreement, including but not limited to the formula in paragraph 4 above, to determine if any changes are warranted. Input from the Cities will be solicited. Notice of the review and any proposed changes will be provided to the Cities by January 15 for the next fiscal year. Comments shall be received through March 1. The District Board will conduct the review at a meeting in April. Any modifications to the agreement shall be made in writing and executed by the parties in the same manner as provided for in paragraph 10 below.

11. **Execution in Counterparts.** This agreement may be executed in several counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original and all of which shall constitute but one and the same instrument.

LINCOLN COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT


PRESIDENT

CITY OF NEWPORT


CITY MANAGER

CITY OF LINCOLN CITY

CITY MANAGER

CITY OF TOLEDO

CITY MANAGER

CITY OF WALDPOR'T

CITY MANAGER

K:\Library District\Final Draft Contract 8.4.04.doc

Reimbursement for 2020/2021

Libraries	Operating Expenditures 2018/2019	Percent		Circulation 2018/2019	Percent
Driftwood	\$949,680.00	38.392%		51,496	21.7%
Newport	\$988,444.00	39.960%		98,918	41.7%
Toledo	\$263,256.00	10.643%		19,451	8.2%
Waldport	\$272,231.00	11.005%		67,500	28.4%
Total	\$2,473,611.00	100.000%		237,365	100.0%

Revenue 2018/2019

	Budgeted	Actual	Difference
Tax Revenue 2018/2019*	\$ 1,276,772.00	\$ 1,308,287.16	\$31,515.16
Previously Levied Taxes*	\$ 40,000.00	\$44,923.83	\$4,923.83
State Forestry*	\$ 5,000.00	\$16,511.00	\$11,511.00
Total	\$1,321,772.00	\$1,369,721.99	\$47,949.99

Possible Revenue for 2020/2021

(Anticipating amount of taxes that won't be received in 2020-2021)

	-6%	-5%	-4%
Tax Revenue Projected \$1,392,029.09	\$ 1,308,507.26	\$ 1,322,427.55	\$ 1,336,347.84
Previously Levied Taxes	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 40,000.00
State Forestry	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
Subtotal	\$ 1,358,507.26	\$ 1,372,427.55	\$ 1,386,347.84
LCLD = 20%	\$ 271,701.45	\$ 274,485.51	\$ 277,269.57
Direct Services = 10%	\$ 135,850.73	\$ 137,242.76	\$ 138,634.78
Siletz	\$ 76,100.00	\$ 76,100.00	\$ 76,100.00
Subtotal	\$ 483,652.18	\$ 487,828.27	\$ 492,004.35
Total Available for Reimbursement	\$ 874,855.08	\$ 884,599.29	\$ 894,343.49
Total Reimbursement for 2019/2020 (includes Siletz)	\$ 950,955.08	\$ 960,699.29	\$ 970,443.49

2020/2021 Reimbursement

Proposed Funding 2020/2021
\$ 874,855

Operating Expenditures		Op. Ex 2018/2019	Percentage	Total
\$ 0				
\$ 306,199	Driftwood	\$ 949,680	38.392%	\$ 117,557
	Newport	\$ 988,444	39.960%	\$ 122,356
	Toledo	\$ 263,256	10.643%	\$ 32,587
	Waldport	\$ 272,231	11.005%	\$ 33,698
	Total	\$ 2,473,611	100.000%	\$ 306,199

Circulation		Circ.2018/2019	Percentage	Total
\$ 1				
\$ 568,656	Driftwood	\$ 51,496	21.7%	\$ 123,369
	Newport	\$ 134,140	41.7%	\$ 236,978
	Toledo	\$ 19,451	8.2%	\$ 46,599
	Waldport	\$ 67,500	28.4%	\$ 161,710
	Total	\$ 272,587	100.0%	\$ 568,656

Total Reimbursement		Op. Ex.	Circ.	Total
2020/2021				
At 35% & 65%	Driftwood	\$ 117,557	\$ 123,369.06	\$ 240,926
	Newport	\$ 122,356	\$ 236,978.03	\$ 359,334
	Toledo	\$ 32,587	\$ 46,598.80	\$ 79,186
	Waldport	\$ 33,698	\$ 161,709.87	\$ 195,408
	Total	\$ 306,199	\$ 568,655.75	\$ 874,855

ALA American Library Association

2021

STATE OF AMERICA'S LIBRARIES

SPECIAL REPORT: COVID-19



EDITOR'S NOTE

Nothing about 2020 was business as usual in any part of American society, and libraries and their workers, users, and services were all deeply impacted by the pandemic. In reflecting on the year, the only way to tell the stories of America's libraries is through the lens of the challenges and opportunities presented by COVID-19.

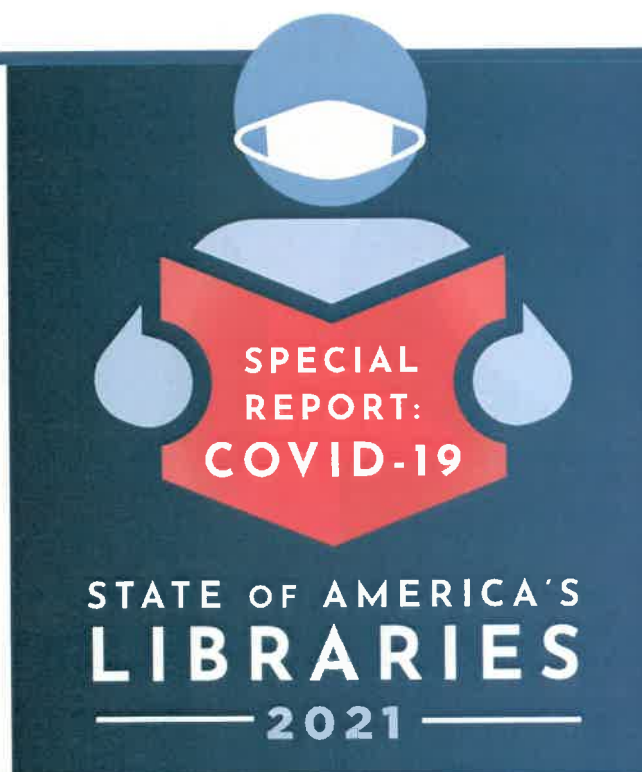
Every year, *The State of America's Libraries* report aims to present a complete picture of the activities and trends in libraries of all kinds during the previous calendar year. This year, we are taking a different approach. Rather than a broad focus, we have narrowed our scope, and the result, we hope, provides library users a more nuanced understanding of the impact of COVID-19 on libraries in their schools, communities, and campuses and offers library workers, and everyone associated with the profession, some insight into best practices during an extraordinary and challenging year.

Although there are statistics and figures in this report, our primary goal was to spotlight the resilience, determination, and innovations of library workers in unprecedented circumstances. These human stories, ultimately, can tell us more than numbers ever could.

Writing a report about the impact of the pandemic on libraries while we are still in the thick of it is a bit like flying a plane while still building it. We know that we cannot possibly capture everything that happened in 2020. Our hope, instead, is to provide a snapshot of a moment in time that might encourage conversation, reflection, and ultimately, action. While historical in nature, this report is also about change and perseverance. We hope it will inspire appreciation for the essential role that libraries play in our world and persuade you to take steps to help them thrive.

