

Municipality of Anchorage
Library Advisory Board Agenda
Microsoft Teams Virtual & In-Person Meeting
Loussac Library (note: moved to Moose Room)

May 21, 2025

Attendance

_____ Debra Bronson
_____ Megan Cacciola
_____ Olivia Garrett
_____ Jen Griffis
_____ Marc Johnson
_____ Rachel Odom
_____ Meneka Thiru
_____ Cristy Willer

Topic	Leader	Time	Action
Call to Order/Land Acknowledgement	Cristy Willer	5:30	
Roll Call & book recommendations	Cristy Willer	5:35	
Approval of Agenda & Minutes	Cristy Willer	5:40	
Resource: Novelist	Jim Curran	5:45	
Collection Management Policy	Marjorie Harrison Director	5:55	
Capital Projects Planning	Marjorie Harrison Director	6:05	
IMLS funding	Olivia Garrett Board Member	6:15	
Board Report	Marjorie Harrison Director	6:30	
Persons to be Heard	TBA	6:45	
Board Comments and Adjourn	Cristy Willer	6:55	

Following is a link to join the meeting virtually:

https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_Yzl3YzZkMmEtMzBmOS00Y2RmLWEyYjgtZjNiMGJjMmZmZmQ1%40thre%20ad.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22127a78cb-19c5-46ca-b11f-87c33c49a907%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%2232153d56-30ab-46e0-9dc1-9816df7e2721%22%7d%22%7d#/registration.

Call in: +1 907-519-0237, 632109625#

Municipality of Anchorage
Library Advisory Board Agenda
Microsoft Teams Virtual & In-Person Meeting
Loussac Library
April 16, 2025

Attendance

PH	Debra Bronson
X	Megan Cacciola
X	Olivia Garrett
X	Jen Griffis
X	Marc Johnson
E	Rachel Odom
X	Meneka Thiru
X	Cristy Willer

X = Present, E = Excused, U = Unexcused, PH = Phone, remote = Teams

Staff

Marjorie Harrison (Director); Emily Paige (Collection Management Services Coordinator);
Rebecca Lampert (Administrative Assistant)

Guest

Wade Hampton Miller

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Cristy Willer at 5:30 pm.

Land Acknowledgment

Cristy Willer acknowledged that the Board meets on the traditional lands of the Upper Cook Inlet Dena'ina Athabascan people.

Approvals

- Action: The agenda was approved with the addition of an update on the Downtown Library, as requested by Member Johnson. (Member Cacciola motioned, Member Thiru seconded.)
- Action: Minutes from the February 19th LAB meeting approved. (Member Garrett motioned, Member Cacciola seconded.)

Staff Presentations:

- Emily Paige, Collection Management Services Coordinator, presented Explora. This research database provides high-quality full-text articles from magazines, encyclopedias, academic journals, and books and topic overviews and videos in easy-to-browse categories organized by popular topics. You can print, email or save your search results. Options for educators, elementary school age children, middle school age children, and public libraries. To find this great resource go to: [Databases A to Z - Anchorage Public Library](#) and click on Explora.
- Marjorie Harrison, Library Director, shared information on the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) funding cuts and potential impacts on library services. Discussion followed. Member Garrett offered to draft a statement to be discussed later.

Guest Presentations: None**Director's Report:**

The April Director's Report was distributed and is on file. Director Harrison gave a brief update on the status of the Downtown Library.

Adjourn:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m. (Member Thiru motioned; Member Griffis seconded.)

Education & Skills for Life

Recent Accomplishments

- Red Coffey (Youth Services Librarian, Muldoon) hosted three Saturday Morning Storytimes with 24 participants across all events.
- Lisa Bricker (Youth Services Librarian, Loussac) hosted April's Explore program about bridges to 21 enthusiastic attendees.
- Mountain View Library installed two new AWE Early Literacy Stations in the children's department
- Mountain View Library enrolled three families in the 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program in April — the first new sign-ups since the start of the year.

Next Steps/Coming Soon

- Keelin Baughman (Teen Services Librarian, Loussac) will attend a Job Fair at Wendler Middle school to talk to students about how to become a librarian and what skills and classes they could take in school to help them get a future job in a library.
- Lisa Bricker (Youth Services Librarian, Loussac) will present to the Alaska School Library Learning Academy in June on Anchorage Public Library's Youth Services Department's book selection and collection management criteria.

Limiting Factors/Concerns

- None at this time.

