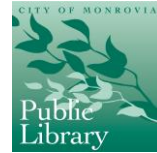




**CITY OF MONROVIA
LIBRARY BOARD
AGENDA REPORT**



DEPARTMENT: Community Services
Library Division

MEETING DATE: September 26, 2024

PREPARED BY: Amanda Carey, Librarian

AGENDA LOCATION: AR-2

TITLE: 2023-24 Teen Advisory Board (TAB) Evaluation

OBJECTIVE: To provide the Library Board with the annual evaluation of the 2023-24 Teen Advisory Board.

BACKGROUND: The Teen Advisory Board (TAB) was formed in June 2009 for sixth through twelfth grade teens to plan events for themselves and their peers at the Library, offer volunteer opportunities, and make suggestions for purchasing materials for the young adult collection. The TAB members get involved in the community by assisting with City events, and are able to establish relationships with other teens as well as with adult role models.

Library staff emphasizes the importance of creating a library environment that serves teens from diverse backgrounds, and the rich diversity of TAB enables a wider range of voices to be heard. Staff rely on teen feedback to design programs and purchase collection materials that appeal to teens throughout the community. The TAB program encourages lifelong library users and fosters a sense of empowerment and teamwork amongst teens via their suggestions for programs and services, further connecting teens with the library and with the community.

ANALYSIS: The Teen Advisory Board membership includes teens from all walks of life and from different schools in the area served by the library. Local schools include Monrovia High School, Santa Fe Middle School, Clifton Middle School, and area private schools, in addition to homeschool students. The teen membership also appeals to teens from neighboring communities, including teens attending school in Duarte, Arcadia, Pasadena, and throughout the San Gabriel Valley. Membership is open to all teens in sixth through twelfth grade. To join, teens must fill out an application and waiver, and both documents must be signed by their parent or guardian. The waiver is a formal document approved by the City of Monrovia, asking for emergency medical information and photo release approval, and is kept on file for one year. At the end of the school year, teens interested in continuing their TAB membership submit a new application with updated contact information.

The following information is an overview of the 2023-24 TAB program:

Members: The Teen Advisory Board membership started with 43 active teen members at the beginning of September 2023 and ended with 86 members at the end of August 2024. Inactive members and those who had not renewed were removed from the roster at the end of August 2023. Sixty-six members were moved to an inactive status. Those removed included teens who did not participate in TAB meetings or other TAB activities and did not submit a renewal application for the 2023-24 TAB year. Others that were removed included teens who had graduated high school, or moved out of the area. Even though there were a number of members removed from the roster due to inactivity at the beginning of the year, overall the library

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welcomed 41 new members to TAB throughout the 2023-24 year. The breakdown of members between middle school and high school students has remained steady. In the 2023-24 year 58% of TAB members were in 6th through 8th grade (compared to 57% in 2022-23 year). The remainder of TAB members, 42%, were in 9th through 12th grades (compared to 43% in 2022-23 year). Membership has continued to grow from schools outside of the Monrovia area. Sixty percent of members are either home schooled or attend school outside of the Monrovia area. While membership from all MUSD schools has decreased, membership from Monrovia High School students has continued to significantly decrease. Students graduating high school combined with lack of enrollment during the pandemic has contributed to the decrease in numbers.

The following is a comparison of each school’s student representation over a three year period.

TAB Membership by School			
School	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Clifton Middle School	11	28	14
Santa Fe Middle School	12	10	9
Monrovia High School	41	31	9
Monrovia Schools (non-MUSD)	n/a	n/a	2
Home Schools	2	1	5
Arcadia Schools	3	7	15
Duarte Schools	4	9	8
Pasadena Schools	2	5	3
Other	10	18	21

The following information is a comparison of grade level enrollment over a three-year period.

