COLORADO PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS

2024 to 2030

Produced by

Colorado State Library



COLORADO
Department of Education
Colorado State Library

INSTITUTE of Museum and Library SERVICES

PHOTO REFERENCE GUIDE

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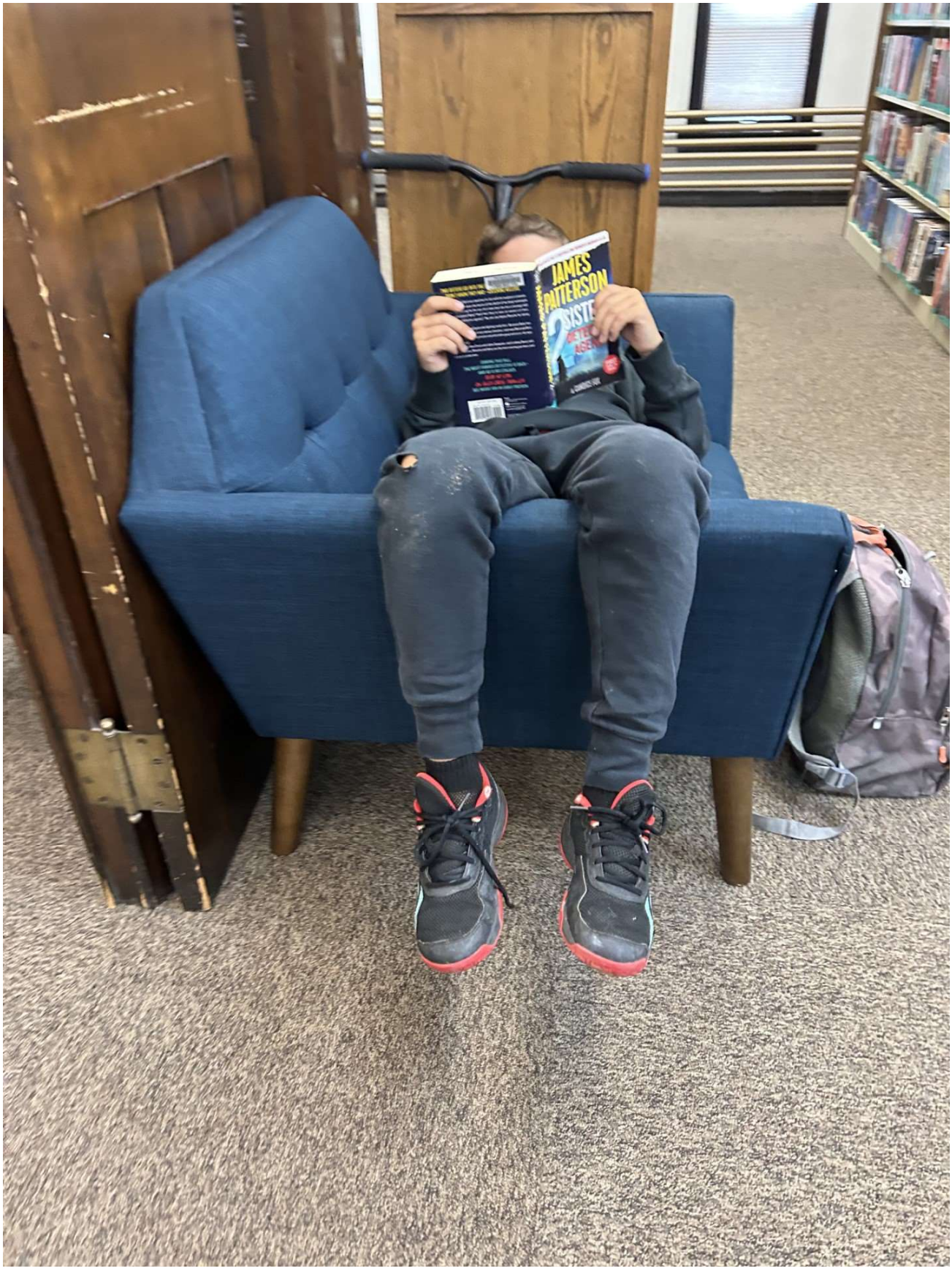
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1: A child lounges in a comfortable chair, reading a book in a Colorado library.

INTRODUCTION

These standards serve as an important tool in defining and measuring a Colorado public library's success in fulfilling its mission and role in the community.

GOALS

The goals of the Colorado Public Library Standards are to:

1. Serve as models for achieving a consistent quality of library offerings across the state.
2. Inform community leaders and residents about what they can expect from their community library(ies) as well as ideas for growth and development.
3. Assist library leaders in planning, administration, and implementation of library responsibilities.
4. Provide an authoritative document to which library administrators and supporters may refer when justifying requests for funds and expanded library offerings.
5. Assist library staff and leadership in connecting with the communities they serve.
6. Spark discussion, assessment, planning, and other action in all public libraries so they remain vital community hubs.

THE STANDARDS AND COLORADO LIBRARY LAW

Public libraries are established and maintained according to the provisions of the Colorado Library Law (C.R.S. § 24-90-101 et seq.) and other legal requirements. The Colorado State Library is charged by this law to provide standards that ensure all Coloradans have quality library services. This document provides support and guidance for all public libraries to deliver and improve upon those services.

WHAT ARE STANDARDS?

The Colorado public library standards identify requirements, evidence-based practices, and resources that are essential for all public libraries in Colorado regardless of the size of library, budget, and community.

Standards center on key aspects of a successful Colorado public library in the 2020s. While the standards identify current issues, services, and best practices in Colorado public librarianship, they are not intended to be a detailed road map to each library's future. This document can inform but does not replace a library's strategic plan.

HOW TO USE THESE STANDARDS

The ten topical standards each include an outcome, overview, and two checklists. The checklists provide stakeholders with ways the library does or can address each standard to achieve the stated outcome. All Colorado public libraries have basic requirements and activities that are essential to quality service for their communities.

The "Essentials" checklists apply to all libraries no matter the size, staff, resources, or funding. The "Essentials +" checklist for each standard adds additional practices for public libraries with more revenue, staffing, and resources. Some libraries may exceed many or all listed practices, while others may be constrained by funding or other circumstances.

To distinguish between the Essentials and Essentials + checklists, a threshold of the smallest and least-funded libraries has been established. The 35 library jurisdictions (30% of Colorado library jurisdictions) that serve populations under 2,500 and/or have an annual operating budget of $165,000 or less will focus specifically on the Essential checklists. All other libraries will use both the Essentials and Essentials + checklists to determine areas of strength and growth that are locally relevant.

Every community is different. What is important is that the board of trustees, director, staff, and community:



2: Statue outside of the Loveland Public Library.

1. Assess the current state of the library.
2. Identify existing strengths to build upon.
3. Determine priorities for development.
4. Plan to make the changes.
5. Implement plans with fidelity.
6. Consistently review and iterate to achieve the plan.
7. Report on achievements and impacts.

To support the checklists, an accompanying resource document provides data, tools, and examples relevant to each standard's activities. The Colorado State Library, the Colorado Library Consortium, and other agencies offer consulting support, training, and resources to achieve the standards.

Library leadership will decide locally on how best to use this document. At minimum, the Colorado State Library recommends an annual review that may prompt, for example, a list of to-dos, key areas for policy development, adjustments to services or budgets, or the need for a more thorough review of existing practices, etc. A few major initiatives may float to the top of the planning priority list, such as increased services to a particular population. Or a whole new awareness may be sparked from realizing the need for a comprehensive risk management strategy that aligns with other community resilience planning.

For directors and board members, the standards are a guide for decision-making for the public library in their community. To this end, library directors may choose to review each standard by bringing one to each board meeting throughout the year. Staff, community members, and other stakeholders are encouraged to attend these discussions about how the standards apply to library services and improvements.

Regardless of the various methods for using this document, the intent is that Colorado communities continue to enjoy and rely on their public libraries for vital and recreational services well into the future.

CONTEXT FOR THE STANDARDS REVISION

The following considerations guided the development of this document:

1. Colorado public library jurisdictions operate with different legal authority and governance structures as outlined in Colorado law (See C.R.S. § 24-90-103 for the definitions of library types and C.R.S. § 24-90-107 for the public library establishment process). The current legal status of Colorado public library jurisdictions are:
    - 57 Library Districts
    - 37 Municipal Libraries (City/Town)
    - 11 County Libraries
    - 5 Multijurisdictional Libraries (school & town)
    - 1 City/County
    - 1 School Administered Library

    Within the document, distinctions are identified when appropriate between library districts (which are distinct government entities with their own legal governing authority) and other library types, such as municipal, county, and others (operating under local government leadership).

2. Colorado public libraries vary widely in the number of residents within their legal service areas (LSA).
    - The smallest public library legal service area has 361 residents while the largest public library jurisdiction serves 706,799 residents.
    - Eighty-two (73%) public library jurisdictions are considered small and/or rural, serving populations under 25,000 and nearly 8% of all Coloradans. These public libraries have 111 of 271 library buildings in the state.
    - The eight largest library jurisdictions have 99 buildings, 9 bookmobiles, and serve 63% of all Coloradans.
    - Twelve Colorado libraries are identified as Resort Libraries, serving tourists as well as residents. These libraries report higher use and funding than other libraries serving a similar size legal service area.

    To address these variations, the Colorado State Library's Library Research Service identifies peer groups within Colorado libraries for more refined analysis. See resources for these data.

3. Colorado communities allocate different levels of public library financial support that result in inconsistencies and disparities in library services across the state.
    - Public libraries serving populations under 2,500 had operating expenditures per capita rates ranging from $5.31 to $242.24 with the overall average of $65.50 per capita (2022 data).