Stephanie Hlywak

Director, Communications and Marketing Office
American Library Association



CONTENTS

- 4** Introduction
- 6** Top 10 Most Challenged Books of 2020
- 8** Library Use and Access
- 10** Federal Funding and Legislation
- 12** Wi-Fi and Broadband Access
- 14** Advocacy in Action
- 15** Library Programs
- 17** How We Read in 2020
- 19** Learning in the Age of Coronavirus
- 21** Confronting Structural Inequities Impacting Communities of Color
- 24** Fighting Disinformation

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report would not be possible without the support and contributions of the staff and members of the following American Library Association (ALA) divisions and offices:

- ALA Editions
- American Association of School Librarians
- Association for Library Service to Children
- Association of College and Research Libraries
- Chapter Relations Office
- Communications and Marketing Office
- Core: Leadership, Infrastructure, Futures
- International Relations Office
- Library and Information Resource Center
- Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services
- Office for Human Resource Development and Recruitment
- Office for Intellectual Freedom
- Office of ALA Governance
- Public Library Association
- Public Policy and Advocacy Office
- Public Programs Office
- Reference and User Services Association
- United for Libraries
- Young Adult Library Services Association

PRODUCTION TEAM

Author: Steve Zalusky, Communications and Marketing Specialist, Communications and Marketing Office, ALA

Content editor: Stephanie Hlywak, Director, Communications and Marketing Office, ALA

Project coordinator: Macey Morales, Deputy Director, Communications and Marketing Office, ALA

Design: ALA Production Services

ABOUT ALA

American Library Association (ALA) is the foremost national organization providing resources to inspire library and information professionals to transform their communities through essential programs and services. For more than 140 years, ALA has been the trusted voice of libraries, advocating for the profession and the library's role in enhancing learning and ensuring access to information for all. For more information, visit ala.org.

PRESS CONTACT

Reporters should contact:

Macey Morales

Deputy Director, Communications and Marketing Office

American Library Association

mmorales@ala.org

HOW TO CITE THIS REPORT

American Library Association. The State of America's Libraries 2021: A Report from the American Library Association. Steve Zalusky. <https://bit.ly/soal-report-2021>.

INTRODUCTION

LIBRARIES SERVE AS “FIRST RESTORERS”

Julius C. Jefferson, Jr., ALA President

In 2020, libraries of all types stepped up to meet the needs of their communities as they responded to the impacts of COVID-19, a national financial crisis, and social unrest. They were at the center of some of our nation's most consequential work, including supporting accurate counts in the US Census, fighting political disinformation, and facilitating free and fair elections.

Libraries also extended necessary lifelines to community members facing job losses, healthcare crises, and remote work and learning during an unprecedented and uncertain time. As we assess the state of America's libraries, we find 2020 was a year when library professionals answered the call to serve amid multiple emergencies and a year when library workers again proved to be essential “first restorers” or “second responders.”

It also proved to be a year of opportunity, as libraries kept Americans connected in ways that brought our communities closer. Buildings may not have been open, but libraries were never closed.

I was lucky enough to see this work in action myself when I embarked on a national virtual tour meant to understand the needs of libraries on the ground. What I saw was awe-inspiring, even for someone like me who has spent decades in the profession.



Libraries kept Americans connected in ways that brought our communities closer. Buildings may not have been open, but libraries were never closed.

At the Cambria County (PA) Library in Johnstown, for instance, workforce development programs, services, and local partnerships supported patrons with finding jobs and building careers. At the time of my visit with them, the state's unemployment rate was 16 percent, and the library's career center was essential for residents seeking economic advancement, digital literacy, and professional certifications.

Rural communities across the country faced and continue to confront tall hurdles to connect residents often scattered over large geographic areas. In Zanesville, Ohio, the Muskingum County Library's parking lot was filled most days with families, jobseekers,

telecommuters, and students taking advantage of free Wi-Fi to participate in Zoom meetings, distance learning, job interviews, and telemedicine appointments.

From the Midwest to the Southwest (and everywhere in between), people who didn't have access to reliable, affordable broadband internet found themselves on the wrong side of the digital divide. In 2018, the Federal Communications Commission estimated that more than one in three residents living on tribal land lack access to broadband. During the pandemic, rural New Mexicans used the Jemez Pueblo Community Library's parking lot to access Wi-Fi, and librarians there helped community members with



Libraries Transform graphic.



Jemez Pueblo Community Library.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JEMEZ PUEBLO COMMUNITY LIBRARY.

unemployment and stimulus forms and even auto license renewals.

Social justice is an issue that is close to my heart, and as the nation faced a racial reckoning, the work of our libraries as centers for engagement and community dialogue came into sharper focus. The John Brown Watson Memorial Library at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, a historically Black university, takes its role in preserving history that is not always visible in white institutions very seriously. In Oakland, California, community programming like the Father Circle, a non-judgmental family setting where fathers can share their feelings, and bike repair workshops that resist gentrification and support youth entrepreneurship are just two examples of the countless ways libraries demonstrate their commitment to diversity and community empowerment.

Of course, we can't speak of the past year without acknowledging the significant role of school librarians in supporting their community's remote learning needs.

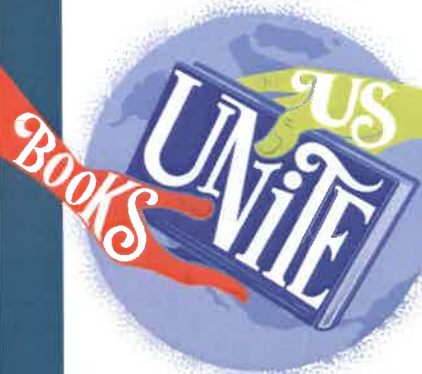
In Texas, I met creative and innovative librarians like those at Castleberry Independent School District's Grab & Go Library, who provided families with activity packs so they could create and learn at home, and at Dallas's Franklin Middle School, who distributed laptops to students when in-person learning was cut short by lockdown orders.

In Hawaii, school librarians had to be flexible long before coronavirus made remote learning the default for students across the country. School librarians at Kamehameha Schools told me students are offered three modalities of learning—traditional in-class instruction, distance learning, and a blend of both—because some of the students travel as far as sixty-eight miles just to get to school.

As we move into the future, I realize that last year was not the first time librarians and library workers have been challenged. Yet libraries are still standing. Read on for more about how these fundamental institutions are serving our communities during a most unusual time. And I hope you'll join me in advocating for their success. ▸

FOR MORE ON HOW STRONG LIBRARIES—and a well-supported library workforce—are essential to the recovery of communities devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic, check out resources developed and updated by units across the American Library Association designed to help communities, library workers, and library supporters plot the best course forward for their libraries. See ala.org/tools/covid-19-recovery.





CENSORSHIP BY THE NUMBERS

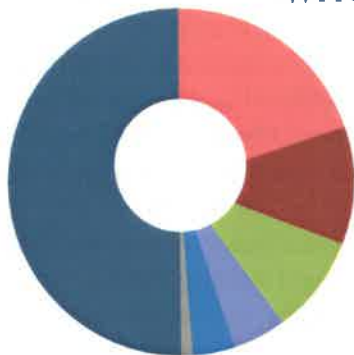
Books unite us. They reach across boundaries and build connections between readers. Censorship, on the other hand, divides us and creates barriers. In 2020, 273 books were affected by censorship attempts. [Learn more at ala.org/bbooks](https://ala.org/bbooks).