Bridge to Information and Resources

Recent Accomplishments

- Bear Awareness Week returned to Muldoon Library in April with a bear-themed storytime, a bear bell craft program, and a wildlife safety presentation with staff from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.
- Loussac Youth Services staff visited three elementary schools, one middle school, and two high schools in April to announce Reading Rendezvous and Summer Discovery and talk about library resources, both in classroom visits and at family nights.

Next Steps/Coming Soon

- Youth outreach visits to schools from all library locations for Summer Discovery will continue in May.
- Loussac Youth Services will host our annual Reading Rendezvous, the kickoff party for Summer Discovery, Saturday, May 17, 12 - 4 PM. This event hosts dozens of organizations who provide free reading and learning based activities for families, along with free entertainment on stage like The Button Box Gang, Tomodachi Daiko drummers, and storytimes with local authors.

Limiting Factors/Concerns

- None at this time.

Building Community

Recent Accomplishments

- In partnership with Alaska Public Media and IndieLens, Sarah Preskitt (Adult Services Coordinator, Loussac) presented a public screening *Free for All: The Public Library* on Saturday, April 12 followed by an opportunity to meet and chat with new Library Director Marjorie Harrison. The event was attended by 60 patrons, 15 of whom returned event surveys with responses such as “Excited to meet the new Director,” “I did not realize how historical the value of Libraries has been to democracy and equality,” and “The film brought forth a flood of feelings, memories, and emotions associated with public libraries. And had lots of new to me historical and social history!”
- Youth Services hosted best-selling children’s chapter book author Max Brallier at three Anchorage Public Library events and three Anchorage School District events. We also partnered with the Wasilla Public Library to offer a library and school visit in Wasilla. Across all the events, we saw 214 attendees at Anchorage Public Library events, 955 at the Anchorage School District events, and 616 at the Wasilla events, for total attendance of 1,785. **(see recap attached)**
- Keelin Baughman (Teen Services Librarian, Loussac), along with Sandy Lukes (Community Engagement Librarian, Loussac) and Ariel Mortem (Technical Services Librarian, Loussac) staffed a table at Arctic Comic Con to share various nerdy resources, including the new database Comics Plus. They signed up several new patrons, checked out materials, and handed out event flyers for D&D, Star Wars Marathon, and more.
- Samantha Blanquart (Youth Services Coordinator) cohosted a special storytime with Mayor LaFrance at Loussac on April 28 for 33 attendees. Mayor LaFrance read stories about citizenship and kindness. One family shared their daughter’s excitement about meeting a woman in leadership while she took photos with the Mayor. **(see photo below)**
- Mountain View’s family storytime saw a 32-person increase in attendance from March to April, reflecting a growing interest in early literacy programming
- On April 23, Sue Sommers (Youth Services Librarian, Chugiak-Eagle River) hosted 35 children and adults from Northern Lights Preschool for a special storytime and tour of the library.
- The Gerrish Library celebrated Poetry Month with a Haiku Contest that engaged 17 creative participants.
- The Gerrish Library has wrapped up its annual Knot Just Knitters program that starts in September and ends in April with a total of 70 participants for its duration.

Next Steps/Coming Soon

- The Gerrish Library is organizing an Author Visit with Tricia Brown, author of *The Queen of Fairbanks*.

Limiting Factors/Concerns

- None at this time.

Internal Goals and Strategies

Recent Accomplishments

- Collection Management Services by the numbers for May:

Task	Number of Items
Collection Maintenance- Updates to existing items	3,306
Donations- Added to the collection from community donations	237
New Item Processing- Books, movies etc, added to the collection	2,190

- On Thursday, April 17, all library locations closed for our annual staff training day. 86 staff members learned about the strategic plan and helped develop the initial implementation. We also had programming, technical skills, and readers advisory training sessions as well as a visit with Mayor LaFrance.
- GHD architecture and design presented some initial concepts for the Downtown Library in Old City Hall. After consultation with the Anchorage Library Foundation, the concepts were returned to GHD to develop a concept that will fit within the available budget.
- The Strategic Planning Committee completed the final draft of the strategic plan. The plan was presented to all staff at Staff Day where staff were asked to prioritize issues and provide feedback. This information was added into the plan and will be presented to Leadership Team for review in May. The committee spent 24 hours over eight months reviewing staff input, challenges, and feedback to craft areas of focus and action steps to guide the library over the next three years.
- The library hired Hays Research to conduct a public survey aimed at people who do not use the library. The results will help inform the community aspect of the strategic plan.
- The Assembly approved the First Quarter revised budget which included an increase of \$10,000 to the library for new printing software.
- Kristie Nelsen (Virtual Services Librarian, Loussac) coordinated with our website developer on the implementation of a website upgrade. This upgrade will ensure our site continues to keep pace with changing software and security needs while the patron experience will be minimally impacted.
- Kristie Nelsen (Virtual Services Librarian, Loussac) has been coordinating with the librarian who purchases ebooks and audiobooks for the Alaska Digital Library consortium to identify titles that the consortium has lost access to and needs to repurchase.