- Public libraries serving over 2,500 residents and with annual operating expenditures of over $165,000 had operating expenditures per capita rates ranging from $15.45 to $468.72 with the overall average of $81.50 per capita (2022 data).

Standards and the associated data resources illuminate these disparities to inform local decision makers with the goal that all Coloradans may enjoy quality library services.

4. Every public library undertakes essential methods to maintain the public trust, including following legal requirements; employing professional values, ethics, policies, and practices; and maintaining governance and operational responsibilities with integrity, transparency, and accountability.

5. To serve the public good, public libraries have long been concerned with reaching underserved members of their communities. An equity lens, a process to analyze the impact of policies and practices on such individuals and groups, has also been integrated throughout the standards.

6. Libraries utilize technology to support the vision, mission, and goals of their organizations. Technology use is ubiquitous in the library and as such is integrated throughout the standards.

7. Colorado libraries have a proud tradition of collaboration, coordination, and colleague support to strengthen each library for each community. Resource sharing and partnerships are prioritized in the standards to reflect that core value.

8. The 10 library standards inherently have overlaps that may result in topics and activities being addressed in different ways, contextually, in more than one standard.

DEFINITION OF A PUBLIC LIBRARY IN COLORADO

The legislative declaration in the Library Law, C.R.S. § 24-90-102, states that it is the policy in Colorado to ensure equal access to information and materials. Section 24-90-105(2)(a.3) of the Library Law directs the State Librarian to develop service standards to guide library development. Any entity wishing to qualify as a public library in Colorado must meet or exceed the following criteria:

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Be legally established under Colorado Library Law (C.R.S. § 24-90-101 et seq.)
2. Comply with Colorado Library Law and any other local, Colorado, or federal laws that govern library operations.
3. Maintain dedicated space that meets the criteria of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) applicable to libraries.

4. Ensure that a "library governing authority[1]" or "governing authority" submits statistical data for the Public Library Annual Report in a timely manner.

LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

5. Provide free access to basic services as defined by written policies regarding lending, borrowing, and circulation services as approved by the library's governing authority.
6. Have paid staff present during all hours of service. Staff pay and other compensation must be based on cost of living standards within the community.
7. Prepare and utilize a long-range strategic plan for continuing improvement.

ACCESS AND SERVICES

8. Have an ongoing collections budget from local tax funds and a collection management plan for the purchase of materials and electronic access.
9. Provide at least one device with public access to the Internet, a printer, an email address, a website, an online information catalog, and databases.
10. Be open to the public a minimum of 20 hours each week. These hours will include morning, afternoon, evening, and/or weekend hours based on users' and potential users' disposable time. All service outlets of libraries providing multiple access points must be open to the public for no fewer than 20 hours a week.

RESOURCE SHARING

11. Be a member of and fully participate in the Colorado Libraries Collaborate (CLC) program, extending privileges and services to state residents according to the CLC agreement.
12. Comply with the Interlibrary Loan Code for the United States and adopt the Colorado Interlibrary Loan Best Practices, including lending and borrowing materials through the statewide interlibrary loan network according to these codes.
13. Be a member of the Colorado Library Consortium (CLiC) and use its services as appropriate.

[1] Throughout these Colorado Public Library Standards, "library governing authority" or "governing authority" means the governing body of the local government entity to which the library belongs – such as a library board of trustees in the case of library districts, or municipal, county, schools, and or other entities with legal authority for the public library, as the context requires.



3: Inside the Koelbel Library, a branch of the Arapahoe Library District.

ADMINISTRATION & GOVERNANCE

OUTCOME

The library is an efficiently managed community resource that provides high-value library services to all through the effective stewardship of public funds.

OVERVIEW

GOVERNING AUTHORITY

Public libraries in Colorado are established as either:

- a municipal, county, or other government department, or joint library, or
- a separate governmental agency referred to as a library district.

MUNICIPAL, COUNTY, OR OTHER LIBRARIES

Public libraries that are part of an existing government entity, such as a town, county, and/or school system, report to the governing authority for the local entity (e.g., the city council, county board of commissioners, or other local leadership) and typically use the local governmental fiscal, human resources, facilities, technology, and other organizational systems. Municipal, county, and other local government department libraries have a board of trustees, a formal group of community members, that advises the library as defined by law (C.R.S. § 24-90-108). These boards may be "advisory" in nature as opposed to holding governing authority for the library. The scope of advisory library boards' authority is set forth in local agreement or charter and varies locally.

Library staff generally are employees of the town or county though employment arrangements may vary based on local practices. Municipal, county, or other libraries may be subject to local reporting requirements in addition to those imposed by state law.

LIBRARY DISTRICTS

A library district is a governmental entity with its own governing authority, a board of trustees. The library district's board includes responsibilities for fiduciary, facilities, and organizational systems. The library director reports to the library board of trustees, and staff are employees of the library district.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES

The powers and duties of public library boards of trustees are defined in the Colorado Revised Statutes, § 24-90-109, including additional responsibilities for library district boards.

Municipal, county, and other boards of trustees have a charter or other local agreement to distinguish the charge of the library board from that of the local government leadership. Because of local agreements, the municipal, county, and other library board's responsibilities will vary; however, the checklists below provide key areas of accountability.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The library director brings the library vision, mission, and values to life. To this end, the director oversees staff, facilities, and operations. The library's practices are defined in a set of policies adopted by the library board and administered by the library director.

ADMINISTRATION & GOVERNANCE ESSENTIALS
CHECKLIST FOR ALL PUBLIC LIBRARIES

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- ☐ Earns the public trust by representing all members of the community, ensuring effective stewardship of public funds, and supporting the vitality of the library within the community.
- ☐ Complies with all relevant laws, including the Colorado public library statute specific to the Powers and duties of the board of trustees, C.R.S. § 24-90-109.
- ☐ Adopts and uses bylaws that outline the library board's purpose, roles, and operational procedures. The library board of trustees reviews bylaws at least every three years. Library Districts: Submit updated bylaws to the Colorado State Library as required by law, C.R.S. § 24-90-109(1)(a).
- ☐ Convenes regular, open board meetings in compliance with the Colorado Open Meetings ("Sunshine") law, C.R.S. §§ 24-6-401 & 402. The library director or a designee is present at all board meetings. Agendas are posted publicly in advance and written minutes are available to the public.
- ☐ Plans for and implements procedures for public transparency with all communications. Provides access to public records in compliance with Colorado Open Records Act (CORA). C.R.S. §§ 24-72-201 – 24-72-205.5.
- ☐ Represents the needs, interests, and aspirations of all residents in the community when guiding library policies, strategic planning, and other board responsibilities.
- ☐ Hires and supervises the library director, according to a written job description. (Municipal, County, Other Libraries: This responsibility may vary locally as outlined in a written charter or intragovernmental agreement of the local governing authority.)
    - ☐ Supervision includes developing and monitoring performance expectations for the library director and library that are then used in annual performance reviews.
    - ☐ Selects and supports the director that has or may earn a master's degree in library and information science (MLIS), public administration, business administration, and/or other related education, equivalent experience, and comparable skills to effectively direct all aspects of library operations.
    - ☐ Supports the Director in professional development.
    - ☐ Defers to the library director on all aspects of library operations, including the responsibilities for library staff supervision, collections, programs, and services.
- ☐ Secures adequate funding and practices responsible fiscal management of the public money, including oversight of financial management of the budget in alignment with the library's strategic plan, local, state, and federal laws, and local agreements. See also the Budget and Fiscal Standard for specific requirements and details.
- ☐ Enacts policies to ensure that all residents of the library service area have access to tax-supported public library services. Reviews and revises policies regularly based on local protocol and approves new policies. When necessary, use equity impact analysis and other assessments

to ensure fidelity with the core values of the library profession. (Municipal, County, Other Libraries: The policy responsibilities may vary locally as outlined in a written charter or intragovernmental agreement of the local governing authority.)

- Oversees all library property, including building(s), grounds, land purchases, contracts, etc. (Municipal, County, Other Libraries: This responsibility may vary locally as outlined in a written charter or intragovernmental agreement of the local governing authority.)
- Publishes an annual report and submits required data to the local government and the Colorado State Library in accordance with C.R.S. § 24-90-109(2) & (2.5). Distributes reports to community leaders, partners, and the public for additional transparency.
- Sets at least one annual goal for the board's continuing education and performance in alignment with the library's strategic plan and annually reviews the board's performance.
- Integrates annual board continuing education and performance related to the values and ethics of the library profession.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR

- Liaise between the governing authority and library staff, including communicating priorities to staff and sharing significant staff concerns that may inform governing decisions.
- Prepares and presents regular reports, budget updates, and recommendations to the library's board of trustees/governing authority.
- Hires and supervises library staff members who are representative of local community demographics.
- Manages the library daily by planning, organizing, and directing building and grounds maintenance, technology, collections, services, and programs for all people in the community.
- Upholds (with the help of staff) written policies and procedures for the library, including supervision, operations, fiscal matters, and services (See resources for library policies examples.)



4: Maria DeHerrera- Founder and Director of Conejos County Library District.

- Writes and oversees procedures that align with policies and library professional ethics. Regularly reviews and revises policies and procedures, recommending new policies to the board when necessary. Ensures staff are trained to implement all policies and procedures.
- Maintains written emergency procedures, risk management plans, and other guidance for continuity of library operations.