REASONS FOR CHALLENGES



Each word and phrase in this graphic is cited from 2020 censorship reports

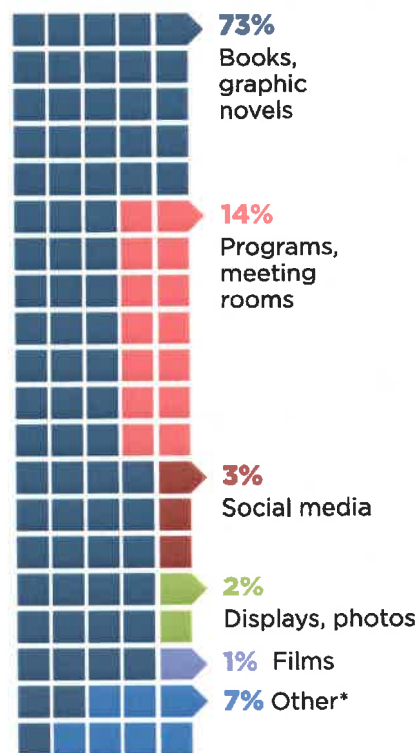
WHO INITIATES CHALLENGES?



Statistics based on 147 responses

BOOKS AND BEYOND

The ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom tracked 156 challenges in 2020. Here's the breakdown:



* Includes filtering, access, databases, magazines, online resources, legislation

WHERE DO CHALLENGES TAKE PLACE?

Statistics based on 156 responses



43%
Public
libraries



38%
Schools



15%
School
libraries



2%
Academia



2%
Other

CENSORSHIP
STATISTICS
COMPILED BY:



OFFICE FOR
Intellectual Freedom
American Library Association

TOP 10 MOST CHALLENGED BOOKS OF 2020

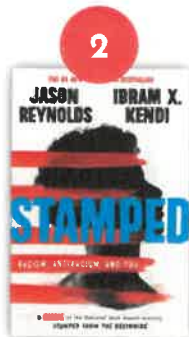
The American Library Association tracked 156 challenges to library, school, and university materials and services in 2020. A challenge is an attempt to remove or restrict materials or services based on content. Overall, 273 books were targeted. Here are the "Top 10 Most Challenged Books in 2020," along with the reasons cited for censoring the books:



George

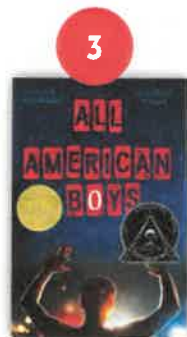
by Alex Gino

Challenged, banned, and restricted for LGBTQIA+ content, conflicting with a religious viewpoint, and not reflecting "the values of our community"



Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You

by Ibram X. Kendi and Jason Reynolds
Banned and challenged because of author's public statements and because of claims that the book contains "selective storytelling incidents" and does not encompass racism against all people



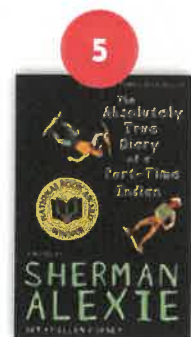
All American Boys

by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely
Banned and challenged for profanity, drug use, and alcoholism and because it was thought to promote anti-police views, contain divisive topics, and be "too much of a sensitive matter right now"



Speak

by Laurie Halse Anderson
Banned, challenged, and restricted because it was thought to contain a political viewpoint, claimed to be biased against male students, and for the novel's inclusion of rape and profanity



The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian

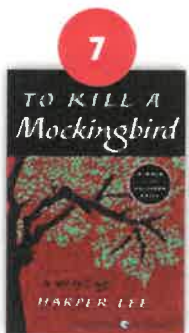
by Sherman Alexie
Banned and challenged for profanity, sexual references, and allegations of sexual misconduct by the author



Something Happened in Our Town: A Child's Story About Racial Injustice

by Marianne Celano, Marietta Collins, and Ann Hazzard, illustrated by Jennifer Zivoin

Challenged for "divisive language" and because it was thought to promote anti-police views



To Kill a Mockingbird

by Harper Lee
Banned and challenged for racial slurs and their negative effect on students, featuring a "white savior" character, and its perception of the Black experience



Of Mice and Men

by John Steinbeck
Banned and challenged for racial slurs and racist stereotypes and their negative effect on students



The Bluest Eye

by Toni Morrison
Banned and challenged because it was considered sexually explicit and depicts child sexual abuse



The Hate U Give

by Angie Thomas
Challenged for profanity, and it was thought to promote an anti-police message



OFFICE FOR
Intellectual Freedom
American Library Association



Staffers at Chicago Ridge (IL) Public Library, which closed its doors March 16 because of COVID-19, advertise the library's remote-reference services in a group Zoom call. PHOTO: CHICAGO RIDGE (IL) PUBLIC LIBRARY

LIBRARY USE AND ACCESS

During times of crisis, libraries take pride in staying open as vital community centers.

The novel coronavirus made gathering together indoors unsafe, however, and in March, out of concern for the safety and well-being of library staff and the communities they serve, many libraries closed their doors to the public, a move supported by the Executive Board of the American Library Association (ALA). They wrote, “Although closing a library is a local decision, we urge library administrators, local boards, and governments to close library facilities until such time as library workers and our communities are no longer at risk of contracting or spreading the COVID-19 coronavirus.”

For libraries, however, closing didn’t mean shutting down; rather it required finding new ways to serve and continue supporting their communities—often at a distance.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES PIVOT

The Public Library Association (PLA), an ALA division, conducted a survey March 24–April 1 to understand how

public libraries were responding to the pandemic. Although 99 percent of respondents confirmed that their libraries had closed, most of them had extended online renewal policies, expanded online checkout services, and added virtual programming.

Many distributed such materials as free craft supplies and STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) kits, supported distance learning, and, significantly, boosted their technology offerings by checking out laptops and Wi-Fi hotspots and extending Wi-Fi to their parking lots.

Emblematic of the trend, the McArthur Public Library in Biddeford, Maine, offered virtual storytimes, read-alouds, and cooking demos.

Still, as centers of lending, libraries also had to develop new policies for handling library materials. The Bertha Bartlett Public Library in Story City, Iowa, was among those that devised a detailed procedure for handling books and money to keep staff and the public safe.

Respondents to the PLA survey expressed concern about the loss of tax revenue and the strain on their budgets.

Many responded they would need state and federal financial support because local governments were stretched thin.

A few libraries managed to stay open. At the Idaho Falls (ID) Public Library, which canceled its programming but remained open to the public for browsing, checkout, and computer use, Director Robert Wright told *American Libraries* magazine, “We’re paid to be public servants, and we are leaving the decision about whether to open or close to the people who are experts in epidemiology.”

Wright’s library followed recommended social-distancing measures, including moving furniture to maintain six feet distance between patrons and staff, directing employees to stay six feet away from each other, sanitizing surfaces every ninety minutes, placing returned materials in quarantine for five days, and offering curbside checkout service on request.

Even for libraries that were closed but offered curbside pickup, concerns about safety preoccupied workers. Meagan McLendon, library assistant at the Kyle (TX) Public Library, pointed out that part-time employees posed the greatest threat for COVID-19 transmission. “A lot of us have other jobs [such as pizza delivery], and we take those jobs into this job,” she told *American Libraries*.