Next Steps/Coming Soon

- Celia Hartz (Automations Coordinator) in coordination with Robert Zamarron (Library Information Technology Specialist) and Municipal Information Technology Department have begun the update of computers and the Windows 11 Migration and this will continue over the next month.

Limiting Factors/Concerns

- Security incidents:

Security Incidents	Loussac	Chugiak-Eagle River	Gerrish	Mountain View	Muldoon	Total
Incidents resulting in trespasses	6	2	0	12	0	20
Other Incidents						0
Total	6	2	0	12	0	20

Library Board Updates

Recent Accomplishments

- Beyond The Stacks 2025, held by Anchorage Public Library on April 5, 2026 was a record-breaking success with over \$140,000 raised for the Library.
- The Anchorage Library Foundation hosted and intimate meet and greet for Library Director Marjorie Harrison on April 24. Board members, major donors, and members of the Next Chapter Society were invited to meet Marjorie, and share their feedback about the library.

Next Steps/Coming Soon

- None at this time.

Limiting Factors/Concerns

- None at this time.

Social Media/Photos



Mayor LaFrance holds *What Can a Citizen Do?* By Dave Eggers, one of the books read at the special storytime at Loussac.

A screenshot of a Facebook post. The top part is a graphic for 'Drawn to the Library' National Library Week, April 6-12, 2025. The graphic has a pink background and features four small illustrations: a person reading, a person on a bicycle, a person sewing, and a person pointing at a book. The ALA logo is in the top right corner. Below the graphic, the post shows 16 likes, 1 comment, and 6 shares. The comment is from Amelie Walker, who thanks the Anchorage public libraries for helping her find more cousins through research. The comment text is: 'Thanks to the Anchorage public libraries, I found more cousins that we didn't know existed, due to racism back in the early 1900's. And all because I went to the library to do research for an upcoming trip, and one of the books I checked out mentioned a relative who traveled to the Yukon Territory, had 11 kids, and returned to Ontario without mentioning them, probably because their beautiful mom was of First Nation Na-Cho Nyak Dun. Hopefully we will be meeting some of them this September, thanks to the Anchorage Public Libraries, the Mayo Historical Society, and my travel planning!'

Patron feedback on Facebook



MAX BRALLIER

VISIT APRIL 2025

WHY MAX

Max Brallier is a popular author for children ages 6-14, whose most famous series, *The Last Kids on Earth*, was adapted into a Netflix original TV show. During his trip, he visited 3 communities (Anchorage, Eagle River, and Wasilla) at 4 public libraries and spoke with students from 13 elementary and middle schools. His engaging presentations encouraged children to become storytellers by being inspired by their experiences and interests. Following each talk, he answered questions from the audience with candor, humor, and kindness. During library appearances, he signed over 500 items for very enthusiastic fans, including a family that flew in from Juneau just to attend his visit.

WHY READ SCARY STORIES? *

Horror offers solace

Kids today are living in a scary world and there is no way to shield them from that. Reading scary books allows kids to navigate their fears in a controlled way.

Horror teaches lessons about fear

When kids read scary books they see themselves reflected. Horror stories are a way to make connections. They teach kids that they too can overcome their fear. Horror teaches kids how to slay pretend monsters so that later in life, when they meet a real one, they'll know what to do.

Horror is fun

Horror and comedy are different sides of the same coin. They both require the building and releasing of tension. Horror is fun and kids deserve to have fun.



Mountain View Library

FUNDING AT A GLANCE

INCOME

Friends of the Library (APL)	\$16,000
Wasilla Library Association (WPL)	950
Copper Whale Inn (donation value)	<u>1,000</u>
	\$17,950

EXPENSES

Appearance Fees	\$16,000
Airfare and Travel	907
Hotel (donated)	<u>1,000</u>
	\$17,907



#1 New York Times bestselling author of *Last Kids on Earth*, *Eerie Elementary* and more!

