



**CITY OF MONROVIA
LIBRARY BOARD
AGENDA REPORT**



DEPARTMENT: Public Services
Library Division

MEETING DATE: October 22, 2015

PREPARED BY: Elizabeth Schneider
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AGENDA LOCATION: AR -1

TITLE: 2014-15 In-House and Outreach Visits Evaluation

OBJECTIVE: To provide the Library Board with an evaluation of the 2014-15 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 enhance the Library's ability to better serve the community. Visits also serve to promote Library services to the public. By establishing relationships with different community groups, the Library can increase its knowledge of the community, while expanding services to better engage the community based on their needs. All visits are presented by librarians or City volunteers trained in the Volunteer Storytelling Program.

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. In-house visits are provided to educate participants on the resources, programs and materials available at the Library, as well as provide expertise at choosing great books to read. An in-house visit may consist of reading stories, early literacy fingerplays, storytelling, booktalks and library education games. Many times there is a demonstration of the Library's online catalog, or a scavenger hunt to discover where materials are located. 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 sharing the history and architecture of the Library. Prior to a tour, Library card forms are provided to the tour group, processed in advance, and distributed at the end of the tour. A book checkout sometimes follows a visit if circulation staff is available. Library staff also provide an educational program on the history of the Monrovia Public Library and Library Park upon request. In-house visits generally last between 45 to 60 minutes, and are scheduled prior to the opening of the Library when the building is closed to the general public.

Outreach Visit: A Library representative goes directly to a school or group outside the Library to talk about Library services. Visits to preschools and early elementary schools consist of reading stories aloud, fingerplays, storytelling, and a Library presentation. Outreach to older elementary, middle and high schools generally consist of stories, booktalks and/or Library related educational games. Booktalks are short summaries of book titles that end on a cliffhanger to entice participants to come to the Library and check it out. Due to a generous donation from the Friends of the Monrovia Public Library, some of the titles of the highlighted books are purchased and given to the school library for circulation or to students for their own personal library to encourage recreational reading.

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In-house and outreach visits are an advocacy tool to express the value of the Library to Monrovia residents, and express the following key elements.

- **Introduction of Library Services and Library Personnel:** Tours serve to introduce patrons to Library resources and services. 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:** In-house and outreach visits can lead to further partnerships with community members and organizations. Relationships are formed with those who are currently unconnected with the Library. Fostering these relationships helps to encourage the public to feel comfortable to use the Library space to meet, learn and enjoy.
- **Library Cards and Materials Checkout:** The goal for tours and outreach visits is to make available access to materials and services with the use of a Library card. All in-house and outreach visits encourage groups to apply for a Library card.
- **Promotion of Library Materials, Reader's Advisory and Services:** Booktalks and reading stories show off the resources available in the Library and encourage patrons to come and check out the materials. Participants are also introduced to programming available such as Early Literacy play groups and various forms of literacy support – Information, Computer, Digital, Cultural, etc.
- **Learning Opportunities & Library Education:** Visits and tours include showing participants how to search for items on the computer catalogs, and introducing new technology and devices.
- **Model Lifelong Reading:** Visits model the gratification of reading and appreciation for reading as a permanent fixture in life.

ANALYSIS

Continued purposeful visits have established relationships with members of the school district. Staff visits Santa Fe and Clifton Middle School twice a year to support recreational reading and help with choosing new titles. Out of that has grown two further collaborations. Staff has been asked to support the afterschool book club at Clifton Middle School by giving booktalks during the 6th grade English classes, and offering tours of the Library. In January 2016, staff will partner with Canyon Oaks High School on the Great Stories Club grant funded by the American Library Association, to bring books to at-risk youth.