COLLEGE, RESEARCH, AND SCHOOL LIBRARIES PROVE RESILIENT

It wasn’t just public libraries that felt the impact of COVID-19. A survey developed by Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe (University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign) and Christine Wolff-Eisenberg (Ithaka S+R) chronicled the impact of the pandemic on academic libraries. It found that libraries pivoted reference services to online or phone delivery. Meanwhile, access to print collections, whether onsite or via



Delray Beach (FL) Public Library staffers, wearing masks and face shields, welcomed users back on May 21 to a partially reopened building. Stacks were closed, a limited number of computers were available, and each visitor could stay an hour. The first people to enter were homeless and others needing access to free computers and internet. PHOTO COURTESY OF ROBYN HUFF

delivery, declined significantly. An *ALA* survey showed that more than half of college and research libraries had seen eliminations or reductions in planned hiring, professional development funding, print collection budgets, and program budgets.

School librarians demonstrated their resourcefulness, despite the fact that two-fifths of school libraries did not expect to reopen during the 2019–2020 school year. Vancouver, Washington, librarian Traci Plaster Chun said, “We have been supporting parents in this pandemic, which has been a shift. Teachers and parents are working so hard; I feel it’s my role to help make their jobs easier with tech, resources, e-books, and whatever they need. We know our students, our curriculum, our teachers, and so it makes sense that we jump in. We can personalize for our families.” Van Meter (IA) Community School District librarian Shannon McClintock Miller hosted webinars to spark ideas and share best practices. ▀

HOW AND WHEN TO REOPEN

Guidelines for reopening were developed by Theresa Chmara, an expert on First Amendment and public forum issues related to libraries and general counsel for the Freedom to Read Foundation, and approved by the ALA’s Intellectual Freedom Committee in June. The guidelines included reviewing federal, state, and local laws, including agency recommendations, such as those of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. It also addressed such questions as whether a public library can terminate an employee who refuses to return to work and whether it has the authority to mandate mask-wearing for patrons or employees.



FEDERAL FUNDING AND LEGISLATION

Libraries, which provide a lifeline to communities coping with the ravages of COVID-19, received a much-needed boost from the federal government early in the pandemic.

In March, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, a \$2.2 trillion economic stimulus package, included \$50 million for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), which then distributed the funds to help states and territories expand digital network access, purchase internet-accessible devices, and provide technical support services to their communities.

The institute's activities also included the REALM (REopening Archives, Libraries, and Museums) project—in conjunction with OCLC, a bibliographic information organization, and the Battelle Memorial Institute in Columbus, Ohio—to produce science-based information

about how materials can be processed to mitigate COVID-19 exposure to staff and visitors of archives, libraries, and museums.

The need for federal assistance grew urgent as thousands of library staff were furloughed or laid off due to COVID-19 and the demand for library services increased.

The CARES Act created the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), which provided loans to help businesses—including libraries—weather the financial crisis due to the

The CARES Act included \$50 million for the IMLS, which then distributed the funds to expand community internet access.

economic slowdown. PPP funds could be used to pay staff, and many libraries accessed these forgivable loans that proved to be vital assistance for many organizations.

In July, Sen. Jack Reed (D-RI) and Rep. Andy Levin (D-MI) introduced in their respective chambers the Library Stabilization Fund Act (LSFA) to establish a \$2 billion fund, administered by IMLS, to address financial losses and bolster library services, with an emphasis on the hardest-hit communities. The LSFA would have supported library operations and such urgent technology needs as broadband access and digital literacy training. It would have also provided funds for hotspots, laptops, printers, and other technology.

CONGRESS ACTS TO SUPPORT LIBRARIES

In December, for the eighth consecutive year, Congress increased appropriations to IMLS. The Consolidated Appropriations Act for 2021, passed on December 21 along with a \$900 billion stimulus relief package for COVID-19, included an additional \$5 million for IMLS, including \$2 million for the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). Appropriations for 2021 include increases for other library line items, including \$28 million for the Innovative Approaches to Literacy program, an increase of \$1 million, with at least half of this funding dedicated to school libraries. ▶

READERS BENEFIT FROM CHANGES TO E-BOOK LENDING

Readers who relied on e-books from libraries to stay well-read during the pandemic saw waiting lists for some top titles decrease significantly. That's because one of the big five publishers, Macmillan Publishers, announced it would end an embargo on sales of new titles to libraries, which had resulted in six-month-plus waiting lists for new releases.

In a statement, ALA Director of Public Policy and Government Relations Alan Inouye said, "Equitable access to digital content is more important than ever as libraries continue to serve their communities amid rapidly changing circumstances."

Publisher Penguin Random House (PRH) also made changes so that libraries could better afford to provide access to the digital content its users needed. In April, PRH announced that it was offering libraries e-book and digital audio book licenses for one year at a 50 percent prorated price, a move necessary to "meet the needs of patrons and homebound school kids," said Skip Dye, senior vice-president.

#eBooksForAll
ALA AmericanLibraryAssociation



From left: ALA Past President Loida Garcia-Febo; former PLA Executive Director Barb Macikas; ALA Past President Sari Feldman; Alan S. Inouye, ALA senior director of public policy and government relations; and Tim Cherubini, executive director of the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies, outside the offices of Macmillan Publishers on October 30, 2019.

PHOTO: DANIEL ROOT



WI-FI AND BROADBAND ACCESS

In the pre-COVID-19 era, America's 16,557 public library locations provided critical digital infrastructure to their communities. For many, the library's computers were their personal computers. Libraries offered internet hotspots to borrow, promoted digital literacy through specialized training, and assisted careers by allowing job seekers to access crucial online information.

Throughout the pandemic, the library's role as a digital provider widened. The American Library Association (ALA) recognized the importance of libraries as broadband service points early in the crisis. In a March statement, the ALA Executive Board recommended that "libraries can and should leave their Wi-Fi networks on even when their buildings are closed wherever possible."

During the pandemic, libraries like rural Marathon County (WI) Public Library and suburban Cuyahoga County (OH) Public Library compensated for closures by making their Wi-Fi networks accessible to patrons outside the building. Library users could sit in or near their cars and tap into the networks with laptops or smartphones, as long as they maintained six feet of social distance from passersby.

The Leominster (MA) Public Library took it one step further, installing mobile hotspots at the local senior center and veterans' center.

Santa Fe (NM) Community College and Pima (AZ) Community College played a vital role during the pandemic for students and communities that didn't have reliable internet access. They purchased and lent out hundreds of laptops and dozens of portable Wi-Fi hotspots. Expanded Wi-Fi also allowed students to safely access the internet outside closed buildings from the parking lot or other outdoor spaces.

The bookmobile, the classic vehicle for library outreach, reinvented itself as a conveyor of broadband to communities in need. Williamsburg (VA) Regional Library parked its bookmobile outside schools, grocery stores, and community centers, while the Topeka and Shawnee County (KS) Public Library deployed its bookmobiles as Wi-Fi hotspots to a local mobile home park and a correctional facility.

INEQUITIES LAID BARE

But even as libraries responded to the call, inequities in allocation were exposed—gaps that would affect communities in need of broadband during the pandemic for access to digital collections, e-government services, legal information, distance learning, telemedicine, and other essential community services.

The COVID-19 outbreak exacerbated these inequities. About 25 percent of Americans lack high-speed internet access at home, according to a June 2019 study by the Pew Research Center. Roughly 33 percent of rural Americans lack home broadband access.