Anchorage Public Library
10,376 lifetime loans of all titles

Wasilla Public Library
921 lifetime loans of all titles

ASD Circulation for all 80 K-12 libraries
13,892 lifetime loans of all titles

MEETING MAX BRALLIER

1,785 Attendees



West High Auditorium/ASD Visit



Loussac Library



Chugiak High Auditorium/ ASD Visit



Chugiak-Eagle River Library



Chugiak-Eagle River Library



"Last Kids On Earth Fan Club Member" Loussac Library



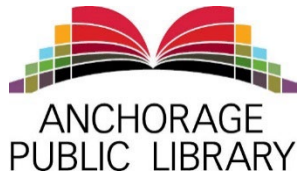
Wasilla Public Library



Service High Auditorium/ASD Visit

Presented by





Collections Management Policy

Effective Date: (MM/DD/YYYY)	Approval Date (MM/DD/YYYY)
Supersedes P&P: Collection Management Policy	Previous version dated: 11/22/2023
Final approval by: (LIBRARY DIRECTOR SIGNATURE)	

Purpose

To summarize established procedures and standard practices used for building and maintaining the collection of physical and digital resources at Anchorage Public Library.

Policy

Intellectual Freedom: The Library recognizes that American democracy depends on an informed and engaged citizenry which can only be realized when a full range of ideas is accessible to people as embodied in the First Amendment of the United States Constitution which protects the free expression of ideas.

The Library's collection, protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and Article 1, Section 5 of the Constitution of the State of Alaska, is a marketplace of ideas that reflects all experiences and points of view. The presence of an item in the Library does not indicate an endorsement of its content by the Library. Library materials are not marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and access is not restricted beyond what is required to protect materials from theft or damage.

The standards stated in this policy apply equally to the materials for children. The Library believes that individuals may reject for themselves and their children—and only for their children—materials which they find unsuitable. Caregivers who wish to limit or restrict the use of the Library by their children should personally oversee their selections.

Selection Responsibility: Ultimate authority for materials selection rests with the Library Director. The Collection Management Services Coordinator recommends policy and implements procedures for the development and management of the Library's collections. Collection management includes assessment of community needs; establishment of policy and budget to support those needs; the selection,

acquisition, maintenance, and promotion of materials; and evaluation of the collection and its effectiveness.

A team of librarians, under the direction of the Collection Management Services Coordinator, assists with collection management as Selectors. Selectors use professional judgment and expertise based on an understanding of user needs and knowledge of authors and publishers or producers. This policy provides guidelines to assist Selectors in choosing from the vast array of available materials.

Selection Criteria: There is no single standard which can be applied in all acquisition decisions. Some materials are judged in terms of artistic merit, scholarship, or value. Others are selected to satisfy the recreational or informational needs of the community. Materials are judged on overall effect rather than specific illustrations, words, passages, or scenes which may be considered offensive by some.

Librarians select materials identified from sources including professional and commercial reviews, listservs and web sites, book lists and bibliographies, local culture and events, and public and staff recommendations.

All acquisitions are evaluated against the criteria listed below; materials need not meet all the criteria to be selected.

A. General Criteria for the Evaluation of Library Materials:

- a. Appropriateness and effectiveness of format to content
- b. Attention of critics, reviewers, media, and public
- c. Authority of author or creator
- d. Availability and price
- e. Contemporary significance or permanent value
- f. Full spectrum coverage on controversial subjects
- g. Popularity and local demand
- h. Present and potential relevance to community needs
- i. Prizes, awards, or honors received
- j. Representation of cultural heritage
- k. Reputation and/or significance of the author, illustrator, editor, publisher, or producer
- l. Skills, competence, and purpose of author, producer, performer, etc.
- m. Suitability of subject and style for intended audience

B. Specific Criteria for the Evaluation of Works of Information and Opinion:

- a. Authority of author
- b. Clarity, accuracy, and logic of presentation
- c. Comprehensiveness and depth of treatment
- d. Contribution to subject balance of the entire collection and relationship to existing collection
- e. Objectivity and integrity

C. Specific Criteria for the Evaluation of Works of Imagination:

- a. Artistic expression, presentation, and experimentation
- b. Illustration of genre, trend, or culture
- c. Sustained interest
- d. Vitality and originality

Self-Published Materials: The Library may purchase self-published materials if they meet the criteria mentioned above and exhibit quality standards of editing and production.