TAB Membership by Grade			
Grade	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Grade 6	11	21	14
Grade 7	12	24	14
Grade 8	11	16	23
Grade 9	8	11	8
Grade 10	14	14	14
Grade 11	21	9	9
Grade 12	8	14	4
Total TAB Members	85	109	86

TAB Leadership Council: Several TAB council members graduated high school and new council members were chosen to fill their places for the 2023-24 year. The TAB members who were interested in serving on the TAB council applied and wrote about what they believe to be TAB’s strengths and weaknesses. The application process took place in August to select TAB council members for a term of one year. Applicants interviewed with the TAB supervising librarian and then were offered positions on the leadership council. The 2023-24 TAB Council included the positions High School President, Middle School President, Secretary, and Councilmembers. The TAB Council led each monthly meeting, under supervision of the TAB supervising librarian.

Programs: The Teen Advisory Board planned and participated in several events in the 2023-24 school year. This year introduced a new TAB planned and led program called “TAB Presents”. During TAB meetings throughout the year teens brainstormed ideas for programs, planned what materials and directions they would need and then led several quarterly events for teens. Some of these events included a Minute to Win it Challenge, Laser Tag, and Pumpkin Carving planned for fall 2024. In addition, the popular Teen Game Hangout program continued monthly, where teens could play both Nintendo Switch Games and board

games. Another new monthly event for teens was introduced in the 23/24 year called “Pop-up Makerspace for Teens”, where teens can drop into the teen area on the last Wednesday of the month to use a makerspace cart filled with supplies to make art or explore technology. Both the Game Hangout and the Pop-up Makerspace are led by TAB volunteers. These volunteers welcome other teens into the events, show them what is on offer, and generally host the event. Attendance at teen programs leans towards those in grades 6 - 8, with some participation from teens in 9 – 12 grades. The Game Hangouts and the Laser Tag events are very popular with middle schoolers, while the Pop-up Makerspace attracts a few high schoolers in addition to the middle school attendees.

Feedback: At the end of the 23/24 year in August TAB members reflected on the year and completed surveys about what they would like to happen in the next year. One of the activities that many members mentioned they would like to have is a Book Club. Other activities mentioned were more hands-on events where they would make crafts, snacks, or even sensory materials like slime. Some quotes from the surveys are listed below:

In response to a question about what they would like the library to offer:

- “More space in the Teen Area”
- “If it’s possible, maybe a 3D printing event, or a writing event”
- “I would like the library to have more private [teen] space in the children’s section”
- “A weekend or summer book club would be fun”
- “Room to play games (video and board)”
- “More private study rooms”

In response to a question about what ideas they have for TAB specifically:

- “Honestly, I’m not sure. I feel like TAB has improved a lot since I’ve first started”
- “Add book clubs to the list of events”
- “More fun games to play as a group”
- “I think it would be a good idea for TAB to do more team bonding exercises or activities during the meetings”
- “Have some hands on activities in the TAB meetings, like games that help you learn about the library”

In addition to this regular survey, high school TAB members were asked to participate in a separate survey about teen programs, focusing on low high school attendance. Some quotes from the surveys are listed below:

In response to “If you did not attend any events, why not?”

- “The lack of people in my age group”
- “Some events (laser tag) were not interesting to me”
- “I am busy with school”

In response to “How can teen events be improved”

- “The high school is also trying its best to get its students to be involved in activities. It may be the lack of motivation and embarrassment as it’s hard for teens to put themselves out there. Have some unexpected events like baking/cooking. Or just working together on something”
- “I think that teen events can be improved by happening after school, but not exactly too close to when students get out of school. Maybe around 5”
- “I think I would like to see more hands on workshops such as cooking, baking, the [Sunprinting Workshop], things that allow high schoolers to take things home”.
- “I’m unsure if other people feel the same way, but sometimes I feel like I’d be more interested in going to events if they didn’t require signing up. Having to make a commitment I’m not sure if I have time to attend stresses me out”

In response to this feedback several events are planned or being planned for the next year including a Writers Workshop hosted by a local author in November 2024, a tween cooking class in January 2025, and more hands on social activities added to the TAB meetings. In addition, the TAB leadership council has talked about leading a TAB book club in the next year.