In a September case study of two tribally owned and operated networks, the ALA Public Policy and Advocacy Office reported that barely half of Native Americans living on tribal lands had access to high-speed internet. Six tribal libraries and two schools in six pueblos in north-central New Mexico aggregated their demand and built two sixty-mile fiber-optic networks. During the pandemic, tribal libraries stepped up significantly to form partnerships to connect diverse populations with broadband.

In Washington, DC, lawmakers proposed several bills to address broadband needs, including the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act, passed by the House in May, which would have provided \$2 billion for hotspots and other devices for library patrons and K–12 students. This bill was never brought up for consideration in the Senate.

LEARNING GOES VIRTUAL

When learning moved online, school libraries like those in the Leander (TX) Independent School District became tech hubs for teachers and students. There, librarians helped guide teachers during the initial weeks of the pandemic, sitting in on staff meetings, helping set up Google classrooms and Zoom calls, answering copyright questions, and curating digital resources.

“Everyone in the school turns to you,” when dealing with computers and setting up online learning, said Four Points Middle School librarian April Stone. “Librarians stepped in to help teachers navigate those new tools and shift what they were doing physically versus virtually. We



Eletha Davis, mobile library services outreach manager at Williamsburg (VA) Regional Library, drives a van that provides Wi-Fi. PHOTO COURTESY OF BETSY FOWLER

were always on the front lines for campus tech anyway, and it's the librarians helping not only navigate Zoom, but also best practices on how to use the tools.”

When its physical locations closed, the Florida State University (FSU) Libraries demonstrated the crucial educational role academic libraries play on their campuses. It began providing electronic resources, online instructional support, open education resources, online tutoring, and other remote services. FSU librarians also helped instructors identify digital, open, and primary-source resources to use in remote teaching.

Meanwhile, advocates called for the Federal Communications Commission to boost broadband connectivity during the pandemic to help school libraries. FCC Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel recommended the FCC expand its E-Rate program, a subsidy created in 1996 for K–12 schools. She warned that without action students nationwide could be locked out of their virtual classrooms. ▶

ENHANCING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIAL MOBILITY

Estill County (KY) exemplifies the challenges many underserved communities face. “Grandkids are being raised by their grandparents by the hundreds . . . Seven out of ten kids qualify for free lunch at school. Only 7.3 percent of homes have broadband access,” said Lesa Ledford of the Estill County Public Library. Getting more people online in her community means more opportunities for residents to access education, entrepreneurship, and employment—all essential to achieving social mobility. When informed her library would receive a grant that includes internet enabled hotspots, funding for financial literacy programming, and more she said, “This grant will change lives.”

ADVOCACY IN ACTION

The pandemic created many financial challenges for libraries, and library supporters mobilized to advocate for continued library funding. Their efforts resulted in an enthusiastic response from a public eager to support libraries, especially at the polls.

In more than 100 library-related referenda across 27 states, more than 90 percent of voters supported the library. In Ohio, 31 of 32 referenda passed, while in Michigan, 18 of 20 met with approval.

Public libraries reaped the benefits. In Antioch, Illinois, residents decided to issue \$9.6 million in bonds to upgrade the village's public library. The Riverside (IL) Public Library passed a referendum that overwhelmingly supported a bond issue for a new storytime and multipurpose room, a common area for children and youth services, a teen room, and an area for middle schoolers, along with an upgraded public meeting room. In Arizona, an education funding measure passed that could raise as much as \$827 million a year, with a portion of the funding earmarked for school librarians.

College libraries benefited at the polls as well. Measure Y passed in Glendora, California, allowing Citrus Community College District to issue \$298 million in general obligation bonds that generated \$16.3 million annually for projects, including the replacement of an existing library.

DEMONSTRATING THE VALUE OF LIBRARIES

Advocates developed new and effective strategies to highlight the value of libraries and library staff. Academic librarians gathered data that made the case to university administrators for prioritizing library workers' employment security. In particular, they used metrics to demonstrate the long-term costs associated with furloughs or layoffs.

United for Libraries, a division of the American Library Association (ALA), offered free webinars to promote ways that foundations and Friends of the Library groups could support their libraries during COVID-19. They offered advice on how to approach advocacy during a time of crisis, how to craft messages for success, and how to stay engaged with supporters and the community during the pandemic.

One librarian who kept in touch with her community during the pandemic was Michelle Jeske, Denver city librarian and president of ALA's Public Library Association. In October, Jeske wrote a "Dear Library Community" letter that pointed out the ways the library had served the community since it closed its doors seven months before. She wrote, "This pandemic has changed almost everything about all of our lives and has been challenging for all of us. We know the community relies on us for resources, services, programs, and safe spaces. Please know that your library is still here for you, just in different ways."

The pandemic called attention to the need for self-advocacy on the part of library workers. In her column in *American Libraries* magazine, Meredith Farkas, faculty librarian at Portland (OR) Community College, wrote, "I know many library workers who are fierce advocates for their patrons but are far more reticent when speaking up for their own well-being." She wrote about the valuable training provided by the Library Freedom Institute, founded by librarian and internet activist Alison Macrina with the support of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and pointed out the importance of strong online communities to promote collective action and self-advocacy. ▀



Fund Libraries graphic.

FUNDRAISING IN UNUSUAL TIMES

Public measures were supplemented by volunteer fundraising efforts, which continued unabated although COVID-19 had forestalled such fundraising staples as book sales. The King County (WA) Library System Foundation adapted by running a virtual giving campaign that used such tactics as email campaigns and social media posts, as well as the more traditional direct mail. The campaign generated \$110,000.



LIBRARY PROGRAMS

Although most library buildings closed as communities went into lockdown, library workers devised innovative outreach strategies to meet the needs of their many constituencies. From analog letters and alternate realities to birds and boats, librarians showcased their innovation under some of the most challenging circumstances.

The Lewis and Clark Library in Helena, Montana, for example, reached out to seniors in isolation at assisted living facilities, helping children to send cards, postcards, drawings, and words of encouragement to residents as part of its “Mail to Our Seniors” program. A virtual karaoke event organized by Madison County (KY) Public Library, was music to the ears of those at a local assisted living community.

One librarian leveraged the popular video game *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* to engage players via this virtual community. In the game, players move to a deserted island, construct buildings and infrastructure, and create their own furniture and decorations. Players across the world can then visit each other’s islands. When Tina Chenoweth logged on to start construction on her island, the young adult services manager at the Baxter-Patrick James Island branch of Charleston County (SC) Public Library chose to construct a library, complete with a children’s room. The library’s patrons responded enthusiastically, visiting the island and donating virtual items to the space.

While Chenoweth used a virtual space to build her library, Johnson Elementary School Librarian Rebecca Flowers and woodworker Kevin Cwaline created a

library out of the natural habitat of their backyard in Charlottesville, Virginia. Inspired by a Norwegian café-themed birdfeeder that went viral the year before, the Bird Library pre-dated the pandemic but found grateful audiences while people were in quarantine. It features handmade, bird-sized bookshelves and a circulation desk strewn with birdseed.

Academic libraries are known for supporting students during stressful academic stretches. When finals moved online, Florida State University Libraries made its end-of-semester stress busters digital. Students could participate in an online escape room, play quarantine bingo, or learn how to tie-dye at home.



Online karaoke with seniors. COURTESY MADISON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES BRIDGE THE DISTANCE

School libraries quickly pivoted their instructional roles when students moved to online learning. Calvert County (MD) Public Schools, for one, transitioned many pre-COVID-19 activities, such as the Amazing Race scavenger hunt and National History Day online, to Zoom.