Suggest-A-Purchase: The Library welcomes suggestions from the community for possible purchase of materials. All suggestions are given serious consideration. Suggestions are considered by the same criteria as all other materials purchased for the Library.

World Languages: The Library collects recreational and informational materials in languages other than English for adults and youth to meet the needs of the community. Materials in a variety of languages are collected based on community demographics and availability of materials.

Digital Resources: Digital resources, including e-Books, e-Audiobooks, streaming media, downloadable material, and databases are subject to the same general selection criteria as other materials. However, some digital materials are only available through subscription services and the Library does not control the content of subscription services.

Special Items: Staff creates, collects, and compiles special items such as packets and kits to fit community goals and educational outcomes.

Reconsideration of Materials: Individuals objecting to specific materials in the collection may initiate a request for reconsideration by filling out a Request for Reconsideration form available at all locations and on the Library web site. The Collection Management Services Coordinator will review the request and assign one or more librarians to read, view, or listen to the item being challenged. This group will meet and discuss the item in question and re-evaluate it against the Collection Management Policy with consideration to how the item does or does not suit the Library's mission.

A request for reconsideration will only be considered if it is from an individual who is a resident of the Municipality of Anchorage or is otherwise eligible to hold an Anchorage Public Library card. Items challenged within the previous three calendar years are not eligible for reconsideration.

A written reply indicating the Library's position and any action taken will be sent to the individual making the complaint within 15 business days dependent on the Library's ability to obtain adequate copies of the materials for all members of the reconsideration committee.

A written appeal of the staff decision may be presented to the Library Director within 15 business days. The Library Director has 15 business days to provide a written reply with his/her decision. The written decision of the Library Director will be final.

Donations: See Donation Policy

De-Selection/Discarding: The Library's collection is regularly reviewed by Selector librarians using weeding criteria to determine what items to keep or discard. Criteria considered during this review include, but is not limited to, physical condition, frequency of use, obsolescence, number of copies in the system, shelving space, research value, adequacy of coverage in the subject area, and availability of similar material.

Depending on how digital materials are acquired, which is determined by publishers, some items will expire within a set amount of time while others may have limits on the number of borrows allowed per purchase. When digital titles expire or their borrows are used in full, Selectors responsible for digital materials will consider the same weeding criteria that is applied to physical material and will determine if a digital item should be renewed or repurchased.

Special Collections: Anchorage Public Library has two special collections: the Alaska Collection and the Loussac Caregivers' Collection. Both collections are housed at the Z.J. Loussac Library.

- **Alaska Collection:** The collection encourages the appreciation and enjoyment of Alaska's history, culture, development, institutions, and natural resources, and is relevant to the study and understanding of the state, including reference and research support. The materials in the collection encompass the Municipality of Anchorage, the state of Alaska, adjacent areas of the Arctic, and Native and Indigenous populations throughout. The collection includes most commercially published works on Alaska written for adults in the English language, Municipality of Anchorage public documents and publications, locally published works that contribute to the mission of the collection, and materials in Alaska Native languages. Items collected include books, government documents, newspapers, periodicals, media, maps, microform, and electronic resources. There are some genealogy resources and rare historical materials included in the collection; however, this part of the collection is not actively added to as other nearby institutions cover this subject more comprehensively.
- **Loussac Caregivers' Collection:** The collection is intended for adults who work with children in any capacity. Early childhood education (with an emphasis on literacy) and elementary education (with an emphasis on science and math and continued literacy instruction) are considered core resources for the collection. Also included as part of the core are materials on brain development in infants and toddlers, and activities books aimed at families or group care settings. Materials about homeschooling, including how-to guides, philosophies, and educational activity guides, are prominent. The collection also includes materials about parenting, children's literature, youth services librarianship, and providing services to children in a public library setting.

Departments/divisions affected

All Library departments.

References

1. MOA P&P 01-01
2. MOA P&P 24-13 Maintaining Capital Asset Accountability and Financial Reporting, effective December 31, 2020
3. APL Donations Policy
4. Anchorage Public Library, Mission Statement
5. U.S. Const. amend. I
6. Alaska. Const. art. I, § 5 and Alaska. Const. amend I
7. Anchorage Public Library, Request for Reconsideration Form

Definitions

Intellectual Freedom: the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause or movement may be explored.

