Template for Advocacy Communications with Public Officials - 2021

Use this template to help organize information for your meeting or communication with legislators or other officials. It is not necessary to address all three issues endorsed by OLA; feel free to delete sections not applicable to your library or experience.

==*Please remember to download this document before you start editing!*==

Introduction and Library Demographics

[Your name, your library's name and your relationship with the library]

[Location of library and communities or institutions served]

[Population of service area and number of registered users or FTE/students served]

[Size of library staff]

ISSUE 1
Ready to Read Funding as Included in Proposed State Library Budget (HB 5017)

Key Talking Points:

- Created in 1993, the Ready to Read (RTR) grant program provides funds to every public library in the state to help children learn to read and maintain their literacy skills as they grow.
- OLA supports the Governor's recommended budget for the State Library, which maintains Ready to Read grants at $1.08 per child. However, OLA suggests a small increase to that amount would have great reward:
  - An addition of $609,577 would increase the investment per child to $1.50.
  - Alternatively, an addition of just $129,000 dedicated to the smallest public libraries would double the amount available to those libraries and their communities, which often have the greatest need. Last year 132 public libraries across Oregon received RTR grants, but 38% (mostly small rural libraries) received only the minimum amount of $1000.

Key State Statistics:

- In 2020, each $1.00 of state funds leveraged $2.98 in local funds and in-kind contributions.
- Prior to COVID-19 restrictions, attendance at library literacy-based activities for children and teens increased annually - 1,477,788 in 2019.

- Summer reading participation statewide has doubled since the grants started. In 2020, 70 libraries used the state funds to implement and enhance early literacy programs.

Key statistics from your library:

- [Number of youth served]
- [Amount of funds your library received this year]
- [How those funds were used and why]

Story or anecdote that demonstrates value of program:

[Stick to 1-2 short anecdotes, such as example below]

[example: From Newport Public Library: Six-year-old library patron Amelia was a struggling reader. Funding from the Ready to Read grant provided stimulating activities such as a Centennial Reading Challenge, STEAM library kits, bilingual book giveaways, online programming, a robust Summer Reading Program, and more, that helped Amelia stop struggling and become a reader. She read an amazing 481 books during the year-long challenge. Her family reports, "She's excited that we get to keep on reading. She really thrived with the book challenge and her love of reading I think will stick - so awesome!"]

ISSUE 2
[On-Time Adoption of Course Materials for Higher Education Students](#) ([HB 2919](#))

Key Talking Points:

- Students need to budget for the real cost of attendance for the upcoming term.
- Faculty have academic freedom to choose any materials they like - and this info will be available to students in time for them to plan ahead.
- Bookstores have time to negotiate better prices for materials and manage their inventory.

Key Statistics

- Statewide, books and supplies are 6% of the total cost of attendance in Oregon (HECC snapshot).
- Textbook prices have a negative impact on students, who report: not purchasing the required textbook (64.2%); taking fewer courses (42.8%); not registering the for a specific course (40.5%); earning a poor grade (35.6%); and dropping a course (22.9%) (2018 Florida survey).
- 44% of students in Oregon are unable to meet expenses with expected resources: family contributions, student earnings, and grant aid (HECC snapshot).

Story or anecdote that demonstrates value, particularly if you are from an academic library. Possible examples:

> [Chemeketa, Umpqua, and Linn-Benton are statewide leaders with over 90% on-time adoption reporting, so we can see that the target of 75% in the bill is realistic.]

> [Students register for courses and then drop at the beginning of the term they realize what the cost of course materials is going to be.]

> [Students come to the reference desk during the first week of the term looking for textbooks in library collections or course reserves because they are unaffordable.]

ISSUE 3
Information Literacy and Library Media Program Standards (**SB 552**)

Key Talking Points:

- The Oregon legislature decided in 2009 that Oregon schools needed strong school library programs, including an information literacy instructional component (incorporated in Oregon Administrative Rules [OAR] Chapter 581, Division 22). However, lack of clarity and accountability have rendered the original intent of the legislation ineffective, leading to inequity in school library programs around the state.
- Some Oregon students have access to teacher-librarians and the information literacy curriculum they teach, but access is not equitably distributed across the state. Without information literacy training, students do not have the skills to tell the difference between trustworthy and faulty information.
- Recent events, such as the violence at the Oregon State and U.S. Capitols, have demonstrated that the lack of information and media literacy skills to recognize false information has the potential to threaten the well-being of individuals and our democratic institutions.
- This bill will identify inequities in library media programs around the state and evaluate the adequacy of the current interpretation of the OARs; that process will lead to stronger library media programs and information literacy instruction throughout Oregon.

Key Statistics: [Suggest picking 1-2 options from this list for meetings]

- As of the 2018-19 school year, there were 152 (FTE) licensed teacher-librarians in Oregon's more than 1200 public K-12 schools. In the 1980s, there used to be more than 800 positions; each decade since has seen a significant decrease. The ratio of school librarians to students in 1980 was 1 librarian/547 students; in 2018 it was 1 librarian/3,526 students.
  https://www.oregon.gov/library/libraries/Documents/SchoolLibrary/History.Oregon.SchoolLibraryStaffing.1980.2018.pdf
- In 2016, the Stanford History Education Group conducted a study which revealed that students were seriously lacking the skills necessary for the evaluation of digital information -- ⅔ of the students in the study couldn't tell the difference between news

stories and ads, and 96% failed to identify how a fossil fuel industry's ties to a climate change website might compromise the information found there. https://stacks.stanford.edu/file/druid:gf151tb4868/Civic%20Online%20Reasoning%20National%20Portrait.pdf
- According to a study out of Eastern Oregon University conducted between 2013 and 2016, only 18.9% of students were able to evaluate a website for quality (Slide 26). 60.1% of students were unprepared for college-level research (Slide 7). https://www.oregon.gov/library/libraries/Documents/SchoolLibrary/History.Oregon.SchoolLibraryStaffing.1980.2018.pdf
- 2018 study by scholars at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology found that it takes true stories about six times as long to reach 1,500 people as it does for false stories to reach the same number of people on Twitter.

Story or anecdote that demonstrates value. If in a school library, can be specific about students you've worked with. If in an academic library, can mention how students entering higher education aren't prepared. Possible examples:

- [Increase in the number of students who are unable to recognize disinformation/false stories]
- [Story of basic information literacy skill a student should have been able to do and had no idea about]
- [Students struggling to conduct research using verified and unbiased sources]
- [Students unable to separate fact from opinion]
- [Students unable to find information they need for an assignment or a personal subject]

Library Services During the Pandemic

List no more than 3 examples of library services during the pandemic. Include statistics when they help to illustrate use of services.

[Examples: curbside and other forms of delivery, use of e-resources, digital library cards, virtual programs, use of public computers or wifi, support for remote learning]

Provide one or two anecdotes about services during pandemic.

[Examples: Using computer to help access social services and employment resources; loaning computer equipment to students; helping with online schooling, extending wifi/circulating hotspots, increasing eresources]

End on a positive note, talk about something you learned or a way that service has changed that will continue after the pandemic.

[Examples: personalized book recommendations, continuing curbside, virtual programming, increased access to computer equipment, remote learning successes]