School libraries became incubators for innovative programming ideas and key resources that engaged both students and teachers, bridging the distance between the living room and the classroom. They offered access to tech tools that allowed users to create or access video content, communicate via digital discussion platforms, and stay on top of assignments and class information via texts.



Book Yak on a Kayak at Russell Library in Middletown, Connecticut

Author visits, another favorite in-person activity, also went digital. Baton Rouge, Louisiana, school librarian Amanda Jones didn't let building closures stop her from giving students the gift of meeting the people behind the books they love. "It's always an amazing experience to witness the wonder in students' faces when they get to ask their favorite authors questions about a book they've read," she said. Students, authors, and teachers came together for Zoom discussions about the writing process, upcoming books, and pop culture with writers of young adult and middle-grade books.

UNEXPECTED ESCAPES

Even those libraries that returned to in-person programming devised socially distant ways to offer their pre-COVID-19 activities. McMillan Memorial Library in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, created a no-touch escape room in an outside corridor, enabling participants to solve puzzles using their phones and making chalk drawings on the walls.

BYOB took on a new meaning when Russell Library in Middletown, Connecticut, adapted their book club program to facilitate social distancing in the great outdoors—and asked their patrons to bring their own boats. Book Yak on a Kayak featured selections focused on kayaking and canoeing. The boaters wore masks for the event, but they couldn't mask their enthusiasm—without the library's innovative spirit, their book club would have been canceled. ▀

ONLINE STORYTIMES GO MAINSTREAM

Perhaps the most ubiquitous program pivot necessitated by the pandemic involved digital storytimes. Libraries across the country took their beloved read-alouds online, often with help from some famous faces—authors, actors, musicians, and even a former President and First Lady of the United States. The Chicago Public Library's "Live from the Library" Facebook series featured Chicagoans Barack and Michelle Obama as guest readers to bring to life *The Word Collector*, written and illustrated by Peter H. Reynolds.

Michelle Obama shared her thoughts about the importance of the library in her life. "I remember my first trip to the library and how important I felt," she reflected. "My library card was a key that unlocked a world of knowledge and experiences."



Michelle and Barack Obama as guest readers for Chicago Public Library's "Live from the Library" Facebook series.



A customer picks up her reserves at the drive-through window at Columbus (OH) Metropolitan Library's New Albany branch.

HOW WE READ IN 2020

Libraries in 2020 saw a significant shift in borrowing habits as e-book usage soared. OverDrive, a major distributor of e-books, audiobooks, and streaming video to libraries, reported that its clients worldwide collectively loaned out more than 289 million e-books, a 40 percent increase from 2019. The company attributed this shift to the pandemic. After all, no-contact e-book lending is the perfect way to get content from a safe social distance.

Digital book borrowing reached record highs, with readers in 102 public library systems each checking out 1 million or more e-books. Twenty-nine of those systems hit that mark for the first time.

With buildings closed to the public, libraries accelerated or adopted plans to issue digital library card (“eCard”) offerings. Sarasota County (FL) Libraries, for example, were able to create and launch their eCard within a few weeks of branches being closed to the public.

In March, with eighty-six locations closed to the public, the Los Angeles County Library offered temporary digital library cards, valid for ninety days. The cards enabled access to all of the library’s digital offerings—e-books, audiobooks, magazines, movies, TV, homework help, and online classes.

HIGHLIGHTING COMMUNITY HEROES

Faced with the challenge of celebrating Library Card Sign-up Month in September, librarians at the Gail Borden Public Library District in Elgin, Illinois, decided to turn the annual campaign into a way to honor Hometown Heroes who worked on the front lines during the COVID-19 outbreak. The library collected their photos and added superhero capes and face shields to the images. The heroes, along with “Secret Superhero Words,” were posted on the front windows or entrances of local businesses that were participating in a socially distanced scavenger hunt in which each Superhero Word directed people to such virtual library services as “eAudiobooks” or “streaming.”



The “Hometown Heroes” campaign in Elgin, IL.

Librarians also performed heroic deeds in making sure community members in need had access to resources. Jayanti Addleman, director of library services at the Hayward (CA) Public Library, worked with staff to streamline the process for registering for a library card online, paying particular attention to eliminating barriers for undocumented individuals. She also oversaw the distribution of hundreds of tablets, hotspots, and other devices to help bridge the digital divide. Moreover, she secured funding for a new bookmobile to meet the needs of those residents who lacked transportation and could not take advantage of curbside pickup.



Curbside Larry of Harris County (TX) Public Library.

CURBSIDE PICKUP AND CURBING LATE FEES

With buildings closed or users uneasy entering them, curbside pickup became popular, and libraries got creative promoting this service that is more often associated with retail shopping. Donning a cowboy hat and aviator sunglasses and adopting the persona of Curbside Larry, Harris County (TX) Public Library's Program Production Specialist John Schaffer delivered a pitch in the style of a

bombastic used car salesman, touting the library's curbside services in a video that attracted more than 50,000 views on YouTube, as well as mentions in *Texas Monthly* and *Southern Living*.

Even before the pandemic, libraries were going fine-free. Library fines "present an economic barrier to access of library materials and services," according to an American Library Association resolution adopted in 2019, and the pandemic urged many districts to action. Since March, 91 of the Urban Libraries Council's roughly 160 member libraries have opted to go fine-free. ▀

SAFE HANDLING OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

The pandemic raised questions about the safety of library materials, and answering them was key to regaining trust in the age-old practice of borrowing books. It was uncharted territory for conservators, who lacked historical information on sanitizing materials. They were also faced with conflicting information about how long the coronavirus would persist on library books and video cases.

As the pandemic continued throughout 2020, many libraries adopted a quarantining protocol of seventy-two hours for returned materials. While necessary to prevent disease contamination, these protocols in academic libraries exacerbated wait times for pricey textbooks.

The REALM project conducted eight phased tests over the course of 2020 to understand how the virus spreads, its survival on materials and surfaces, and the effectiveness of various prevention and decontamination measures. (See page 10 of this report for more information.)



Digital interface for school book holds and curbside pickup.



Elizabeth Moreau Nicolai conducts a virtual storytime at Anchorage Public Library.

LEARNING IN THE AGE OF CORONAVIRUS

In 2020, one-room schoolhouses returned—not the nineteenth-century buildings with wood-burning stoves, but home classrooms with personal computers, laptops, and tablets loaded with apps and remote instruction software.

With distance learning, school librarians still fulfilled all five of their roles as instructional partners, teachers, leaders, information specialists, and program administrators. Their unique skillsets proved invaluable to teachers and students as schools worked to provide continuity through the disruptions of a lockdown.

The school library extended itself into the home, providing virtual hours via webcam conferences, email, phone, and instant messaging. Librarians continued to foster reading development with virtual book clubs, storytimes, and read-alouds. Even gaming and makerspace activities evolved as virtual learning programs.

The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) conducted several surveys that documented the valuable work of school librarians during the school closures of 2020. In an April survey, most respondents said they had expanded access to online resources for students, extended check-out periods (noting that books would be due when school opened again), and offered virtual assistance.

Throughout 2020, AASL found, school librarians and school libraries were contributing to their communities no matter the conditions. In subsequent surveys, school librarians spoke of playing many roles during pandemic learning conditions (PDF), whether for remote learning, hybrid, or in-person instruction. Adaptations included encouraging e-book checkouts, taking bookcarts to classrooms for in-class checkouts, and co-teaching with classroom teachers.