- ☐ Attends professional development to gain resources, skills, and strategies to improve the library. Participates annually in at least one regional, state, and/or other workshops and brings back ideas to implement that benefit library services to the community.
- ☐ Is a member of local organizations, especially those undertaking community priorities that align with the library's mission.
- ☐ Is a member of one or more library associations to support professional development.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES & DIRECTOR

- ☐ Develop a strategic plan for the future of the library with attention to sustainability and strengthening the community. (See the Evaluation and Planning Standard for more detail).
- ☐ Recruit qualified candidates for library board openings that reflect the demographics of the population served by the library. Uses state requirements (C.R.S. § 24-90-108) to coordinate appointments made by the local leadership.
- ☐ Orient and onboard new library board members with fidelity.
- ☐ Ensure public trust through transparent communications, public reports, and frequent communications with the community.
- ☐ Meet with elected officials, community leaders, and other stakeholders to share library impact stories and needs and gain information on other local organizations and community priorities. Convey the library's value to position the library as a vital community hub.
- ☐ Administer the library in accordance with state and local codes and ordinances, including Colorado Library Law, C.R.S. § 24-90-109.
- ☐ Comply with federal and state laws applicable to libraries, including but not limited to the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, Privacy of User Records (C.R.S. § 24-90-119), Colorado data security laws for government entities (C.R.S. §§ 24-73-101 – 24-73-103), Internet Protection in Public Libraries (C.R.S. § 24-90-601, et seq.), and the Science of Reading (C.R.S. § 24-90-121).
- ☐ Library Districts: Maintain adequate insurance covering property, cyber security, and other liability. Comply with legal requirements for records retention, contracts, budgeting, etc.

ADMINISTRATION & GOVERNANCE ESSENTIALS + CHECKLIST FOR LARGER LIBRARIES

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- ☐ Participate in the legislative and policy processes at the local, state, and national levels to strengthen the future of libraries.
- ☐ Prioritizes the selection of a director who has an MLIS and/or master's in public administration to effectively direct all aspects of library operations.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR

- ☐ Develops innovative processes and services, sharing freely with others to lead all public libraries into the future.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES & DIRECTOR

- ☐ Track effectiveness of library services and collections through administration and analysis of library data, user surveys, community feedback, and other assessment and evaluation tools and measures.



5: Library sign at the Baca Grande Library, Northern Saguache Library District.



6: Children enjoying an early literacy toy at the library.

BUDGET & FINANCE

OUTCOME

The community is enriched by a library that is sufficiently funded and transparently administered to meet and anticipate community needs.

OVERVIEW

Colorado public libraries receive an average of 93% of their funding from local tax revenues. Libraries earn the public trust by being accountable and transparent about the use of public funds. Libraries are proactive in these responsibilities and demonstrate transparency by reporting financial and performance information on a frequent, consistent, and reliable basis.

The library's governing authority seeks and secures funding from local taxes and other public and private sources. The library governing authority (library district board of trustees or city/county municipal, county, other government), in coordination with the director, monitors revenue and expenditures and allocates funds with integrity and to support library goals.

LIBRARY DISTRICTS

Library districts, as independent taxing authorities, follow additional fiscal policies and procedures consistent with state law that go beyond municipal, county, and other local library requirements. For this reason, this standard includes additional checklist items for library districts.

FUNDRAISING

Many libraries have separate fundraising strategies, such as a "Friends" group and/or foundation with a 501(C)(3) status. These organizations manage donations, grants, endowments, fundraising events, and/or other funding. These efforts allow for additional library offerings and are supplemental to local tax and other public funding.



7: Montrose Regional Library Bookmobile.

FINANCE & BUDGET ESSENTIALS
CHECKLIST FOR ALL PUBLIC LIBRARIES

- Develop an annual budget based on the library's strategic plan and other key objectives for approval by the library governing authority. Library Districts: Comply with Colorado requirements outlined in law, C.R.S. § 24-90-109(1)(d); (e)(II); & (l)(II) and § 29-1-101, et seq., and the Department of Local Affairs Local Government Budget Calendar.
- Prepare and review monthly financial statements that include comparison to budgeted amounts and make financial information available to the public to ensure responsible and transparent use of funds.
- Establish policies and procedures for the library's financial management, including budgeting, purchasing approvals, procurement, contracts, reimbursement, petty cash, etc. Library Districts: Additional policies and procedures include records retention, budget processes, contracts, control of asset disposal, annual audits, reserve funds, etc.



8: The donor wall at Pine River Library.

- Maintain reliable bookkeeping software with scheduled funding updates, security, password access, and back up, rather than financial details saved on a single device.
- Prepare, review, and approve the budget. In coordination with the library director and other financial library staff, the governing authority approves the budget and expenditures and tracks expenditures and reports. Library Districts: The board of trustees approves the budget and large expenditures as defined by policy. Municipal, County, Other Libraries: The town and/or county governance oversees the budget and expenditures. The library board advises on and advocates for expenditures in alignment with the strategic plan.
- Use group purchases and collective bargaining opportunities to expend funds effectively and efficiently.
- Follow financial management guidelines and fiscal procedures consistent with federal and state law and local government requirements.
- Participate in the State Grants to Libraries program administered by the Colorado State Library.
- Develop a long-term finance plan (minimum three years) in conjunction with the library's strategic plan to identify resources that address future needs of the community. The long-term financial plan includes categories and amounts that are tracked and updated over time.
- Determine product life cycles when purchasing new products and budget for repairs and spare parts if the library is able to support any equipment beyond its warranty period.

- Contract with local and/or minority owned businesses when feasible.
- Library Districts: Commission and accept an independent financial audit as required by law for library districts. Municipal, County, Other Libraries: Participate in audits as required by the local library governing authority.
- Library Districts: Develop fund balance policies to always ensure appropriate levels of funds and in consideration of TABOR requirements when applicable; develop policies to address situations when funds are used as well as when targeted fund balances are not achieved.

BUDGET & FINANCE ESSENTIALS + CHECKLIST FOR LARGER LIBRARIES

- Explore local, state, and national fundraising opportunities, sponsorships, partnerships, grants, donations, and gifts for special projects or as a supplement to local funding.
- Establish financial policies and procedures, when relevant, to address audits, capital assets, investments, borrowing, etc.
- Analyze the budget and expenditures annually including using peer library comparison data, performance toward goals, and other standards and best practices.
- Engage with professional organizations that support development and resources in financial best practices, such as the Government Finance Officers Association and the Colorado Government Finance Officers Association.
- Encourage community financial contributions through Friends, foundations, philanthropists, and/or other organizations.
- Develop a capital infrastructure plan with a depreciation schedule for library assets, a multi-year capital replacement plan with estimated budget amounts for depreciation, and when appropriate, an established asset reserve account for replacement and construction costs.
- Foster a library culture of philanthropy and employee giving through events and systems, such as payroll deduction.



9: Cake pan collection at the Lamar Public Library.

COLLECTIONS

OUTCOME

All in the community have free access to relevant, accurate, and diverse collections that may educate, inform, inspire, entertain, and enhance growth, well-being, and quality of life.

OVERVIEW

A public library offers collections that entice readers, inform the community, and inspire exploration, learning, and creativity.

The collection requires thoughtful and continuous materials procurement to meet the changing needs and interests of the diverse community. Materials are selected in anticipation of, as well as in response to, requests from library users. Purchasing decisions also consider the budget, use, and turnover of various materials. To increase access, public libraries offer displays and remote access that encourage community members to discover new materials in various ways.

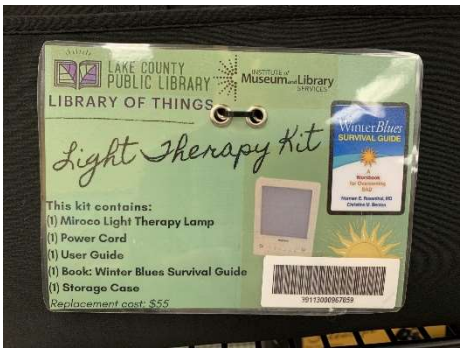
When public libraries participate in regional and/or statewide resource sharing, the community gains expanded access to physical and digital materials. All libraries benefit, for example, from being members of the Colorado Library Consortium, to participate in courier service, benefit from discounts on library materials, and increase effectiveness through collaboration. Libraries may also expand access to rare, local collections by digitizing collections and making them available through the Colorado Virtual Library and its partner systems.



10: Glenwood Springs Branch of the Garfield County Public Library District guitar check out program.

COLLECTIONS ESSENTIALS
CHECKLIST FOR ALL PUBLIC LIBRARIES

- ☐ Establish and follow policies and procedures to effectively manage a balanced collection that reflects the library's strategic plan and community needs and interests. The Collection Management Plan includes policies and procedures for:
  - ☐ Selection and deselection
  - ☐ Conservation/preservation
  - ☐ Receiving gifts and donations
  - ☐ Circulating and non-circulating items
  - ☐ Public requests for collection additions
  - ☐ Public requests for reconsideration of materials, displays, etc.



11: A light therapy kit provided by the Lake County Public Library in their Library of Things.

- ☐ Maintain and revise policies and procedures to ensure ease of access, the freedom to read for all, privacy of library collection use, and fair use within copyright law.
- ☐ Allocate funds for purchasing materials based on a plan for library circulation, services, and programs.
- ☐ Use measures, such as materials expenditures per capita, to determine collection development goals and advocate for the materials budget.
- ☐ Collect materials that provide access to a wide variety of community needs, interests, and viewpoints that represent the diversity of the local community.
  - ☐ Use community demographics to identify and build a collection for all.
  - ☐ Consider various age levels, reading levels, and developmental stages.
  - ☐ Include materials of various cultural, ethnic, political, and socio-economic groups and in various languages so that all residents both see something that mirrors them and provides a window to others.
  - ☐ Provide electronic materials in various formats, including eBooks, audio, and video materials in streaming and/or downloadable formats. (Use multi-factor authentication, when feasible, to help secure the user's account.)
  - ☐ Provide materials in formats appropriate to the needs of all population groups, including large print, Braille, and/or other materials for those who cannot read standard print. When relevant, direct library users to the services of the Colorado Talking Book Library.

