



**CITY OF MONROVIA  
LIBRARY BOARD  
AGENDA REPORT**



**DEPARTMENT:** Public Services

**MEETING DATE:** October 27, 2016

**PREPARED BY:** Elizabeth Schneider  
Library Youth Services Supervisor

**AGENDA LOCATION:** AR -1

---

**TITLE:** 2015-16 Tours and Outreach Evaluation

**OBJECTIVE:** To provide the Library Board with an evaluation of the 2015-16 in-house and outreach visits provided by Youth Services.

**BACKGROUND:** In-house and outreach visits are an essential service provided by libraries. 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.

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 educational 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 shares 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. In-house visits generally last between 30 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 and engage with community members to grow a trusted relationship. 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.

**AR-1**

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

- **Introduction of Library Services and Library Personnel:** Tours serve to introduce patrons to Library resources and services the Library. 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 visit Santa Fe and Clifton Middle School twice a year to support recreational reading and help with choosing new titles. Staff has supported the afterschool book club at Clifton Middle School by giving booktalks during the 6<sup>th</sup> grade English classes, and offering tours of the Library to the Cub Academy Book Club. In January 2016, staff partnered with Canyon Oaks High School on the Great Stories Club grant funded by the American Library Association, to bring books to at-risk youth. Library staff visited Canyon Oaks High School five times between January and May to speak to two English classes and discuss three books donated through the grant. The theme of the grant was *Hack the Feed*. Teens received three books and participated in process art projects while discussing how media affects society, and how to have their message heard. The titles of the books were *Feed*, *Hunger Games* and *March*, a graphic novel by John Lewis. Over the course of this project, staff spoke to teens and developed trusted relationships, helping them to get library cards and discover their personal reading interests. Using money donated from the Friends of the Monrovia Public Library to support teen outreach, staff was able to purchase additional books based on student interest for students to keep. One teen commented, "I haven't gotten a book since Kindergarten, which was from the book fair." He chose two books to keep for his own collection.

**Parent Workshops:** Librarians continue to host parent and caregiver workshops to encourage and empower adults to take the lead in their child's education. This past year, staff presented to homeschool groups, Moms Club of Monrovia, and Pasadena City College Parent Education classes. The purpose of

these workshops is to identify the Monrovia Public Library as a key place for parents and caregivers 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 opportunities to explain the librarian’s role in supporting early literacy on an everyday bases - 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 2015-16. 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 2016 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 2015-16:

- |                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Wildrose Elementary          | Options Head Start Preschool           |
| Mayflower Elementary         | Method School                          |
| Monroe Elementary            | Tzu Chi Preschool                      |
| Plymouth Elementary          | Tzu Chi Elementary                     |
| Bradoaks Elementary          | Options After-School Care – Plymouth   |
| Clifton Middle School        | Pasadena City College Parent Education |
| Santa Fe Middle School       | Moms Club of Monrovia                  |
| Canyon Oaks High School      | Boys and Girls Club                    |
| Canyon Early Learning Center | Summer Extravaganza                    |
| First Lutheran Preschool     | 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		2015-16	
	Visits	Participants	Visits	Participants	Visits	Participants
Preschool	11	609	9	372	6	297
Elementary	11	705	14	1,022	16	857
Middle School	0	0	1	40	3	78
High School	0	0	2	16	4	152
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1,314</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1,450</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1,384</b>

Outreach Visits	2013-14		2014-15		2015-16	
	Visits	Participants	Visits	Participants	Visits	Participants
Preschool	15	960	27	1,208	20	700
Elementary	22	2,822	26	2,206	39	4,997
Middle School	80	2,447	77	2,266	63	2,400
High School	0	0	2	19	5	125
TOTALS	117	6,229	132	5,699	127	8,222

The total youth who participated in outreach and in-house visits were 7,149 in the 2014-2015 fiscal year. In 2015-16, the number of youth reached increased to 9,606.

**STAFF COMMENTS:**

This year, staff worked toward improving upon the existing tours and visits, while adding additional outreach opportunities to reach more people. Staff increased its visibility and built relationships with residents by being more present in the community and engaging people in unlikely places. Staff made a concerted effort to be a part of City events and engage in community programs. Some of these events include the MAP Neighborhood Conference, the Waterwise Gardening Fair and Native Plant Sale, Station Square celebrations, Canyon Early Learning Center Parent Night, Bradoaks Family Literacy Night, Canyon Park Family Campout, Healing Connections Suicide Prevention Fairs, and the March 4 Balance Rally.

Staff started a storytime at Friday Night Fair every Friday in the summer and the first Friday of the month in the fall. Turning up in unexpected places to promote use of the library gave working families an opportunity to spend time with their children through songs and stories. It also encouraged participation from families who may not use the library or are from different communities.

At community outreach events, participants are offered the opportunity to get a library card. With the addition of the new ILS system Apollo, staff now has the capability to make library cards on the spot and check out books to patrons outside of the Library. Remote check out was piloted at the Brews and Books event at Station Square, and was deemed successful.

Enhancements were made to current tours and outreach such as in-depth scavenger hunts to illustrate the library resources through a hands-on approach, and interactive musical storytimes to bring stories to life through song. A library history presentation is presented to support 3<sup>rd</sup> grade curriculum studying the history of Monrovia. Third grade classrooms visit the library or have a staff member come to them to learn about how the library got started in Monrovia, the history of the city and the amazing people who have supported literacy through the years.

Booktalks were increased to include an elementary school. Bradoaks Elementary asked for a librarian to come in the fall and spring. Teachers were given the opportunity to sign up for a librarian to come to the classroom – tell a story and do booktalks for 20 minutes. Teachers from kindergarten to fifth grade signed up. So many teachers expressed interest that the visits had to be spaced out among three days. Students were seen visiting the library afterwards, looking to check out the new and exciting titles.

Staff will continue to seek out opportunities to speak to, engage with, and partner with more service organizations, early literacy providers, and businesses in our community. Librarians will continue to bring programming and provide access to books to various locations such as Station Square to provide equitable delivery of library services to all people in Monrovia. Specific goals for next year include better serving Homeschool groups, and reaching out to special needs groups.

Staff has met with the Santa Fe Special Education teacher. The class plans to walk to the Library once a month for a storytime and to check out books.

Staff also hopes to form a better early literacy relationship with local preschools. The *On the Road to Reading* program was improved upon to be interactive at an age appropriate level for the zero to five year old age group. Pulling the program from online to paper is hoped to increase local preschool participation. Children can color in the cars every time they complete a book without the added effort of caregivers going online to enter the number of books completed. This is a move toward alleviating the barrier of recording reading for large preschool classrooms.

#### **OUTCOMES:**

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

- The City runs a summer camp called Summer Extravaganza. The summer culminates with a fair, where each child receives 10 tickets to spend on food, playing games or purchasing things. The library was invited to have a booth and offered one free book of their choice for 1 ticket. A 5<sup>th</sup> grader chose to spend all of his tickets on books, and begged his friends for their extra tickets. He left that day with 13 books of his own.
- A parent mentioned she had been talking about the library with her 2<sup>nd</sup> grader. They were remembering that a few years ago a librarian had recommended the *Rainbow Magic Fairies*. She said that series was the one that got her daughter excited about reading. Now her daughter always has a book in her hand and reads at a 4<sup>th</sup> grade level.
- “Thanks for having us at the library. You guys actually taught me something new, and that was how each book has its own number on it. That is pretty cool.” – 4<sup>th</sup> grader at Monroe Elementary

**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 2015-16 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 2015-16 In-House and Outreach Visits Evaluation.***

# AR-1