

### **Center for the Book:**

The State Library is starting to phase out Oregon Center for the Book activities. This is the last year the Oregon Center for the Book will run Letters About Literature, the national reading and writing contest for youth in 4<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The contest deadline has passed so youth should have already submitted their letters. Their letters were just sent to the local judges and judging in Oregon will take place in a week or two.

The Awards Celebration is scheduled for May 7<sup>th</sup> at the State Library—author Pamela Smith Hill will be speaking at the Awards Celebration. To date, no other organization has expressed interest in taking it which means this could be our last Letters About Literature contest. Thank you CSD for co-sponsoring it for so many years!

### **Oregon Summer Reading Certificates**

With input from OYAN and CSD, the State Library has decided not to print and distribute hard copies of the Oregon Summer Reading Certificates. Certificates will be available to download and print from the State Library's website. One certificate will be a black-line master for libraries that don't have a color printer and/or can't afford color printing. The State Library's website will also list a few ideas about how libraries may get funding to pay for the certificates themselves. There will still be an Oregon Summer Reading Certificate design contest. My goal is to start voting on the certificates via the listserv next week.

### **Summer Reading Sweepstakes**

This year the summer reading sweepstakes will be called Save for College Save the Day. The summer reading sweepstakes is a random drawing in which 15 winners, three from each congressional district, receive a \$529 Oregon College Savings Plan or \$529 deposited into their existing Oregon College Savings Plan. Libraries with a winner receive \$500. Libraries are encouraged to spend the \$500 on their next summer reading program, but don't have to because there are no strings attached!

The Oregon College Savings Plan sponsors a media package with KATU's AM Northwest program to promote the summer reading program and the sweepstakes almost statewide. It's largest library media campaign in Oregon. In addition, they sponsor one free summer reading performance at libraries with fewer than 10,000 people in their service area. This year 71 of Oregon's 131 public libraries is eligible—that's 54% of Oregon public libraries receiving a free summer reading performance!

Libraries placed individual orders for sweepstakes materials when you filled out the summer reading statistics and orders survey last September. Material will be shipped at the end of April so should arrive in libraries the beginning of May. Remember, libraries may distribute sweepstakes materials however works best for their library.

## **Summer Learning, Summer Library, Summer Lunch (SL3)**

I've been participating in a state level group working on summer learning—previously referred to as Statewide Summer Learning Partnership, going forward it will be called the Summer Learning, Summer Library, Summer Lunch (SL3) partnership. The group hopes to develop a more strategic, coordinated effort to help students maintain their skills over the summer. The group's desired outcomes are:

- Youth will maintain or improve their reading, math, and critical thinking skills during the summer through access to healthy meals and expanded learning opportunities.
- Through advocacy key stakeholders and communities will acknowledge that poverty and lack of access have a significantly negative impact on children and youth. Poverty and lack of access increase summer learning loss and perpetuate the opportunity gap.

Representatives Komp and Nathenson are co-sponsoring House Bill 2650 which would improve, expand, and fund the Summer Learning, Summer Library, Summer Lunch (SL3) program to keep school libraries open during the summer in conjunction with the free summer lunch program to provide economically underserved youth the summer reading program and other expanded learning opportunities. SL3 was piloted at 4 sites in 2012, 8 sites in 2013, and 23 sites in 2014. The pilot sites were all in the Willamette Valley due to resources. A few weeks ago I sent a list of 141 eligible sites for 2015 with information about what public libraries can do.

The intent of HB 2650 is to provide grants to school districts to keep local elementary schools open during the summer to provide food, reading material, and expanded learning opportunities to low-income children most at risk of summer learning loss. Eligibility will be based on the school's reading scores and number of students eligible for free or reduced lunch. The proposed bill also creates a framework through state level collective impact (multiple agencies working together) to increase access to summer meal programs, the summer reading program, and expanded learning opportunities, as well as provide grantees with technical assistance and program resources.