School librarians brimmed with such innovative concepts for meaningful instruction as pandemic journals. Steve Tetreault, a school librarian from the Holmdel Township (NJ) School District, taught a cross-disciplinary unit in English and social studies that involved middle-school students writing about their pandemic experiences as an exercise in self-directed learning.

ACADEMIC AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES GET CREATIVE

The University of Texas at San Antonio Libraries embraced community partnerships to widen the reach of their activities. Peer coaches—students mentoring classmates

in research skills and technology—worked with the local literacy organization Gemini Ink to promote the Big Texas Read online book club. They spread the word throughout the academic community and provided technology support to Texas authors.

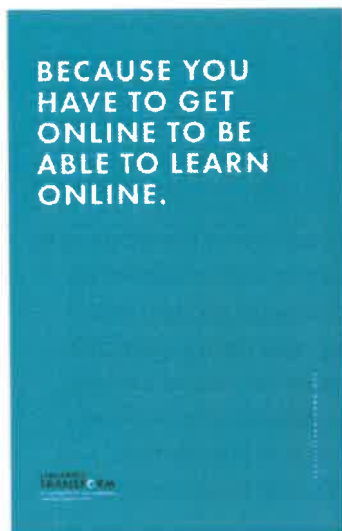
College students accustomed to using academic libraries as quiet places to study alone or in groups needed encouragement to remain engaged as classes moved online and libraries closed. Librarians at Frostburg (MD) State University continued to provide services virtually.

Wayne State University Libraries in Detroit created an orientation video for freshmen who had not yet visited campus in person due to the pandemic. Student Success Librarian Veronica Bielat explained that the video was intended to help students feel comfortable in a new

environment during an uncertain time. The video, she said, “sort of takes that fear away.”

In public libraries, children’s librarians embraced new technologies to enrich the remote learning experience. Liza Purdy, senior children’s librarian for the Santa Clarita (CA) Public Libraries, wrote, “Everything I did as a librarian needed to go through some form of technology in order to

reach the public that I so desperately missed, loved, and wanted to serve.” Experimenting with her phone and



Libraries Transform graphic.



Some librarians even delivered books via drone.

computer and using green screens, she developed rich content that included stop-animation music videos.

The West Vancouver (BC) Library in Canada used Zoom to offer programs on augmented reality and artificial intelligence. Children identified some of the emotions they were experiencing by using augmented reality to create their own emojis. They also collaborated on a song using Chrome Music Lab’s Song Maker online tool. ▀

BOOK CLUBS GO VIRTUAL

Book clubs have adapted to the pandemic by going virtual. The Zoom room has replaced the living room as the arena for spirited literary discussions. Libraries like Santa Maria (CA) Public Library, which hosted monthly in-person book clubs for years, started the Book Club Over the Phone program. The Rochester (MN) Public Library has been hosting video book discussions over Zoom and WebEx.

School librarians are also getting into the book club act. Kristen Mogavero, a library media specialist at New York City’s John F. Kennedy High School, has been hosting Zoom meetings to discuss books with students and teachers. Community members can vote for future book selections on the school’s social media channel.



Teen leader Iris Alvarenga poses in front of yard signs at Waltham (MA) Public Library that depict issues youth patrons care about. The installation was a partnership between the library, civic organization For Freedoms, and local art group Blueprint Projects.

PHOTO: ERWIN CARDONA/WALTHAM (MA) PUBLIC LIBRARY

CONFRONTING STRUCTURAL INEQUITIES IMPACTING COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

The outbreak of COVID-19 exacerbated structural inequities in access to high-speed internet, resulting in a crisis with widespread ramifications in many communities of color.

In an article in *American Libraries* magazine, “[Ending Information Redlining](#),” American Library Association (ALA) Executive Director Tracie D. Hall wrote, “The persistence of the coronavirus pandemic continues to expose the degree to which societal inequities are inextricably linked.”

The fallout from “information redlining,” the systematic denial of equitable access to information, affects everything from education and employment to health and housing and results in an inequitable justice system and high incarceration rates.

Hall cites figures from a [Deutsche Bank study \(PDF\)](#) showing that 76 percent of the nation’s Black residents and

62 percent of Latinx residents are slated to be shut out of or underprepared for 86 percent of US jobs by 2045. She wrote, “They are experiencing a ‘racial tech gap’ that threatens their future economic mobility.”

TWIN SCOURGES: THE PANDEMIC AND SYSTEMIC RACISM

During the global pandemic, the United States also came face to face with its history of systemic racism. An inflection point was the killing of George Floyd by police on May 25 in Minneapolis.

Shortly thereafter, the ALA Executive Board called on the library community to participate in protests and other



Laura Broderick, senior children's librarian at Pikes Peak Library District in Colorado, discussed a challenge to a Black Lives Matter display in her children's department. "Black history is not history," Broderick, said. "Black history is current, it is happening now."

PHOTO: [AMERICANLIBRARIESMAGAZINE.ORG/BLOGS/THE-SCOOP](https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/the-scoop)

forms of activism, promote and create antiracist media content, engage actively in local policy development, exercise the right to vote, or run for office to be a voice for historically disenfranchised groups in a statement condemning violence and racism towards Black people and all people of color.

Public libraries across the country met the moment with a focus on antiracism work. Confronting the issue for many meant acknowledging the fact that during the twentieth century, many libraries, both in the North and

South, were often segregated facilities. John Lewis, the late US Congressman from Georgia, once recalled, "When I was 16 years old, some of my brothers and sisters and cousins [were] going down to the public library trying to get public library cards. We were told the library was for whites only, not for coloreds."

The Oakland (CA) Public Library responded to the murders of Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and others with resource lists on topics like institutional racism; protest, social movements, and community solutions; police conduct, race, and the justice system; and talking to kids about racism and justice.

EXAMINING RACISM AND SUPPORTING STUDENTS ON CAMPUS AND BEYOND

School librarians recognized the pivotal role they played in supporting students reeling from the twin traumas of the pandemic and racism. Writing in the summer of 2020, American Association of School Librarians president and lead school librarian for the Westwood High School Library Information Center in Blythewood, South Carolina, Kathy Carroll said, "Our students have lived through a global pandemic, national protests, societal shifts, and possible untold personal turmoil since we all were last together. Along with formal teaching and learning, our students will need to talk and we will need to listen. Some of those conversations may be difficult or even a little uncomfortable,

A CALL TO ACTION FOR LIBRARY WORKERS

ALA's Public Library Association issued a call to action for public library workers to address racism. It urged them to study, amplify, and align with the policy demands of the Movement for Black Lives; change library security policies that punish and criminalize patron behavior; and develop and fund programs, services, and collections that center the voices and experiences of people of color and shift power to communities for co-curation and co-creation.

Resources for librarians looking to center the voices and experiences of Black library workers and the Black community proliferated. A Libraries Respond: Black Lives Matter web resource provides curated links for librarians who want to support the broader BLM movement, fight against police violence, and help the cause of racial justice.





Some of the ten most challenged books of 2020 (See [page 7](#) for the complete list.)

but those types of interactions are often the ones that have the greatest impact on our students.”

The University of Wisconsin–Madison Libraries’ racial justice efforts included developing a [reading list for disrupting whiteness](#) and decolonizing research in libraries, developed by Gender and Women’s Studies Librarian Karla J. Strand.