- Expand local collections through resource sharing and services such as free book club sets and other kits from the Colorado State Library.



12: Book Vending Machine at Salida Regional Library.

- Organize and display materials to facilitate browsing and retrieval both in-library and online. Showcase unique and diverse areas of the collection that expand discovery and learning. Maintain a vibrant and relevant collection with frequent de-selection activities that remove damaged, outdated, and unused items while making space available for other materials.
- Place orders at regular intervals throughout the year to ensure a steady flow of new materials for the public.
- Provide processes for community members to recommend items for purchase and request items from other libraries.
- Maintain an integrated library system (ILS) to support the management and development of the library's collection and allow the public to search the collection electronically.
- Maintain the patron database on a consistent basis, including purging library cardholders from the ILS patron database after three years of non-use.
- Ensure that current cataloging standards are used for all materials to facilitate public access and resource sharing.
- Maintain protection of personal information of library users in accordance with C.R.S. § 24-73-101 et seq and privacy of library user records in accordance with C.R.S. § 24-90-119.
- Remove late fines and damaged/replacement fees on children's and teen materials to make the collection accessible and reduce barriers for youth, families, and other caregivers.

COLLECTIONS ESSENTIALS + CHECKLIST FOR LARGER LIBRARIES

- ☐ Use circulation, holds ratios, and other material use data to inform collection management decisions.
- ☐ Offer public access to self-check items, including after hours at community locations that increase public access to the collection.
- ☐ Audit the collection to identify areas to add materials for all populations, using a collection diversity audit, community demographic data, and other tools. These activities may be conducted annually or ongoing by sections depending on local capacity.
- ☐ Review the collection management plan within each three-year period.
- ☐ Track and report statistics on various collections and circulation statistics, including per capita and turnover rates, circulation by age level and interest, as well as what is needed for collection management, reporting, and planning.
- ☐ Collect materials produced by local content creators as appropriate and when they align with the collection development policies and procedures.
- ☐ Maintain appropriately sized physical and digital collections based on the needs, interests, and use of community residents. Use data to analyze and make these decisions.
- ☐ Include unique items that, when loaned through the library, make it economically feasible for community members to "try before they buy" and facilitate shared resources at a community level. Some Colorado examples include maker spaces with equipment for idea exploration, creation, and experimentation; non-book/non-media, recreational material (e.g., bicycles, musical instruments, fishing poles, cake pans); educational equipment (telescopes, robots, microscopes); home tools (electricity use monitors, seeds, garden tools), and locally created content (e-books, zines,



13: A teen browsing the graphic novel collection in the Lamar Public Library Teen Space.

music, audio stories, art). Scan trends, gain input, and use evaluation to make strategic decisions on these offerings over time.

- Remove late fines, damage/replacement fees, and other costs associated with library collection use for all residents to increase access for people disproportionately affected by financial barriers to library service.
- Digitize local, historical, and/or special collections for greater public access as needed and/or in partnership with other local organizations.
- Contribute local materials to the Colorado Historical Newspaper Collection Plains to Peaks Collective, and the Digital Public Library of America.
- Follow the best practices of the Society of American Archivists, if the library houses local history/archival collections.



14: Lone Cone Library District book display.



15: Signage for the Rio Grande Library District Adventure Walk in Del Norte.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

OUTCOME

The community is strengthened by a library that addresses the needs, interests, and aspirations of all of those they serve. Library affiliates (Friends and/or foundation organizations) are aligned to strengthen the connections between the library and the community.

OVERVIEW

The public library can be a hub for a vibrant community, serving as a central connecting place and offering space for discovery and community engagement. Through these community connections, the library stays informed and addresses community interests and opportunities.

The public library contributes to the economic health of the community, collects the memories of the community, and provides a place where people can explore, create, learn, meet, connect, become informed, share ideas, and be transformed. The library is a vital community asset with locally driven priorities.

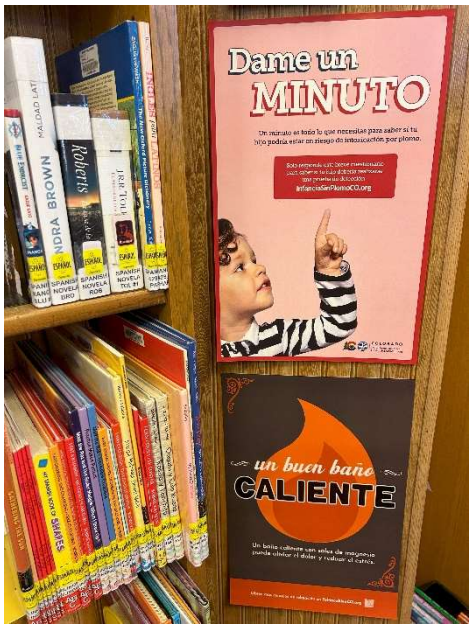
The library governing authority, director, and staff engage with other community organizations, including other libraries, governmental agencies, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector to meet the library's mission.

By conducting outreach and embedding library services in the community, the library engages diverse audiences to make informed choices on vital offerings. In turn, these acts demonstrate the value of the library and may lead to more community engagement, support, and funding.

Community leaders and members that engage with the library are essential to its success.

Community volunteers who fundraise, advocate, or support library initiatives in other ways help to sustain a strong community-centered library.

The library may have a "Friends" group and/or a foundation that assists the library with fundraising, advocacy, and outreach in the community. Resources from these organizations supplement rather than replace the library's operating budget, adding support while aligning with the library's strategic priorities.



16: Akron Public Library Spanish language area.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- ☐ Collect, organize, and provide information about diverse community groups and services so that all may experience a sense of belonging in the library.
- ☐ Embrace the importance of community-wide connections by meeting with and supporting local partners and groups.
- ☐ Establish cooperative agreements between the library and other agencies for shared programs and services.
- ☐ Define the library's role in community crisis situations, working with local agencies on contingencies for various crises (flood, file, snow, pandemic. etc.) in which the library has essential roles.



17: Longmont Public Library Bike Outreach.

- ☐ Participate as an active member, convener, and leader of community groups and initiatives that further community priorities.
- ☐ Collect and use community demographics, library use statistics, library impact stories, and other quantitative and qualitative data to improve services and communicate impact and library relevance.

VOLUNTEERS, WHEN APPLICABLE

- ☐ Recruit, train, and supervise volunteers to assist, not replace, staff. Using clear job descriptions, ensure training includes skill development on volunteer duties and applying the core values of librarianship, the library's values and mission, and cultural competencies.
- ☐ Define volunteer recruitment and engagement with a written volunteer policy that includes the requirement of background checks for all volunteers.
- ☐ Ensure that a staff member is responsible for volunteer coordination, scheduling, and recognition.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ESSENTIALS +
CHECKLIST FOR LARGER LIBRARIES

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



18: Community quilt making at Estes Valley Library District.

- ☐ Involve library Friends and other community members in the library's long-range plan development and fundraising activities.
- ☐ Initiate and sustain connections with diverse groups through outreach and targeted services. Reach a wide range of community entities and individuals with diverse viewpoints to maintain positive associations with the library, its services and impact.
- ☐ Provide language support, as needed, for programs, discussions, and community assessment, including sign language, large print, multilingual content, etc. to ensure all have access and the ability to provide input.
- ☐ Facilitate or contract with a trained facilitator to convene community conversations about issues that are important to the community, sparking civic engagement, establishing civil discourse, and leading to positive community outcomes, such as stronger connections.
- ☐ Invite partners to collaborate to address community needs with multiple resource streams and from multiple perspectives. Participate in (or convene) cooperative planning and programming with community groups. Share associated costs when feasible.
- ☐ Establish mechanisms for library staff to participate on community commissions, boards, neighborhood groups, organizations, and chambers for community building and leadership development.
- ☐ Collect statistics and conduct evaluation, such as customer use and satisfaction surveys, community studies, observations, focus groups, interviews, and other means appropriate to assess and improve library services and resources for all.

VOLUNTEERS, WHEN APPLICABLE

- ☐ Create opportunities for community groups and/or businesses to participate in volunteer activities and other fundraising that benefit the library.
- ☐ Maintain a Friends group or foundation (501(c)3) that meets on a regular basis with a library staff liaison present as well as reporting structure to the library board. Follow the national guidelines for the role of each organization, including written agreements.
- ☐ Establish written distinctions about the responsibilities of the Friends group or foundation as needed, and keep funds raised by these groups separate; do not mix funds with library operating expenses when accounting for revenue and expenditures.



19: Libraries Build Communities signage.

EVALUATION & PLANNING

OUTCOME

The community can rely on an effective public library that has short and long-term plans and regularly evaluates library operations and services.