Representatives Komp and Nathenson hosted an invitation only information session for legislators at the capitol on February 10<sup>th</sup>. Following the information session, OregonASK hosted an invitation only Summer Learning Summit for legislators and other key stakeholders at the Salem Convention Center. MaryKay facilitated a panel of librarians, including Heather McNeil and two school librarians as part of this summit.

Information about SL3 is primarily being communicated through the State Library's newsletter which is called LTLO (Letters to Libraries Online). It is distributed on libs-or and available on the State Library's website. I also sent an email on the kids-lib, OYAN and Public Library Directors listservs with a list of eligible SL3 sites so you can start a conversation with them about summer reading—if you want to.

## **Early Learning Hubs**

Earlier this year I sent out a survey to library directors to gather information about how libraries are working with their Early Learning Hubs. The information libraries provided when they filled out the survey should be extremely useful. I'm working with CSD to create resources based on the information you provided. My goal is to make them available in conjunction with the OLA Annual Conference next month. At the conference, I'll be facilitating a panel session on libraries and hubs. After the conference, CSD and I will share the resources more broadly via the listservs and our respective websites.

Thank you so much for taking the time to provide such thoughtful responses when you filled out this survey. As result, we should have really useful information and resources for you.

## **Ready to Read:**

The 2014 Ready to Read Annual Report was published online and shared with the library community in February. Newport Public Library, Coquille Public Library, Helix Public Library, Enterprise Public Library, and Salem Public Library received the Outstanding Ready to Read Project Awards for their 2014 grant funded activities. I travel to these libraries to present their award in front of their city council or library board so local library stakeholders witness their library getting recognized by the state.

The legislation with the proposed changes to the Ready to Read Grant has been assigned a bill number, it is HB 2479. In January, the State Librarian sent an email to library directors with this information, and I forwarded her email to children's and teen library staff via the listservs. Brett Walker from the Early Learning Division, Abigail Elder the director of the Beaverton City Library, and I presented verbal testimony for HB 2479 to the Legislature a few weeks ago. On Monday, MaryKay attended the HB 2479 work session and reported that it has moved forward to the Joint Ways & Means Committee. MaryKay and I will keep you informed via the listserv of any significant news about HB 2479 as it continues through the legislative process.

Review 'Reimagining Ready to Read Road Show' handout (pasted below).

If the proposed changes are approved by the legislature, you will receive a 2016 Reading for Success application instead of a Ready to Read application at the beginning of July 2015. That is in four months so you may want to start thinking about:

- Does my library want to use state funds on materials, programs, or services for students in kindergarten through high school graduation? If so, what might we do in and in 2016 how would we pay for storytimes, summer reading, or whatever you have been spending your Ready to Read Grant the past few years.
- In 2016 I will be able to use state funds on teen summer reading materials and programs. How might we change our 2016 summer reading program to include or better serve teens?

- I'm going to be required to make an extra effort to engage underserved families in grant funded projects. Am I already doing this? If so, do I want to be more strategic by working with community partners to help identify where the library may have the most significant impact on outcomes in my community? If not, what organizations in my community serve underserved families and how can I work with that organization to get those families to participate in my state funded program?
- Minimum grant libraries will get an increase of \$200. How can I use that money to help the kids already in my program make greater progress towards the outcomes or how can I use the money to get more kids to participate in my program so more kids in the community are making progress towards the outcomes.

At the OLA Conference, I will be presenting the last Reimagining Ready to Read Road Show. It is an informal session. We will literally just talk through the drafts of all the new grant materials page by page. You'll get to see everything and be able ask questions about the new grant application, report form, and other grant materials that are being created to better support you apply for and report on your grant. You'll also get to discuss ideas about planning, implementing, and evaluating your grant funded projects with me and colleagues around the state.

If you can't come to the OLA Conference, you still have options to get this information. The Reimagining Ready to Read Road Show has been select as one of the virtual sessions at the OLA Conference. I don't know what that means yet—will it be streaming video you watch or more like a webinar—I don't know, but as soon as I know I'll send an email on kids-lib about it. Also, I will post all the draft grant materials on NW Central about a week before the OLA Conference. After the conference I'll send an email on kids-lib to remind you that they're available online and provide the necessary link.