Pennsylvania State University Libraries devised “a centralized resource for information about historical and current discrimination of African Americans in the United States, Pennsylvania, and the Greater Philadelphia Region.”

Despite a 34 percent increase in books by diverse authors . . . those books represented only 15 percent of the total number available for young people.

city and community to “talk about, and invest in, the library” when working to refine community-first public safety, dismantle racism, pursue equity, and rebuild the workforce.

Friends groups also joined in the fight for racial justice. The Friends of the Saint Paul (MN) Public Library Advocacy Committee wrote a powerful public letter to the mayor, urging the

OVERREPRESENTED IN CHALLENGES, UNDERREPRESENTED ON THE SHELVES

ALA’s Office for Intellectual Freedom pointed out that books with diverse content [frequently appear on its list of challenged books](#), including such works as the *Autobiography of Malcolm X* by Malcolm X and Alex Haley and *Native Son* by Richard Wright.

Libraries also encountered inequities in collection development, often lacking a sufficient number of books by authors and illustrators of color. The Cooperative Children’s Book Center at the University of Wisconsin–Madison showed a [34 percent increase in books by diverse authors](#) between 2017 and 2018, but those books represented only about 15 percent of the total number of materials for young people received at the book center—this in a country where [more than 39 percent of the population is non-White](#), and where White children no longer make up a majority in their age group.

The library profession also worked to address internal inequities in 2020. As late as 2018, [just 6.8 percent of librarians identified as Black or African American](#), indicating a persistent lack of racial and ethnic diversity. ▀

BECAUSE FAKE NEWS CAN HAVE REAL-WORLD CONSEQUENCES.

LIBRARIES
TRANSFORM[®]

Libraries Transform bookmarks.

FIGHTING DISINFORMATION

With the onset of the pandemic in the United States, librarians were mobilized as information first responders. “We’re really being proactive,” Lisa G. Rosenblum, executive director of King County (WA) Library System, told *American Libraries* magazine in March. “We’re information gatekeepers, so this hits us on a personal level,” said Rosenblum, whose library system created a web page with facts about the virus that includes links to local resources.

Misinformation about COVID-19 was infused with xenophobia and especially Sinophobia, resulting in a surge of bigotry against Asian and Chinese people. Chinese American Librarians Association President Fu Zhuo wrote in a March 5 email, “The enemy is not Chinese or Asian people. The Chinese American Librarians Association is firmly against any types of prejudices, especially in this critical moment of fighting the COVID-19.” In May, the Executive Board of the American Library Association (ALA) signed the Asian Pacific American Library Association’s pledge (and asked others in the library community join) to demonstrate a commitment to combating the rise in xenophobia and racism due to COVID-19.

Throughout 2020, librarians responded to misinformation about vaccines, the census, and the November election, as well as the demonization of the mainstream media as purveyors of “fake news,” by creating resources to fight disinformation. The Chicago Public Library

provided an online course, “Disinformation in Social Media,” which offered guidance on how social media algorithms foster implicit biases.

The University of Louisville (KY) Libraries’ Citizen Literacy project

helped students become savvy information

consumers in a post-truth era. Launched to coincide with the final weeks of the 2020 election season, Citizen Literacy promotes essential information skills like algorithmic literacy, news literacy, how to evaluate expertise, how to investigate the veracity of online sources through lateral reading, and how to become an informed voter.

“We’re information gatekeepers, so this hits us on a personal level.”

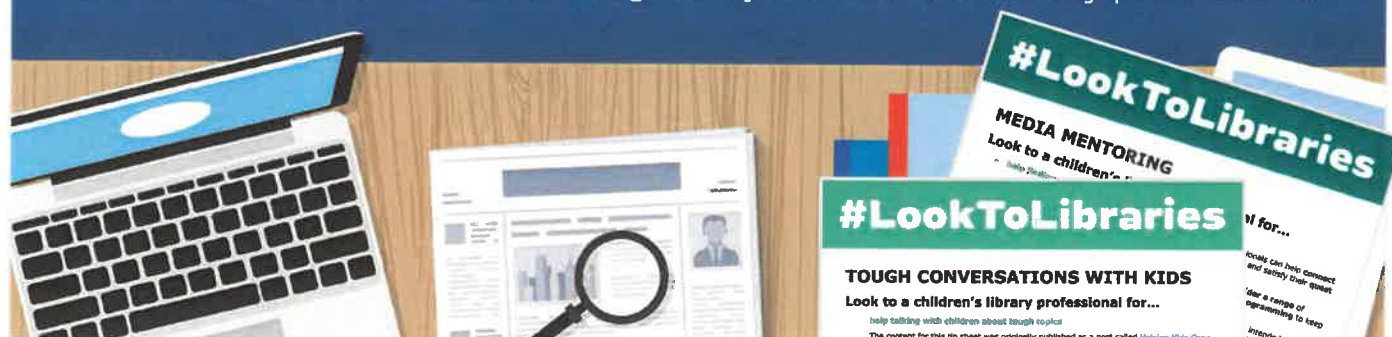
—LISA G. ROSENBLUM, EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR OF KING COUNTY (WA)
LIBRARY SYSTEM.

LOOK TO LIBRARIES

In August, the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of ALA, launched the #LookToLibraries campaign, highlighting the role of children’s librarians in serving as “media mentors” for kids and their parents and caregivers in times of crisis. “With families facing the increased pressures of needing to balance online learning, monitoring children’s activities, and for some, working from home, we felt it important to let them know they could and

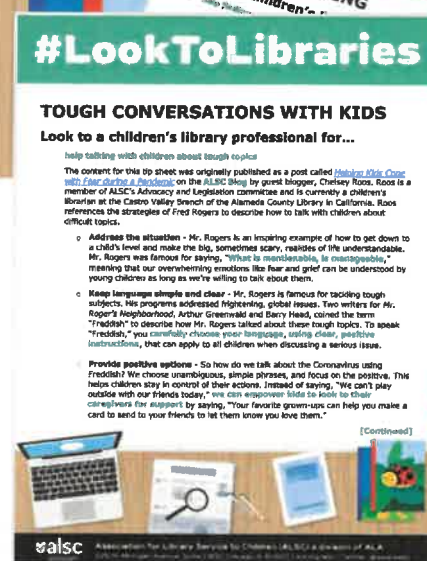
#LookToLibraries

Discover the power of connecting with your children's library professional.



should turn to library professionals for assistance,” said ALSC President Kirby McCurtis.

The #LookToLibraries website emphasizes the role of library professionals in empowering parents and caregivers with the tools they need to develop a media plan that best addresses their family's needs. It contains tip sheets, booklists, and resources, including the [“Tough Conversations Tip Sheet \(PDF\)”](#), considering the strategies of the late television host Fred Rogers in talking with children about difficult topics. ▶



ALSC's #LookToLibraries campaign.

MEDIA LITERACY MATTERS

ALA, working with talented thought leaders across the library and media literacy sectors, created [Media Literacy in the Library: A Guide for Library Practitioners \(PDF\)](#) in November to aid library workers. The guide asserted that “a media-literate adult should be able to access, share, and create media across multiple formats and platforms while utilizing critical thinking skills to evaluate the purpose and potential impact of the material.”

The guide teaches library workers about filter bubbles, confirmation bias, and news deserts; gives guidance on how to answer questions about false or misleading news items in reference transactions; and supplies virtual and in-person program ideas covering topics like fact checking, cookies, internet privacy, the Freedom of Information Act, and local media.