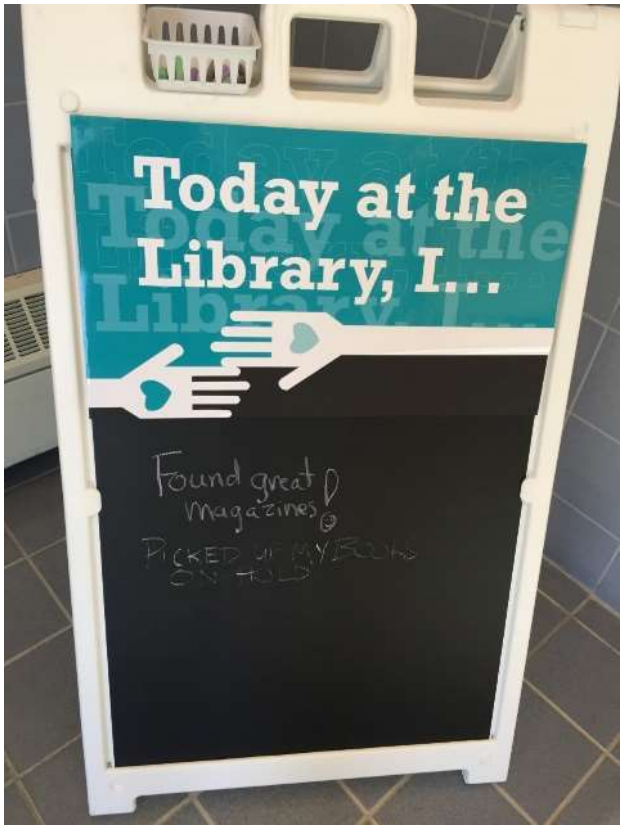
OVERVIEW

To remain relevant and responsive to the community, public libraries engage in a continuous cycle of planning, operating, evaluating, and reporting on operations and services. This evaluation and planning cycle is used for continuous improvement, long-range strategic planning, and public accountability. Community needs, interests, and aspirations are the catalysts for these efforts with all community sectors engaged.

Library leadership approaches library evaluation by initially identifying areas of strength and capacity. This asset-focused approach is critical to strengthening operations while supporting staff in implementing change. Rigor in evaluation, along with communication with various community stakeholders, instills public trust, maintains transparency, addresses all community groups, and can be a vehicle to justify funding and support.

A longer-term strategic plan envisions the future of the community and library and charts a course to get there. A formal strategic planning process includes input from diverse community members, leaders, and organizations as well as staff, volunteers, and partners to center planning on community impact.

The board of trustees oversees the strategic plan development while the library director and staff implement the plan, track progress, and provide regular reporting to the board and other stakeholders. The strategic plan also enables the library to prioritize the budget, staff activities and performance, library services, and resources.



20: Signage at a Colorado Library.

EVALUATION & PLANNING ESSENTIALS
CHECKLIST FOR ALL COLORADO PUBLIC LIBRARIES

- ☐ Use the Colorado Public Library Standards to assess strengths and identify areas for growth and improvement. Refer to each standard for additional guidance specific to that standard.
- ☐ Establish your library's unique vision, mission, and values based on the diverse needs, interests, and aspirations of those in the community as well as the singular role of the library within the community served.
- ☐ Develop an annual strategic plan for library services and operations that include goals, activities, and measures. Use this plan to inform the annual budget, align with staff performance and evaluation, and prioritize services for all in the community.
- ☐ Review library goals and activities regularly to gauge progress, effectiveness, and success. Report regularly to the library board and staff on the progress of the annual plan.
- ☐ Develop an annual report of library use and impact to share with community leaders and the public.
- ☐ Submit an annual report to the Colorado State Library as required by law (C.R.S. § 24-90-109(2.5)). (See also Administration and Governance Standard).
- ☐ Review local, state, and national public library statistics, at least annually, to gain perspective from other libraries and to determine the library's success in supporting broad community goals.

EVALUATION & PLANNING ESSENTIALS +
CHECKLIST FOR LARGER LIBRARIES

- ☐ Develop a community-centered strategic plan to guide budget, resource allocation, library service priorities, and library improvements. Engage stakeholders, including community members and organizations, in the process of developing the library's strategic plan.
    - ☐ Implement an ongoing, integrated process of community and library analysis, planning, evaluation, and community impact that covers two to five years, and involves the library board, staff, and community members.
    - ☐ Identify annual performance outcomes for library services and operations. The goals, objectives, and measures of this annual plan inform the annual budget and align with staff plans and performance.
    - ☐ The board of trustees identifies and undertakes actions to support the plan.
    - ☐ Communicate the plan to the community, gaining input along the way as the plan is developed and providing updates as implementation milestones are met.
- ☐ Assess current services with qualitative and quantitative measures and user feedback to identify areas for improvement of offerings.

- Employ or contract for data specialists to track, analyze, and report on use data and other evaluation to ensure accountability with your strategic plan.
- Conduct community analysis in alignment with library use, such as market segmentation, GIS mapping of library users, census and demographic data analysis, and other methods to gain understanding of community member interests, needs, library use, and other relevant metrics. Use analysis to predict future trends that can inform planning.
- Develop short and long-term plans for various aspects of library operations, including but not limited to, financial, staffing, facilities, collections, marketing, and technology. See also the specific standard in this document for more detail on each area.



21: New books featured at the Fowler Public Library.



22: The Akron Public Library.

FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

OUTCOME

Library spaces, both physical and virtual, offer the community a compelling environment to explore, gather, learn, engage, and relax while ensuring equitable access to all.

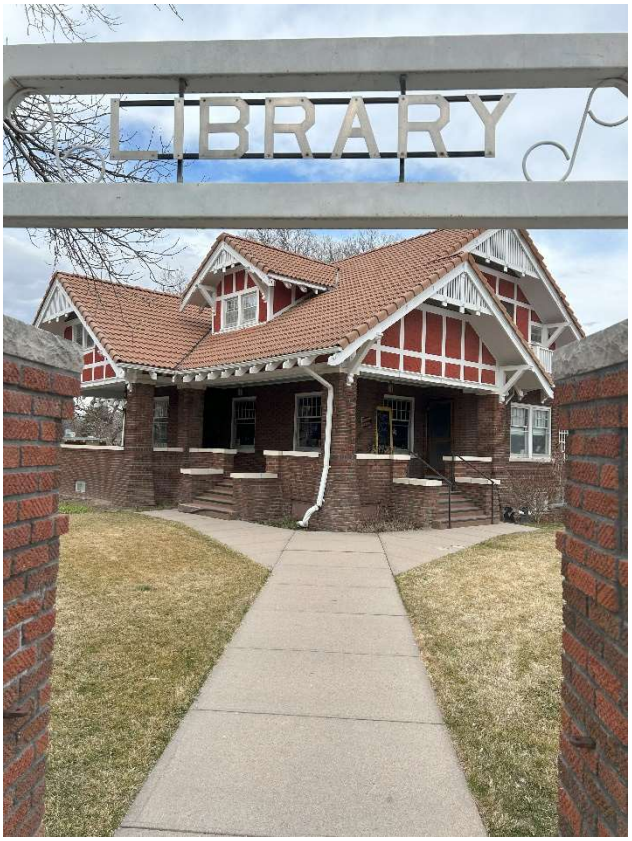
OVERVIEW

Libraries serve as a hub for each community member or group to gain what they need, access with ease, and feel a sense of belonging. To achieve this, this Standard includes four checklist areas: General, Building Exterior, Building Interior, and Technology Infrastructure.

Library facilities and online spaces serve as havens, designed to address various needs and interests. Carefully planned design allows for a wide range of uses, including reading, studying, meeting, exploring, creating, and playing. The spaces also offer ways to strengthen community identity and social bonds. Library facilities can also be an anchor for economic development and neighborhood vitalization.

Like the library building, the technology infrastructure is a key asset for delivering on the library's promise to serve as a community hub, information access point, and cultural center. Public library facilities are designed for ease of access to library services, including checking out and returning materials to ensure use for all members of the community.

At the same time, safety, and security are vital to maintain libraries and those working in and using them. Library staff, leadership, and governing authorities are proactive in maintaining facilities and technology to meet safety and security needs.



23: Heginbotham Library in Holyoke.

GENERAL

- ☐ Meet required safety and fire codes.
- ☐ Ensure accessibility to all members of the community, conforming to the Americans with Disabilities Act and C.R.S. §§ 24-34-801 – 24-34-805 for buildings, grounds, and virtual spaces. Apply universal design principles to transform access for all.
- ☐ Develop policies and procedures for effective public use of facilities, including:
  - ☐ Public use of the library so that all may use and work at the library respectfully.
  - ☐ Library user privacy in accordance with the C.R.S § 24-90-119.
  - ☐ Displays and meeting rooms use policies.
  - ☐ Technology access and use, including security and privacy procedures, content filters for public computers used by children (in compliance with the federal Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and Colorado's Library Filtering law, C.R.S. §§ 24-90-601 – 24-90-606).
  - ☐ Guidelines, including schedules, for maintaining and improving building(s), grounds, technology infrastructure, and other infrastructure.
- ☐ Budget for sufficient maintenance and ongoing development of buildings, grounds, and technology infrastructure. See also: Budget and Finance Standard.
- ☐ Maintain a continuity of operations plan that provides guidance on response to staff transitions and emergency situations in the facility, with the network, and other disruptive circumstances.
  - ☐ Include a disaster-recovery plan associated with the facility and technology resources and infrastructure, including functions such as data archiving, recovery testing, and restoration of assets and services.
  - ☐ Ensure staff are apprised of protocols, such as in the case of data breach or ransomware attacks.



24: Alamosa Public Library.



25: Julesburg Public Library.



26: Rio Grande Library District Carnegie Library in Monte Vista.

- ☐ See resources for a template Library Factbook for smaller libraries and other templates and guidance.
- ☐ Provide public emergency alerts in the languages of those who live in the community.
- ☐ Municipal, County, Other Libraries: Work with the local municipal, county, and other agencies to plan local emergency procedures.

BUILDING EXTERIOR & GROUNDS

- ☐ Install signs in the community that direct people to the library.
- ☐ Provide a well-lit exterior with signage that clearly identifies the building from the street.
- ☐ Prominently post hours of operation outside the library.
- ☐ Ensure sufficient, well-lit parking for library access. Include bike racks and other systems for parking various types of vehicles.
- ☐ Provide a convenient, safe book return location(s) during the hours the library is closed.
- ☐ Provide 24/7 Wi-Fi access for public access outside of library hours.



27: Silverton Public Library.

