

Idaho Libraries

In an increasingly online world, Idaho's 103 library jurisdictions might have met the same fate as other "brick and mortar" entities facing lower patronage and greater competition from Internet-based services, but in fact, Idaho library use has never been higher. In fiscal year 2015, there were more than 8.6 million visits to public libraries in Idaho. In fiscal year 2014, Idaho libraries had the 5th highest per capita circulation of children's materials and attendance at children's programs in the nation. Attendance at young adult programs ranked 7th per capita and has increased 139% over the past five years. While attendance at adult programs was 39th in the nation, per capita, turnout at adult programs has increased by 40% in Idaho during the past five years.^a

This issue of Idaho at a Glance offers an overview of Idaho's library community, describes the roles it plays in education and workforce development. **W I L I E**

City library jurisdictions range in size from Salmon River Public Library in Riggins (population of 418) to Boise (220,866). District library jurisdictions range from Clarkia (88) to the two-county Prairie River District (18,318), to the Community Library Network (108,419) based in

Top priorities for Idaho's library community are supporting the state's efforts to improve educational attainment among its K-12 and postsecondary student population and supporting the learning of all Idahoans. Libraries play an important educational role by:

preparing young children to enter school ready to learn through research-based early literacy and "Read to Me" programs. Once children are in school, the priority of school libraries is to meet students' educational needs from kindergarten through graduate school.

minimizing the summer learning slide for children and teens with reading and outreach programs. In 2016, more than 52,000 Idaho students participated in library summer reading programs; another 55,400 were served through library outreach programs.^c

optimizing out-of-school time with access to resources and programs like "Make It at the Library." Given that Idaho students only spend 20% of their waking time in the classroom, libraries focus on offering educational programming for the rest of students' time.

supporting lifelong learning and creative activities of all Idahoans. Library special collections provide access to historical photographs, state documents, university historical materials, rare books, digital collections, and other primary source materials. Many Idaho libraries are reconfiguring their spaces and resources to provide room for Makerspaces in response to patrons' desire to create original content. These spaces are increasingly incorporating technological advances such as coding resources, 3D printing, video editing, and other STEM-

The authors would like to thank Jean Henscheid, Christy Dearien, and Priscilla Salant from the McClure Center for their editorial and other assistance.

—Public Libraries Survey Data, 2014,