Selection: The process of choosing materials to add into the Library collection, with consideration to specific criteria, which is accomplished by professional librarians.

Reconsideration: The process of reviewing an item in the collection against which a library patron has submitted a complaint in writing using the Request for Reconsideration process.

Request for Reconsideration form: a written document that identifies the specific resource that is of concern and the reasons for reconsidering its inclusion in the library's collection.

De-selection/Discarding: The process of removing or "weeding" materials from the Library collection, with consideration to specific criteria, which is accomplished by professional librarians.

Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC): Generally referred to as simply "the library catalog," an OPAC is a web-based user interface that allows users to access a library's collection.

Library Director: Agency Head of the Anchorage Public Library. Any reference to Library Director applies to the director or their designee.

Responsibilities

Responsibilities related to selection/de-selection & management of the collection:

Collection Management Services Coordinator:

- Coordinate the librarians who make the selection and/or de-selection of materials.
- Oversee and assist with the processes of the related tasks, including the ordering and weeding of materials.
- Administer the vendor accounts and representative relationships.
- Working with the Budget Coordinator, manage the budget and documentation of the department.
- Coordinate with the Technical Services department for accurate and timely receiving and processing of materials.
- Work with Patron Services for the physical organization and tidiness of shelved materials for discoverability by patrons and staff.
- Respond to patron suggestions for the purchase or reconsideration of materials.

Selection Librarians:

- Using the selection criteria established by this policy, select materials to be added or removed from the collection.

Technical Services Staff:

- Receive and process material shipments.
- Work with the relevant entities to maintain the integrity of the Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC).
- Maintain relationships with vendors.

Patron Services Staff:

- Shelf and maintain the physical collection according to established Library guidelines.
- Assist patrons with library materials.

Budget Coordinator:

- Working with the Collection Management Service Coordinator, manage the budget and documentation of the department.

Responsibilities related to Reconsideration of Materials:

Collection Management Services Coordinator:

- Respond to all Requests for Reconsideration submitted to the Library.
- Assign multiple librarians to review relevant material.
- Reply in writing to the complainant within 15 business days with the details of the Library's position and any action taken (timeframe dependent on the Library's ability to obtain adequate copies of the materials for all members of the reconsideration committee.)

Library Director

- Receive any written appeals of the Library's Reconsideration of Materials decision.

- Review decision and material.
- Reply to the complainant within 15 business days with a written decision regarding appeal.

Responsibilities related to donations made for the collection – See Donation Policy

Procedure

Manage the Library's collection, including both physical and digital materials, by utilizing this policy's standards for selection and de-selection while striving to represent the entire community of Anchorage, and providing educational and informational resources that fulfill the mission of the Anchorage Public Library.

Annual review date/lead review responsibility

This policy will be reviewed every two years by:

1. Collection Management Services Coordinator
2. Library Leadership Team
3. Library Director

List reviews and/or edits for the previous 10 years.

Review Date	Review Agency	Review/Edit
5/10/2025	Marjorie Harrison, Library Director	Review
5/8/2025	Emily Paige, CMS Coordinator	Edited
03/06/2025	Majorie Harrison, Library Director	Review
7/23/2024	Library Leadership Team (separate material donation policy created)	Review/Edit
6/3/2024	Emily Paige, CMS Coordinator	Edited
2/16/2024	Library Leadership Team	Review
11/22/2023	Virginia C. McClure, Library Director	Edited
8/19/2020	Library Advisory Board	Review

8/19/2020	Mary Jo Torgenson, Library Director	Edited
9/15/2021	Library Advisory Board (Material Donations Policy)	Review
9/15/2021	Judy Eledge, Library Director (Material Donations Policy)	Edited

Potential partner sign-ons (please add anyone I missed!)

Alaska Literacy Project

Best Beginnings

Thread

Alaska Humanities Forum

Fairbanks Library Commission

Alaska State Library

Juneau Public Library (unclear if they have any governing boards)

AK Children's Trust

Anchorage Museum

Alaska State Museum

Museum of the North

Other libraries statewide

Alaska State Council on the Arts

UAA/APU consortium library

Museums Alaska

Alaska Afterschool Network

Alaska Association of School Boards

Draft letter editing instructions:

Please make your edits as comments to make the editing process go more smoothly. Highlight the text you would like to edit, right-click, and then click the little comment icon.

You can start a thread by adding comments under someone else's comment. Just click on their comment and a small text box will appear.