BUILDING INTERIOR

- ☐ Provide a flexible, well-designed interior that encourages self-directed as well as collaborative use of the library.
- ☐ Offer adequate space to fulfill the library's stated mission and goals. Examples of space needs include:
  - ☐ Storytime & early literacy
  - ☐ Study
  - ☐ Quiet areas
  - ☐ Public meeting
  - ☐ Programming
  - ☐ Displays
  - ☐ Materials access and use
  - ☐ Public computing or personal computer use
  - ☐ Arts, crafts, and other creative activities



28: The North Branch of Summit County Libraries, Silverthorne.

- ☐ Establish separate areas for staff workspace(s), bathroom, and breaks with signage indicating that these are not public spaces. As needed, provide a private staff area for nursing and storage of breast milk.
- ☐ Maintain storage space for library collections, displays, programming materials, and equipment.
- ☐ Allow easy access to electrical and cabling outlets to support current technology.
- ☐ Provide non-gendered bathrooms when feasible and with remodeled and new construction as required by C.R.S. § 9-7.5-103.

TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE



29: Ignacio Community Library computer area and public art.

- Provide access to current and emerging technology tools and applications, including a public telephone and dedicated wired and wireless Internet connections that support simultaneous use.
- Implement ongoing, adaptive, and overlapping security practices at the device, server, and network levels to ensure the system as well as data storage, transmission, and retrieval are secure. Security practices include a combination of firewalls, access-control lists, intrusion prevention, regular system security updates, and commercial antivirus/anti-malware software packages.
- Sustain and refresh technology infrastructure, including broadband, to support library operations and services, with a schedule for ongoing network and other technology assessments.
- Ensure that vital data is backed up with adequate frequency, based on the amount and type of data. Backups should be stored on removable media or cloud-based storage, and tested regularly to ensure they function properly for recovery or restoration.
- Ensure the technology plan addresses how technology integrates with and supports library operations, services, programs, collections facilities, and staff. The plan aligns with the library's overall strategic goals and mission, documents what technology is used, and includes ongoing staff development.
- Participate in E-Rate to gain a robust technology infrastructure with financial support. Collaborate with local schools, health, and other local anchor institutions to leverage E-Rate funds and other grants to build local and/or regional broadband infrastructure.

GENERAL

- ☐ Offer mobile library services to residents throughout the community, such as a bookmobile, book bike, or other vehicle for materials and broadband services that reach distant and/or homebound residents.
- ☐ Install signage for welcoming spaces and ease of wayfinding, including multilingual signage based on local community demographics.



30: Costilla County Library Public Library in Fort Garland.

- ☐ Provide changing tables in all public bathrooms, including adult changing areas when feasible.
- ☐ Maintain security cameras and other measures that support safety and security in and around the facilities. Maintain user privacy when using video footage within the library privacy law (C.R.S. § 24-90-119).
- ☐ Prepare a long-range facility plan which addresses community needs, projected growth, and maintenance practices. Review the facility plan annually and revise it at least every five years.
- ☐ Maintain a capital line in the annual budget for maintaining buildings, grounds, interior furnishings, etc.
- ☐ Seek the professional expertise of a library planner and/or library architect for any new construction or major remodeling.
- ☐ Select sustainable building solutions, such as solar, geothermal, LED lighting, xeriscaping, recycling, locally sourced materials, etc. to reduce environmental impacts and model strategies for the community.
- ☐ Invest in dedicated staff or contract services to maintain buildings, grounds, and technology infrastructure.
- ☐ Perform regular security audits, risk assessments, and staff training, including simulations and drills and coordination with local law enforcement, to prepare for emergency situations.

BUILDING EXTERIOR & GROUNDS

- ☐ Provide flexible access to the library, considering drive-through windows, curbside service, and other access services. Offer after-hours and/or non-library hubs for pick-up and check out of library materials, such as pick up lockers, book returns, vending/lending machines for physical materials, Little Free Libraries, access to digital materials, and Wi-Fi services on library property.



31: Douglas County Libraries Philip and Jerry Miller Library.

- ☐ Provide bus passes or other alternative transportation methods to support access to the building and services.
- ☐ Install charging stations for e-vehicles when relevant for local needs.

BUILDING INTERIOR

- ☐ Design and display to accommodate sightlines throughout the library public spaces to support safety and security measures.
- ☐ Maintain usage statistics, including library visits gate count, and compare them to space allocation standards to ensure library facilities meet community demands.
- ☐ Perform a safety/security audit of the facility on a regular basis and in coordination with the police, fire, and other safety services in the community.

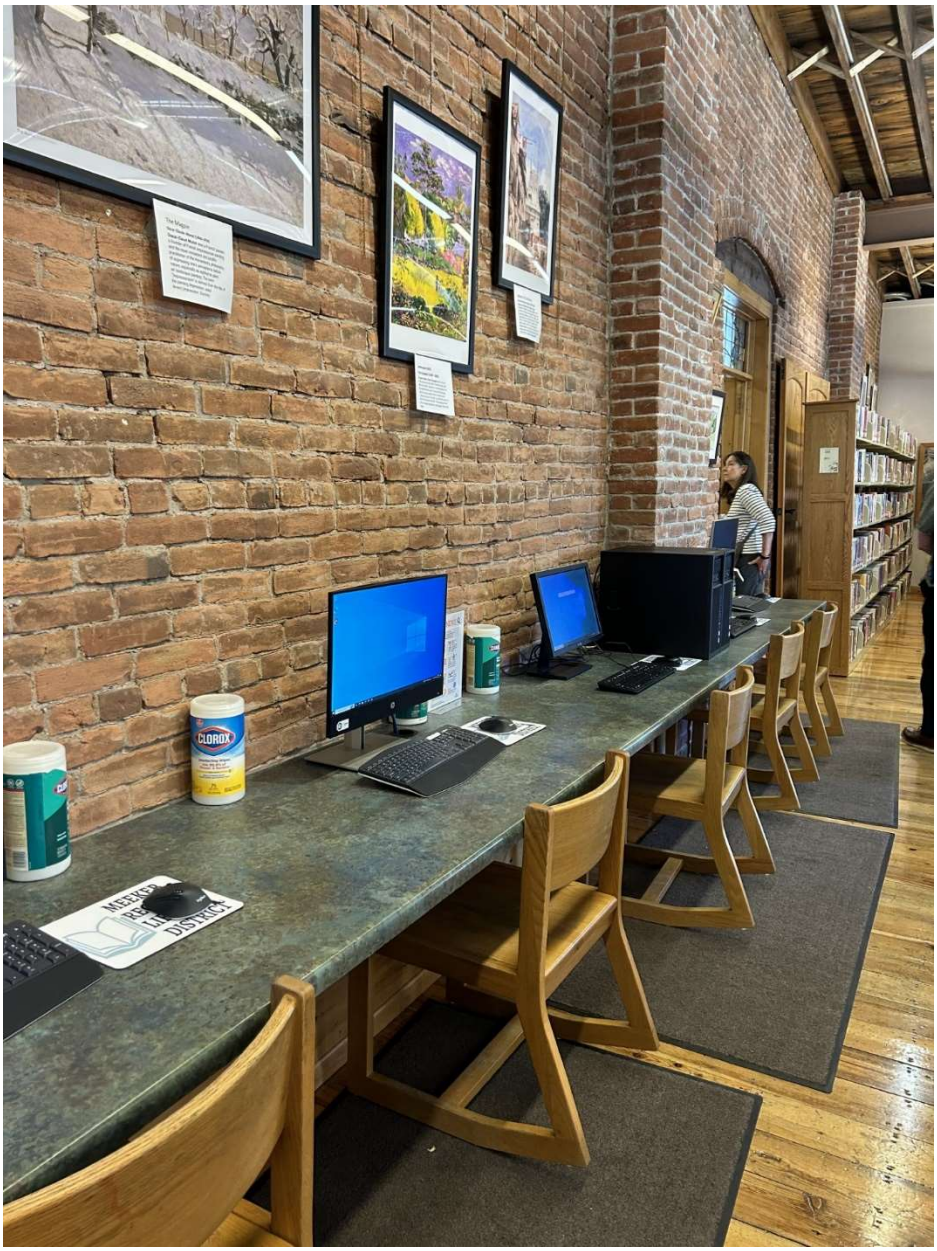


32: Ridgway Library District Kids' Lego Projects on Display.

- ☐ Provide spaces for local artists and exhibitors, including protocols for liability agreements in case something is damaged or stolen.

TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

- ☐ Participate in a local/regional broadband consortium to coordinate middle and last mile infrastructure in smaller communities.
- ☐ Separate the staff network from the public access network.
- ☐ Achieve the state broadband speed goal of 25Megabites per second (download) and 10Megabites per second (upload) up per Internet-accessible device.
- ☐ Continue to assess and improve broadband based on local availability and community needs.



33: Computers at the Meeker Library.



34: Kiowa County Library District children's computer area.

LIBRARY SERVICES & PROGRAMS

OUTCOME

The community is enriched by formal, informal, and self-directed library services and programs that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all.

OVERVIEW

Services and programs are the foundation of a community-centered public library. To ensure access for all, tax-funded public libraries offer free services and programs. In addition, value-added services, such as passports, copying, etc. may require cost recovery fees.

Public libraries serve all and are centers for literacy, lifelong learning, discovery, and connection. Both formal and informal learning occur with intrinsically motivated inquiry and intellectual curiosity encouraged.

The library commits time, staff, and resources to coordinate literacy and learning activities for all ages and reading levels by engaging individuals, families, and social groups. Multiple literacies are considered beyond reading, including information literacy and digital literacy. In addition, the library promotes recreational reading and learning, skill-building in diverse areas, and economic development just to name a few topics.

Continuous experimentation and assessment ensure that services and programs are fresh, effective, accessible, and meet the diverse needs and interests of various residents in the community.