The impact of early childhood education on future academic achievement and later success in life is in the national spotlight. Afterschool, which is any time school age youth are not in school, is starting to move into that spotlight for the same reasons. The stakes are high. Government funding is steadily shrinking; therefore other funding opportunities are becoming more competitive. Policy makers are looking at new and different ways to buy the education outcomes for youth that our economy needs to thrive.

Libraries have been providing high-quality early childhood and afterschool programs for a century, but until recently the library community's contribution to positive youth development has not been recognized by policy makers. In Oregon, public libraries are specifically included in the education agenda for the first time. The State Librarian created a task force to make recommendations about changing the Ready to Read Grant to leverage this opportunity for libraries to improve their efforts to reduce the achievement gap, and to demonstrate to policy makers that public libraries are essential partners in achieving statewide education outcomes for youth. This proposal to change the Ready to Read Grant is contingent on approval by the State Library Board of Trustees for inclusion in the State Library's 2015-2017 budget request, which was submitted to the Governor last summer.

#### **Proposed big changes:**

- The name of the grant program will change to Reading for Success.
- Funding to support library activities for youth, birth through high school, \$1200 minimum grants and accounting for grant funds on a separate line in your library's budget.
- Libraries will all work towards achieving the same broad outcomes and choose from a menu of methods for evaluating them.
- Libraries will be required to make an extra effort to engage underserved youth in grant funded activities.
- Libraries will be able to use grant funds to pay for materials, programs, and services for school age youth (K-12<sup>th</sup> Grade) all year round.
- Libraries will fill-out the report online via Google Forms (or similar). Paper report forms will be available on request to libraries with poor internet connectivity. Applications will still be paper.
- Libraries will be more accountable for reporting how they spend grant funds and what outcomes are or are not achieved through grant funded activities. Libraries that don't submit their report by December 1<sup>st</sup> will not receive a grant the next year. They will have to wait until the following grant cycle to apply for and receive state funding again.

#### **Proposed to stay the same:**

- Continues to be a noncompetitive grant from the state general fund for legally established libraries to support youth services; with an emphasis on the library youth services best practices.
- Funding will be distributed on the same grant cycle, based on a formula weighted to address geographically underserved youth—80% based on population served and 20% based on square miles of service area.
- Libraries will continue to choose if they want to spend all their grant funds on one type of project or if they want to divide it between multiple types of projects (early literacy, school age, **and/or** summer reading).
- The grant will continue to encourage libraries to be innovative and facilitate self-evaluation for continuous improvement.
- The purpose of this grant is still to help youth get ready for kindergarten, maintain or improve their reading skills when they are not in school, and develop a love of reading and learning.

### Process timeline:

- January 2014: Convene a task force to develop a proposal to align the Ready to Read Grant with the three library youth services best practices and 40-40-20. **DONE**
- January-March 2014: The task force will seek feedback from the public library community at least once. **DONE**
- April 2014: Submit final proposal to the State Library Board of Trustees for approval of inclusion in the State Library's 2015-2017 budget request. **DONE**
- April-June 2014: State Library will educate the library community about the proposal. **LAST ROAD SHOW MEETING WILL BE A SESSION AT THE OREGON LIBRARY ASSOCIATION'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON APRIL 15-17, 2015**
- June or August 2014: State Library Board of Trustees approves the State Library's budget request and submits it to the Governor's office—the State Library budget will include the proposal. **DONE**
- December 2014: The Governor's budget is released—including the State Library's budget. **DONE**
- Spring 2015: The State Library's budget goes through the regular legislative process. **WIP**
- July 2015: The new grant program will launch, replacing the current Ready to Read Grant program.

### Task force members:

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Email ([katie.anderson@state.or.us](mailto:katie.anderson@state.or.us)) or call (503-378-2528) the Youth Services Consultant to ask questions about the proposed changes to the Ready to Read Grant.

Email the State Librarian ([marykay.dahlgreen@state.or.us](mailto:marykay.dahlgreen@state.or.us)) to express support for or concerns about the proposed changes to the Ready to Read Grant to be shared with decision makers.