Please keep in mind that this letter is a matter of public record as soon as it is shared with members of APL's advisory board. Please make your edits and comments accordingly.

Draft letter:

Dear [federal delegation member]

We, the undersigned **organizations**, are writing in strong opposition to recent cuts made to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the proposed elimination of the agency. IMLS provides vital funding through grants that support libraries and museums across the United States, including grants to the State of Alaska and tribes within the state. On March 14th an executive order titled "*Continuing the Reduction of the Federal Bureaucracy*" called on 7 agencies, including the IMLS, to develop and submit plans to the Office of Management and

Budget to reduce their function and personnel to the “minimum presence and function required by law.” On March 31st, all staff at the IMLS were placed on administrative leave, which leaves them unable to communicate with IMLS grantees or process grant payouts. In Alaska, this means that FY25 grant funds from the Native American Basic and Enhancement Grants, the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Grant, as well as grants that support museum services and programs, are currently impacted. Without these grant funds, critical services that Alaskan citizens and communities rely upon are at risk.

Through state grants under the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), IMLS distributes funds that support vital literacy resources that are tailored to local needs and priorities. In FY 2024, Alaska received \$1.27 million in LSTA grants, which funded essential programs at local libraries statewide. These include:

- Toll-free phone reference and interlibrary loan services for rural and urban communities.
- The Alaska Library Extension that offers books-by-mail services to rural Alaskans living in communities that have no local library.
- School-age public programs including Battle of the Books, Alaska Reads, and summer reading programs.
- The Talking Book Center for disabled library patrons who cannot hold a physical book or read standard print.
- The Alaska Digital Library. This includes apps such as Libby, Hoopla, and Overdrive that provide free eBooks and audiobooks to library patrons.
- The Statewide Library Electronic Doorway (SLED) database.

In addition to funds provided to the State of Alaska, IMLS also funds several tribes. .

On April 4th, the Division of the Alaska State Libraries, Archives, and Museums received notice that the current National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) National Digital Newspaper Program grant for Alaska was cancelled. This program is a partnership between the NEH, the Library of Congress, and state libraries to provide access to American newspapers published between 1836 and 1922. These papers are then made available online. The Division and the state Department of Education and Early Development are working together to determine next steps in the face of so much funding and program uncertainty. IMLS also provided grant funding to several tribal organizations in Alaska. A recent article by KTOO indicates the loss of that funding will have a significant impact on tribal libraries in rural communities, including a reduction in library hours, reduced programming and even closures.

Libraries advance literacy, school success, and workforce development. They also serve as a lifeline for patrons who need to access community resources in housing, health care, education, employment, and more. The potential loss of funding to Alaska community libraries in FY25 and beyond would negatively impact all of Alaska’s libraries, and the impact would be especially devastating for our rural communities. Parents and child care providers risk losing access to

books and programs that support early literacy development. School-age children risk losing access to databases that support their ability to conduct research. Adults risk losing opportunities to improve their skills to support their careers. And our communities risk access to information and the connection to each other that our libraries provide. [ask LAB members for additional examples]

Libraries are critical infrastructure for our communities in Alaska. They are an investment in Alaska's past, present, and future. They increase literacy, support workforce development, and encourage community engagement. The services they provide rely on funding from multiple sources, including federal IMLS funds. We are asking that you support the important work of the IMLS, reject the cuts to the IMLS grants, and advocate for continued funding in the FY26 budget.

Please contact Cristy Willer, Anchorage Library Advisory Board Chair, at the information below if you have any questions or would like to discuss our concerns related to IMLS and NEH funding for FY26.

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Tribal libraries across Alaska slash hours and programming amid Trump's cuts

May 13, 2025 by Avery Ellfeldt, KHNS - Haines



The Klukwan Library has reduced its hours from 35 to four and canceled all future events amid federal funding cuts. (Photo by Jamie Katzeek)

For thirty-five hours each week at the Klukwan Library, people study, check out books, and take workshops on everything from paddle making to Chilkat weaving.

Or at least they used to. The Trump administration recently notified the tribal library that it was canceling two grants that account for the vast majority of its budget. That left the staff no

choice but to cancel all future events – and dramatically reduce their hours.

“The letter said that our grant is, unfortunately, no longer consistent with the agency’s priorities, and no longer serves the interest of the United States,” said Jamie Katzeek, the library’s co-director.