Projects: The teen members volunteered their time to represent TAB at Library Board meetings. The members also played a role in suggesting and planning teen programs, such as Teen Game Nights, Maker Events, and Laser Tag. The TAB members also worked with library staff when volunteering to prepare crafts, kits, and activities for patrons to pick-up or use during library programs. They also worked collaboratively on their Discord server to share ideas, ask questions, and engage with one another.

Collaboration: The Teen Advisory Board collaborated with the Recreation Division's Youth Commission to host a booth with a scavenger hunt activity at the Earth Day event in Library Park. They also worked to create a kids craft activity for the Spring Egg Hunt at Recreation Park (which was later held at the library due to the event being rained out). The teen members volunteered at the Make a Difference Day event and planned an activity for families during the Thankful and Grateful event. They also had the opportunity to work with the Monrovia Duarte Black Alumni Association again this year for their Children's Art Exhibit and Black History Month Celebration in February.

Volunteer Hours: This year the TAB members volunteered for a total of 1,051 hours. This is compared to the 2022-23 year, where TAB members volunteered a total of 1,117 hours. The teen volunteer hours remained steady this year. The members were able to volunteer at library programming and participate in city-wide events. Other teen volunteer hours included attending TAB meetings, planning teen events, and representing TAB at Library Board meetings. Teen volunteers continued to support the Summer Reading Program with a booth in the lobby on select days throughout the summer. This year, 50% of middle school members and 43% of high school members completed or exceeded their required 10 hours of service. This is compared to the previous year where 37% of middle school members and 47% of high school members completed their hours. Though membership has slightly decreased, participation has increased. Overall completion of TAB requirements has increased from 36% to 47%.

Outcomes: The Covid-19 pandemic and impacts of virtual instruction continued to effect teens throughout this school year. Teen feedback throughout the past several years has shown the significance that TAB plays in the community and the library. Teens have expressed that they feel like they are missing out on social interactions and feel less connected then they did prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. Many of their suggestions for improvements to teen programs centers on building community and creating more opportunities for teens to interact with each other. This year the focus was on creating programming that allowed more opportunities for teens to participate and connect with each other. In addition, helping with city-wide events gave TAB members the chance to work with other youth organizations and community groups.

Membership maintenance, including requiring renewal applications yearly, was re-instated for the 2022-23 TAB year. This maintenance continued with the 2023-24 year. The teen membership overall dropped at the start of the year as members who had not participated in the last year, graduated from high school, or moved were taken off the active roster. Participation in meetings and events continued to increase this year with 10% more members completing their required hours of service. Word of mouth about the TAB program also increased, especially in schools outside of the Monrovia Unified School District (MUSD). Staff welcomed in 41 new members this year, including 26 new members who go to school outside of Monrovia. In the 2024-25 TAB year we hope to increase the membership of MUSD students by doing more promotion for the program on the Monrovia Reads Literacy Van, encouraging TAB members to recruit their friends, and working with the TAB leadership council to create more marketing materials.

The Teen Advisory Board continued to be an essential connection for teens to the library as they navigated the effects of the pandemic and return to in-person activities. Teen members were able to build community by attending meetings and organizing social events. Since the pandemic interrupted the social components of teens' everyday lives, TAB was even more crucial in maintaining this connection, ensuring that the library maintained a welcoming and familiar environment for teens through the changes and challenges brought on by the pandemic and its after effects.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT: There is no environmental impact associated with this program.

FISCAL IMPACT: During the fiscal year of 2023-24, TAB members contributed 1,051 volunteer hours to the library. Based upon a Library Aide wage of \$16.01 per hour, this volunteer support saved the Library \$16,810.50. The TAB program is funded entirely by donations from the Friends of the Monrovia Public Library.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Library Board move to receive and file AR-2 2023-24 Teen Advisory Board (TAB) Evaluation Report.

LIBRARY BOARD ACTION Required: If the Library Board concurs, the appropriate action would be a motion: *Receive and file AR-2 2023-24 Teen Advisory Board (TAB) Evaluation Report.*

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