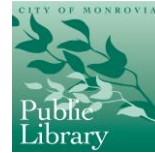




**CITY OF MONROVIA
LIBRARY BOARD
AGENDA REPORT**



DEPARTMENT: Community Services
Library Division

MEETING DATE: October 23, 2014

PREPARED BY: Annette Simpson
Librarian II - Youth Services

AGENDA LOCATION: AR -1

TITLE: 2013-14 In-House and Outreach Visits Evaluation

OBJECTIVE: To provide the Library Board with an evaluation of the 2013-14 in-house and outreach visits provided by Youth Services.

BACKGROUND: In-house and outreach visits are an integral part of Library service. Collaborations with schools and groups in the City can enhance the Library's ability to serve the community. The visits also serve to promote Library services and make them more visible and valued. By establishing relationships with different community groups, the Library can increase its knowledge of the community, and its needs, while expanding the Library's services and lend vital support.

The following information is an overview of the program components that make up the Library's in-house and outreach visits.

In-House Visit: An organized trip to the Library, may encompass a teacher with his or her class, parent groups, or scout troops. An in-house visit consists of reading stories, singing songs, and storytelling, and may include the showing of a short film and/or playing related educational games. Library education is usually part of a visit, including a demonstration of the Library's online catalog, or an explanation of Library organization. Some in-house visits may include a Library orientation and a tour in which a librarian leads the group through all sections of the Library explaining the workings of each area, as well as shares the history and architecture of the Library. The tour often depends on the age of the participants, and what the teacher or group leader requested in advance. Prior to a tour, Library card forms are provided to the tour group, processed in advance, and are ready to distribute at the end of the tour. A book checkout sometimes follows a visit. Library staff also provides to teachers and their elementary aged students an educational program on the history of the Monrovia Public Library and Library Park. Book talks and tutorials are available upon request. Depending on the request and services provided, an in-house visit generally lasts between 30 to 60 minutes.

Outreach Visit: A Library representative goes directly to a school or group outside the Library. The type of outreach depends upon the age of the children. Visits to preschools and early elementary schools consist of reading stories aloud, singing songs, and a storytelling presentation. Outreach to older elementary, middle and high schools generally consist of a booktalk and/or Library related educational games. Booktalks are short, oral "trailers" that promote the discovery and checkout of books that may have been unfamiliar to students. Outreach also includes visits to a local organization or school to talk with children or adults about Library services.

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Staff considers in-house and outreach visits to be one of the most important services available to the public for six primary reasons.

- **Introduction of Library Services and Library Personnel:** A tour might be the first time a patron has entered the Library. Tours serve to acquaint patrons to different sections, and services the Library has to offer. They remind patrons of the Library's existence and encourage them to return to the library after a long absence. An important component of in-house and outreach visits is customer service. Introducing the public to the Library creates an opportunity for a patron to return to the Library at a later date and receive personal attention.
- **Community Connections:** The personalized nature of in-house and outreach visits serve as a connector between the community and the Library. Outreach connects both new and regular users to Library services and the information portal. These visits connect patrons of limited means to free or nearly free resources, particularly important during tough economic times.
- **Library Cards and Materials Checkout:** A primary goal of any Library is to encourage patrons to obtain Library cards and use them. Tours and class visits involve registering for a new Library card and checking out books. Outreach visits encourage patrons to come to the Library to register for a Library card.
- **Promotion of Library Materials and Reader's Advisory:** Booktalks and reading stories market the Library's books and encourage patrons to check out Library materials.
- **Learning Opportunities & Library Education:** Class visits and tours include some form of Library education, for example, teaching the participants how to search for items on the computer catalogs, and introducing new technology and devices. Visits with young children often include instruction on Library behavior.
- **Entertainment:** Reading several books aloud, telling a story, singing songs, and showing films constitute entertainment. Children and adults associate the Library with an enjoyable spot to return to on their own.

ANALYSIS

Volunteer Storytellers: Staff developed a Volunteer Storytelling Program in response to community demand for specialized visits and outreach. Increased requests for private storytimes for moms' clubs, day care centers, after-school centers and local elementary schools have led to the need for volunteers to provide this literacy service to the community. Potential volunteers go to VolunteerMatch.org or the City's employment web page to apply for the position. Applicants are interviewed by staff prior to starting the City's Human Resources' hiring process that includes a comprehensive screening, including checking references, drug test, and Live Scan fingerprinting. Staff looks for applicants with a positive, energetic demeanor, a commitment to sharing a love of reading with children, and the ability to keep the attention and control of 15 to 100 children. Prior experience working with children is preferred, and they must commit to at least nine months, working a minimum of one hour a month.

The hiring and training process is coordinated with the Volunteer Coordinator and Youth Services staff. Youth Services staff developed a training manual, working one-on-one with volunteers, teaching storytime techniques. After training, volunteers continue to receive support through mentoring and training. Volunteers receive storytime kits that contain all necessary materials, such as books, puppets, props, songs, and fingerplays.