Parent Workshops: Librarians began hosting parent and caregiver workshops to encourage and empower adults to take the lead in their child's education. This past year, staff presented to a homeschool group and a parenting group. The purpose of these workshops is to identify the Monrovia Public Library as a key place for parents to discover resources to support early literacy education and school readiness skills. At these workshops, staff identified the five simple practices of Every Child Ready to Read – Talking, Writing, Reading, Playing and Singing, and discussed the value of having access to library resources and storytime programs by having a Monrovia Public Library Card. The workshops focused on modeling and practicing dialogic reading and book sharing, and demonstrated what to look for when selecting a book to enforce development of narrative and reading skills. Staff used the opportunity to

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explain the librarian’s role in supporting early literary on an everyday basis - reader’s advisory, storytime programs, play groups, and developmentally appropriate educational toy stations throughout the children’s room.

Groups: Youth Services staff conducted a variety of visits during fiscal year 2014-15. Some elementary classes came to the Library, particularly those schools within walking distance. Staff partnered with the Monrovia Unified School District by hosting assemblies at elementary schools to promote the 2015 Summer Reading Program. Youth Services staff went to both middle schools to promote library services, booktalk, and encourage youth participation in the Library’s teen volunteer group, Teen Advisory Board. Private schools 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 2014-15:

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| Wild Rose Elementary | Options Headstart Preschool |
| Mayflower Elementary | Tzu Chi Preschool |
| Monroe Elementary | Tzu Chi Elementary |
| Plymouth Elementary | Immaculate Conception School |
| Bradoaks Elementary | Options After-School Care – Mayflower |
| Clifton Middle School | Options After-School Care – Plymouth |
| Santa Fe Middle School | Pasadena City College Parent Education |
| Canyon Oaks High School | Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPs) |
| Canyon Early Learning Center | Boys and Girls Club |
| Girl Scouts of America | YMCA |
| First Presbyterian 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	2013-14		2014-15	
	Visits	Participants	Visits	Participants
Preschool	11	609	9	372
Elementary	11	705	14	1,022
Middle School	0	0	1	40
High School	0	0	2	16

Outreach Visits	2013-14		2014-15	
	Visits	Participants	Visits	Participants
Preschool	15	960	27	1,208
Elementary	22	2,822	26	2,206
Middle School	80	2,447	77	2,266
High School	0	0	2	19

The decrease in the number of preschool participants from 2013-14 to 2014-15 is attributed to reduced class sizes.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Staff is developing a community engagement plan to build relationships with more Monrovia residents for the purpose of creating a collective vision for the benefit of the community. In collaboration with the City of Monrovia Information Systems staff, a GIS map is being generated to illustrate specific target locations

where there are fewer library card holders. Staff will seek out opportunities to speak to, engage with, and partner with most service organizations, early literacy providers, and businesses in our community. Librarians are looking into taking programming and access to books to various locations such as Station Square to provide equitable delivery of library services to all people in Monrovia.

Enhancements will be made to current tours and outreach such as scavenger hunts, art projects, STEAM workshops, and Common Core support to illustrate the library resources through a hands-on approach

The Volunteer Storytelling Program has been in existence for about three years. 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. Staff will analyze continuation of the Volunteer Storytelling Program and whether it is the most effective use of volunteer's time.

OUTCOMES:

Community impact was captured in thank you letters after visits and interactions at the Reference Desk including:

- “Thank you so much for the books you got me. I'll take really good care of them and read them all. I appreciate you taking your time and getting the books for all of us. Thank you once again, and take care :) <3 – Teen from Canyon Oaks High School
- An English teacher at Clifton Middle School reported about 50% of all her English classes did the end of the year book project on a book presented at a Library Outreach Booktalk visit.
- A middle schooler came in the summer to ask for a book from the Library Outreach Booktalk visit. His parent said the librarian must have given a good impression because he never comes home excited about anything. He asked for two books, then said he would be back the following week to sign up for the Summer Reading program.
- A parent informed the librarian that her sixth grader had rushed home after booktalks and made a list of books to read. They came to the Library that day to find the books. She said he enjoyed the presentation and loved that the librarian only told them enough to want to read the book and drive them crazy.

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.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the Library Board move to receive and file AR-1 2014-15 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 2014-15 In-House and Outreach Visits Evaluation.***

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