Keeping the library current and relevant to those in the community involves opportunities for community members to be engaged in making suggestions, offering support, and co-creating the library their community needs. Collaborating with other agencies enriches services and programs as outlined in the Community Engagement standard.



35: Las Animas Bent Public Library District children's area.

LIBRARY SERVICES & PROGRAMS ESSENTIALS CHECKLIST FOR ALL PUBLIC LIBRARIES

GENERAL

- ☐ Establish and uphold written policies and procedures for:
  - ☐ Basic services are free of charge to everyone residing in the legal service area.
  - ☐ Public use of spaces, services, equipment, collections, programs, and public meeting spaces. Ensure policies emphasize welcoming, efficient, and effective services and programs for all segments of the community.
  - ☐ Safety and security of staff and library users with specific training and protocols that align with the community's law enforcement and emergency services.
  - ☐ Customer service quality, including staff protocols and training for addressing and de-escalating disruptive behavior with compassion. Train and support staff in using best practices when addressing behavior issues in the library.
  - ☐ Public request for reconsideration of programs; align these policies and processes with other reconsideration policies related to collections and displays.
  - ☐ Library user intellectual freedom; privacy; copyright, intellectual property and fair use; ADA access; and other legal requirements.
  - ☐ Non-resident use, including participation in Colorado Libraries Collaborate as outlined in the Resource Sharing Standard.
- ☐ Uphold the Core Values of Librarianship regarding all library services and programs.
- ☐ Ensure quality and relevant library services and programs for all through community member input from non-users and feedback from library users. Refine and improve services based on regular community member feedback.
- ☐ Partner with other organizations, as appropriate, to enhance services and programs, strengthen other organizations, and further limited resources.

SERVICES

- ☐ Offer in-library and virtual services that meet the needs and interests of the varied demographics of the community.
- ☐ Provide staff assistance to the public during the hours the library is open, including help with the computers, Wi-Fi, circulation, and access to materials.
- ☐ Provide outreach services, when feasible, to those community members who may not be able to visit the library building.
- ☐ Address community member needs and interests through library services that include research assistance, readers advisory, digital literacy, information literacy, and, when feasible, community meeting space(s).

- ☐ Provide information to library users about local literacy opportunities for children, teens, adults, and/or family literacy, including those offered in the library and in other parts of the community.

PROGRAMS

- ☐ Provide interactive, age-appropriate programs for all ages and developmental levels.
  - ☐ Early literacy programs for children and their caregivers at least once a week.
  - ☐ Programs for school-aged children and teens at least twice a month.
  - ☐ Host pleasure reading and enrichment experiences, such as summer learning and after-school activities for children, teens, and families, and book discussions for adults.
  - ☐ Integrate the library into the community, such as visits to preschools, K-12 schools, or senior living, and particularly serve those who face barriers to coming to the library.
  - ☐ Host programs that value lifelong learning for all community members.



36: Teen area in the Park County (Fairplay) Public Library.

- ☐ Offer literacy programming and/or space or referrals for other agencies to teach literacy classes.
- ☐ Provide inclusive programs and services for community members of all ages, abilities, genders, ethnicities, income levels, literacy levels, language preferences, etc.
- ☐ Provide programs at times and locations convenient for the intended audience.

MAKING INFORMATION READILY AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC

- ☐ Help with digital literacy, e-communications, business development, e-government access, test proctoring, and/or other digital access. These services may include informal, one-on-one help as well as formal training.
- ☐ Leverage partners and other resources to address local needs and interests, such as telehealth, workforce support, office productivity software, artificial intelligence (AI) searching, privacy training, security, social media, and multimedia.
- ☐ Ensure that the library website, computers, and other technology are accessible to all individuals consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Colorado laws on web accessibility (C.R.S. §§ 24-85-101 – 24-85-104), and the statewide accessibility standards established by the Colorado Office of Information Technology.
- ☐ Provide, maintain, and replace technologies to offer:

- Internet access stations (computers, laptops, etc.) for in-library use
- Wi-Fi in the library and surrounding grounds, including in hours when the library is not open.
- Photocopiers and scanners

- Host a website under the control of the library with anytime/anywhere access to library materials, online resources, and library information. Update library news and community information regularly. (Free-of-charge website creation and hosting is available through the Colorado State Library.)



37: Wetmore Community Library children's area.

LIBRARY SERVICES ESSENTIALS +
CHECKLIST FOR LARGER LIBRARIES

GENERAL

- ☐ Provide scheduled library outreach to various populations in locations where they are via bookmobile service, pop-up libraries, Little Free Libraries, home delivery, and/or other methods.
- ☐ Leverage local partners and community members when planning and implementing services and programs, including reaching diverse populations.
- ☐ Offer services and programs in languages spoken in the community.
- ☐ Evaluate all services and programs regularly based on input, output, and outcome measures.
- ☐ Share innovative library services and programs with other libraries in Colorado via the Colorado Virtual Library and other venues.
- ☐ Assist with or serve as a custodian of local history and/or community memory when relevant.



38: 21C Pikes Peak Library District signage.

MAKING INFORMATION READILY AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC

- ☐ Invest in relevant and cutting-edge technology, including staff and public training, to offer services such as, but not limited to:
  - ☐ Teleservices support, such as telehealth check out kits and/or soundproof booth
  - ☐ Audiovisual studio equipment
  - ☐ Virtual reality and/or gaming equipment and spaces
  - ☐ Electronic classrooms, in-library computer labs, and/or one-on-one tech help
  - ☐ Device check out, including laptops, Wi-Fi hotspots, tablets, etc.
  - ☐ Maker space equipment and programs
- ☐ Curate online resources to ensure public access to quality, freely available information.
- ☐ Offer youth and adults opportunities to create content by providing software, equipment, instruction, and/or mentorship.



39: Ignacio Community Library.

LIBRARY STAFF

OUTCOME

The public library empowers diverse staff who provide excellent service, represent all residents, and proactively adapt and respond to changing community needs.

OVERVIEW

Library staff are the heart of the public library, serving all with professionalism and hospitality. To achieve this level of service excellence, libraries create a "culture of learning," in which continuous growth and improvement are expected and supported. Ongoing development is not just for library staff; trustees and library users also benefit from this learning culture.

Library staff respond to and track the ever-changing needs of their communities, using data to inform innovation. Library leadership values staff as the essential component to library success and rewards creative solutions, risk taking, and reaching into the unknown.

To address staffing, the library's governing authority is responsible for personnel policy and oversight as well as the supervision of the director. The library director is responsible for personnel supervision, policy implementation, legal concerns, professionalism, and employee well-being.

Municipal, county, and other libraries typically use the town/county/school human resources department to support their personnel needs. Library districts, as separate governmental entities, are responsible for all human resource requirements and activities. To this end, some areas below call out specific and additional requirements and resources for library districts.

This standard includes three elements: general procedures for library staff employment, guidelines for staffing the library operations, and guidance on professional development.



40: Staff at the Pine River Library District.

LIBRARY STAFF ESSENTIALS
CHECKLIST FOR ALL PUBLIC LIBRARIES

GENERAL

- ☐ Follow state and federal laws in recruiting, hiring, onboarding, supervising, and terminating employees.
- ☐ Recruit and select staff to represent the community demographics, especially focusing on cultural and multilingual diversity while avoiding discrimination. Provide library staff with a pay benefit for multilingual duties and other specialized skills that uniquely address local needs.
- ☐ Use written job descriptions to hire and assign duties.
- ☐ Pay all staff based on cost of living standards within the community.
- ☐ Conduct background checks as part of the hiring process.



41: Poster promoting Longmont Public Library Staff Recommendations.

- ☐ Establish a healthy library culture in which all employees understand the local library's mission, vision, and/or values and can apply them in their work.
- ☐ Conduct formal performance evaluations at least annually to document performance, justify pay increases, and, when necessary, remove staff members who are underperforming.
- ☐ Maintain library staff/human resource policies and procedures and orient staff to these resources.
- ☐ Create an Employee Handbook for employee orientation and reference. Review for updates at least every two years.
- ☐ Develop work goals and activities that align with the job description and strategic plan.
- ☐ Offer each staff member regular coaching, feedback, and support for development.
- ☐ Library Districts: Employ or contract for Human Resources expertise to keep abreast of legal requirements, wage trends, and other personnel considerations.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- ☐ Ensure all library employees (including temporary and substitute) are proficient in carrying out the library's policies, values, philosophy, management, and operational practices as these relate to their job duties.
- ☐ Verify that all library employees (including temporary and substitute) are proficient in the use of the library's technology to do their work efficiently and to assist library users in the use of the technology. Staff onboarding includes training on software (e.g., integrated library system,

online catalog, digital resources, etc.), hardware, security, hacking, social engineering, etc. All staff receive cyber security training.

- ☐ Allocate time and funding for external staff development; communicate this benefit to staff.

LIBRARY STAFF ESSENTIALS + CHECKLIST FOR LARGER LIBRARIES

GENERAL

- ☐ Maintain current staff compensation policies and provide wages and benefits that reflect community and market standards.
- ☐ Adopt a staffing plan that addresses job descriptions, competencies, performance evaluation, compensation, organizational development, and succession planning.
- ☐ Establish practices to be an employer of choice.
- ☐ Analyze comparative salary data to determine just wages, including using state and national salary data for libraries. Consider total compensation that includes wages, benefits, and other support for library staff.
- ☐ Employ professionals that have earned a master's degree in library and information science (MLIS) in recognition of the essential skills and competencies developed through a graduate program. When feasible, support staff in earning their MLIS degree.
- ☐ Library Districts: Seek expertise and guidance to keep abreast of legal requirements, wage trends, and workplace culture. Contract with outside agencies, as needed, for payroll and other human resources services.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- ☐ Allocate funding for all library staff and trustees to participate in professional development.
- ☐ Offer in-house and continuing education activities for staff, trustees, and volunteers.
- ☐ Connect library staff development opportunities during the year with performance and annual plans.
- ☐ Prioritize staff proficiencies in effective communication, service quality, cultural competency, access, intellectual freedom, privacy, equity, copyright, and sustainability. Ensure staff have knowledge of human developmental stages as they relate to library use, skills in library functions, and technology competence required for their job duties.