Volunteer Storytellers lead interactive early childhood literacy storytimes for Monrovia elementary schools and local pre-schools. For the 2013-14 school year, two Volunteer Storytellers donated 69 hours, reading to 1,435 children.

Every Child Ready to Read: This year, the Library is offering a workshop that involves young children and their parents, and/or caregivers in learning about early literacy practices that help prepare children to be successful in school and help prepare parents for their critical role as their child’s first teacher. Early literacy practices are highlighted, and parents have a chance to practice with their children during the 45-minute workshop. Fun interactive activities, practical tips, and resources are shared. This new program is available for parent groups with children under the age of five.

Groups: Youth Services staff conducted a variety of visits during fiscal year 2013-14. Some elementary classes came to the Library, particularly those schools which are within walking distance. Staff partnered with the Monrovia Unified School District by hosting an assembly at elementary schools to promote the 2014 Summer Reading Club. Youth Services staff went to both middle schools to promote library services, booktalk, and encourage youth participation in the Library’s Teen Advisory Board as well as volunteering during the summer. Private schools, and local daycare centers requested visits during the school year for a storytime or Library related educational program.

Below is a list of community groups that staff and volunteers visited or provided in-house tours in 2013-14:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Wildrose Elementary | First Presbyterian Pre-school |
| Mayflower Elementary | First Lutheran Pre-school |
| Monroe Elementary | Tzu Chi Preschool |
| Plymouth Elementary | Tzu Chi Elementary |
| Bradoaks Elementary | Immaculate Conception School |
| Clifton Middle School | Options After-School Care - Mayflower |
| Santa Fe Middle School | Options After-School Care - Plymouth |
| Canyon Early Learning Center | Options Headstart Pre-school |
| Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts of America | PCC Parent Education |
| State Preschool | |

The following tables outline the number of visits for children of all age groups. Staff currently tracks the number of in-house and outreach visits, and the number of participants who are involved in the scheduled visits.

In-House Visits	2012-13		2013-14	
	Visits	Participants	Visits	Participants
Preschool	11	541	11	609
Elementary	10	664	11	705
Middle School	0	0	0	0

Outreach Visits	2012-13		2013-14	
	Visits	Participants	Visits	Participants
Preschool	14	952	15	960
Elementary	20	2,816	22	2,822
Middle School	96	2,880	80	2,447

In-house visits are scheduled prior to the opening of the Library when the building is closed to the general public. Currently, staff provides bi-monthly or quarterly visits, compared to previous years’ monthly visits.

The Library limits visits to groups or schools within the City. Staff reserves the right to cancel or reschedule when there is limited staffing.

Teachers prefer middle school outreach visits over in-house tours due to the booktalk format, and the ability to reach more students. Middle school teachers find field trips problematic because of the lack of chaperones and transportation. Staff reached out to each middle school twice during the school year.

Surveys: Staff distributed surveys to groups/schools during the 2013-14 school year. A total of 11 surveys were completed by teachers/leaders. Survey results include the following:

- 1) On a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being the worst – 10 being the best), when asked how they rated the overall visit:

Excellent (8 -10)	= 100%
Good (5-7)	= 0%
Fair (3-4)	= 0%
Bad (0-2)	= 0%
- 2) When asked what they enjoyed most during the visit, the top three answers were storytelling, books and presentations.
- 3) One hundred percent of survey respondents agreed; staff and volunteers were courteous and professional.
- 4) Five in-house elementary school visits were arranged to obtain Library cards for their students, and to check out books from the Library.
- 5) Five in-house visits received a tour of the Library.

STAFF COMMENTS: To keep up with community demand for specialized visits and outreach, staff will continue the Volunteer Storytelling Program. Surveys will be distributed to each group/school visit to help staff measure the effectiveness of visits and volunteer storytellers, provide information for Library reports, and help staff align Library resources and services to meet the needs of each group.

Staff is discussing the possibility of making available additional in-house visit activities such as; scavenger hunts, art projects, and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) workshops.

Information about booking group visits is located on the Library’s website. The site includes detailed descriptions of visits and outreach opportunities provided by the Library.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT: There are no environmental impacts associated with this report.

FISCAL IMPACT: In-house and outreach visits are considered a regular part of Library business practice; there are no additional costs associated with these visits. For the 2013-14 school year, two volunteers assisted with outreach visits donating 69 hours, equivalent to \$2,285 in staff cost savings.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the Library Board move to receive and file AR-1 2013-14 In-House and Outreach Visits Evaluation.

LIBRARY BOARD ACTION REQUIRED: If the Library Board concurs, the appropriate action would be a motion: *Receive and file report AR-1 2013-14 In-House and Outreach Visits Evaluation.*

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