The money comes from an agency known as the Institute of Museum and Library Services, which provides funding to communities across the country, including libraries in Native villages. In Alaska alone, the agency awarded library-related grants to [dozens of tribes](#) over the last two years.

It’s not yet clear how widespread the cancellations are across Alaska – [or the country more broadly](#). But Theresa Quiner, the president of the Alaska Library Association, has been doing her best to track what’s happening.

“My perception is that most people who are Native American Library Services grant recipients, I have a feeling that most libraries have gotten the cancellation notice at this point,” Quiner said.

Library hours go from 35 to 4 in Klukwan

The Chilkat Indian Village in Klukwan was among them. In 2023, the tribe was awarded a two year grant – called an enhancement grant – of nearly \$150,000. The money helped fund a project that aims to both reclaim and sustain traditional knowledge.

Then, in 2024, the tribe also received a much more common, \$10,000 basic grant, which can be used to pay for staff hours and other budget items.

But in mid-March, President Donald Trump [signed an executive order](#) aimed at eliminating the agency. The order dubbed it – alongside six other federal entities – an “unnecessary” element of the federal bureaucracy.

By early April, the large grant was canceled even though the library still had nearly \$100,000 to spend. Three weeks later, the smaller one was terminated, too. That left the library with just one source of funding: an annual \$7,000 grant from the state that’s set to wind down next month.

That means Katzeek will work four hours per week until the end of June. She said she will likely use that time ensuring the library spends down the rest of the state grant according to their application.

It all means the library will no longer be able to offer programming and events meant to preserve traditional knowledge – or provide library services to students and other community members during the weekdays and weekends.

“The biggest loss is probably the programming that we offered. We would partner with other organizations and offer instructors for paddle making, moccasin making, beading, Chilkat weaving,” Katzeek said. “A lot of those programs were important to the people that live here in Klukwan, even people from town.”

The cancellations also threaten the library’s ability to apply for the state grant in the next round, given that it typically uses federal funds to meet a state matching requirement.

“That basically makes us ineligible to apply for the next PLA grant, which is supposed to start July first,” Katzeek said.

Library cuts have big impacts in small communities

At least five other tribes that have received IMLS funding could not be reached for comment. But Quiner, of the Alaska Library Association, provided a few additional examples of libraries that have lost funding so far.

Among them is the Kuskokwim Consortium Library, where Quiner serves as library director. She said the library partners with the Orutsararmiut Traditional Native Council in Bethel to get the same \$10,000 grant as Klukwan. And they got the cancellation notice, too.

It's a smaller sum than the agency's much larger enhancement grants, which go to fewer recipients but often exceed \$100,000. But they still matter, Quiner said, particularly in places where \$10,000 can be the difference between having some library services or none at all.

"I did hear from the Pedro Bay Village Council that they've had to lay off a library worker because of this grant cancellation," Quiner said. "And so it's a small amount of money, but it has a pretty big impact in a small community."

Other libraries, such as the Tuzzy Consortium Library in Utqiagvik, aren't as reliant on federal dollars.

The library is part of Iḷisaḡvik College – Alaska's only tribal college – and supports the school's students and staff. It also provides public library services to seven communities across the North Slope Borough.

Teressa Williams, the library's director, said the library has received the \$10,000 grant for each community for years. And as is the case in Klukwan and Bethel, those grants were cancelled.

She said the loss is a "significant hit" to the library. But she emphasized that the federal grant amounted to just 7% of her overall budget, which means the library won't be as affected as others. She added that she also doesn't have to worry as much about the matching requirement for the state grant.

"Thankfully, I'm able to use my local funds to be able to afford the match," Williams said.

Still, she's concerned about the broader ramifications of Trump's effort to dismantle an agency that so many libraries rely on for funding. That's especially the case, she said, given Alaska's [low literacy rate](#) – and the role libraries play in getting early literacy resources to families in rural areas.

"Libraries provide not only just books, though," she said. "There's people in communities that don't have internet at home. They don't even have a computer at home. When they need services to apply for the PFD, to file their taxes, where are they going to go, if not the library?"

Further complicating the picture is a federal judge's decision last week to halt the executive order [amid ongoing litigation](#). Even so, neither the Klukwan Library nor the Tuzzy Library have received any indication that their grants may be reinstated.

In Klukwan, Katzeek said she's working with the tribal administrator to appeal the cancellations. But for now, her options are limited.

“We don’t yet know what the what it’ll look like for the library after June 30,” Katzeek said. “But we may have to close temporarily.”

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