42: Arapahoe Library District Early Literacy Marketing.

MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

OUTCOME

Community members are aware of the library's role in the community and engage with, value, and support library offerings.

OVERVIEW

The overall goal of marketing and public relations is to inform the public about ways the library meets the diverse needs and interests of the community. In doing so, the library conveys a strong public image while increasing participation in library services, programs, and resources.

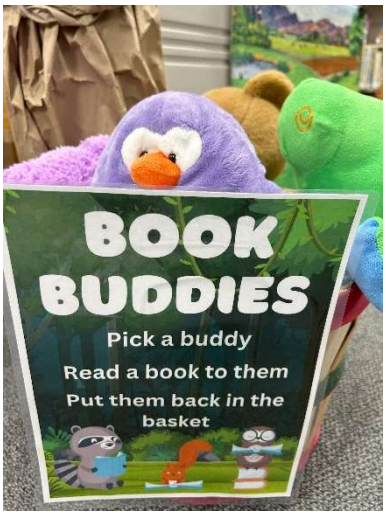
A marketing plan is an effective way to establish and implement policies, a budget, and strategies that communicate with diverse audiences within the community. Effective library marketing includes consistent messages and branding that frame the value of the library in ways that welcome all and entice use. In addition, the library uses a variety of outreach strategies to engage community members in library activities and conversations.

Public relations efforts build relationships with community members, leaders, and partners for positive community impact. By cultivating strategic partners, the library can expand its reach and message beyond its walls. This outreach also offers opportunities to listen to community input to find ways to improve services and meet the needs of various community members.



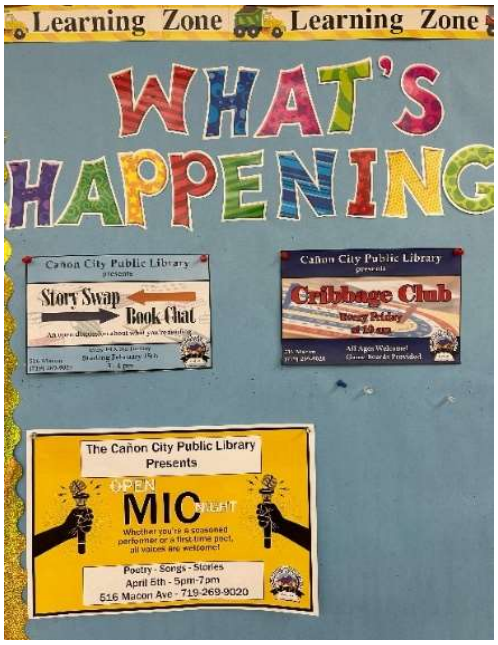
43: The flagpole at the Hayden Public Library with the American, Colorado, and national library symbol flags.

MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS ESSENTIALS CHECKLIST FOR ALL PUBLIC LIBRARIES



44: Book buddies at the Moffat County Public Library in Craig.

- ☐ Communicate a positive image of the library and its services while remaining receptive to input, diverse opinions, and suggestions.
- ☐ Use community demographic data to identify targeted personas and/or diverse community groups for customized promotion of library offerings.
- ☐ Leverage community connections to identify and engage community members.
- ☐ Promote library programs and services in inclusive ways, including in the library, in the community, and through online platforms:
    - ☐ Use displays, flyers, and other media to market library materials, programs, and other community services both in the library and in other venues in the community.
    - ☐ Reach community members anytime, anywhere, and beyond the library with an online presence that includes an ADA compliant website (C.R.S. § 24-85-101 – 24-85-104), and online media platform(s) (social media, email newsletter, etc.).
    - ☐ Translate promotional material and other public communications in the language(s) used by community residents.
    - ☐ Collaborate with local businesses and organizations to cross-promote programs and services.
- ☐ Establish communications policies and procedures in collaboration with the local office of emergency management to plan for and respond to community crises or disasters. As locally appropriate, position the library as a community hub for communications during and after a disaster. Provide public emergency alerts and instructions in the languages used in the community. See also the Facilities & Infrastructure Standard.
- ☐ Develop and implement procedures to receive and promptly respond to comments, suggestions, and feedback from the community in order to increase customer satisfaction and protect and improve the library's image. Refine communication process based on comments.
- ☐ Leverage statewide or national library promotional campaigns that increase public awareness of libraries.



45: Signage for program offerings at the Canon City Public Library.



46: Limited Edition Library card at Berthoud Library District.

- ☐ Establish and communicate the library's brand in ways that clarify value to the community.
- ☐ Develop, adopt, and implement a comprehensive marketing and public relations plan that addresses library priorities and reflects community interests, opportunities, and needs. Include social networking and other online strategies.
- ☐ Allocate funds to support the marketing and public relations plan. This may include a dedicated budget for advertising (print and digital), promotional materials, support, and staffing for community events, marketing supplies, and, when possible, a marketing staff member.
- ☐ Report to library leadership and the public, at least annually, on marketing activities, budget use, and impact.
- ☐ Create a marketing calendar to establish a schedule for promotional topics and systematic promotion.
- ☐ Distribute a newsletter (print and/or digital) with custom content to update the community on library news and activities.
- ☐ Provide training and resources for library staff and volunteers to promote library services in consistent and strategic ways.
- ☐ Have native language speakers translate promotional materials and other public communications into the language(s) used in the community.
- ☐ Participate in local events, such as farmer's markets, parades, and other activities to showcase the library and reach broader community audiences.



47: Check Out Colorado State Parks passes available for checkout.

RESOURCE SHARING

OUTCOME

Community members are aware of and benefit from greater access to library resources beyond what they have locally. Libraries gain efficiencies and cost-savings through shared and collaborative library services.

OVERVIEW

Colorado's long and rich history of resource sharing has made library services more robust, well-used, and equitable in every region of the state. Library leaders continue to recognize that all libraries are stronger when they work together.

Libraries collaborate through statewide, regional, and other consortia services to share materials and other resources. Through shared integrated library systems, interlibrary loan, and a statewide courier service, among other services, library users enjoy seamless access to more materials than are available locally. Along with providing access and expanding local collections, these networked systems also focus on efficiency and cost saving for local libraries.

In addition, when libraries use cooperative purchasing agreements to procure materials, resources, and services, the cost savings allows local tax dollars to go farther.

Another hallmark of Colorado's library network is the Colorado Libraries Collaborate (CLC) reciprocal borrowing program. Cardholders from every public library may engage with any other public library (and major school districts, academic libraries, and several special libraries and cultural heritage organizations) to enjoy library services throughout the state.

Sharing goes beyond physical resources to expertise. With a commitment to collaboration, Colorado libraries freely share practices, gain ideas, and strengthen libraries in every region of the state.



48: Penrose Community Library courier items.

RESOURCE SHARING ESSENTIALS
CHECKLIST FOR ALL PUBLIC LIBRARIES

- ☐ Participate in free regional and/or statewide resource sharing programs, at least as a borrowing library, and actively promote these programs to library users.
- ☐ Participate in and promote the Colorado Libraries Collaborate program, offering reciprocal borrowing to cardholders of other Colorado libraries.
- ☐ Make it easy for library users to explore and request materials from the local library and other libraries. Automate the library collection with online access for community members.
- ☐ Lend freely to other libraries within the constraints of local capacity.
- ☐ Participate in the Colorado Library Consortium's statewide courier service either directly or via a community stop.
- ☐ Take advantage of cooperative purchasing agreements as appropriate to save time and money while providing more options for library users.
- ☐ In collaboration with a consortium, share access to databases or electronic collections in compliance with licensing agreements.
- ☐ Join regional meetings, professional development opportunities, and online and state-level discussions to share, contribute, and learn.
- ☐ Practice timely holds management to ensure requested materials are promptly transferred to their areas of origin or need, including checking transit status.
- ☐ Add resource sharing cost savings and other benefits to the library's reports, at least quarterly, to the board and/or other governing body, and to the annual report.

RESOURCE SHARING ESSENTIALS +
CHECKLIST FOR LARGER LIBRARIES

- ☐ Contribute resources and/or staff to support Colorado's resource-sharing programs.
- ☐ Balance borrowing and lending services when implementing resource sharing with other libraries.
- ☐ Offer community members the option to initiate their own library materials requests, including from other libraries.
- ☐ Use a request and delivery system for added access and options for those in the community. Adopt and implement the Colorado Interlibrary Loan Best Practices.
- ☐ Provide access to databases or electronic collections in compliance with licensing agreements.

- Participate in the statewide courier service as a community stop to support smaller and remote libraries.
- Participate in a shared bibliographic database, when appropriate, regardless of the automation system used.
- Provide opportunities for staff to share their expertise with other libraries, such as through mentoring, library tours, loaning staff to other libraries for special projects, etc.
- Encourage library staff to join collaborative groups of people who have similar jobs in other libraries.
- Analyze use of collaborative services to determine cost savings, use changes, and other data that can inform future management decisions.
- Report regularly to boards of trustees and the public on reciprocal borrowing activities and cost savings.



49: A child at a computer station.

- Collaborate with local school(s) to offer public library cards for student access to e-resources and other public library materials.
- Develop and/or provide access to Open Educational Resources to expand educational support to library users and particularly students.

STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

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