

State Librarian's Report

July 2026



State Library of Iowa

State Library Hiring Update

Library Program Director

The State Library hired Samantha Bouwers, the State Library Continuing Education Coordinator, to step into the role of Library Program Director to oversee the Library Support Network and manage federal funding received by the State Library from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. As an internal candidate, she is already familiar with State Library programs and procedures and has a good understanding of the duties required of this position. Sam officially started in her new role on June 19. The State Library is prioritizing hiring a new Continuing Education Coordinator.

Southeast District Consultant

Jennifer Smith, a Davenport-based librarian, started as the Southeast District Consultant for the State Library on June 29. Jen will provide support and guidance to public library directors, staff, and boards of the Southeast District. She is spending her first few weeks becoming familiar with the Iowa public library landscape and the State Library's programs, services, and resources.

Update on Contracts

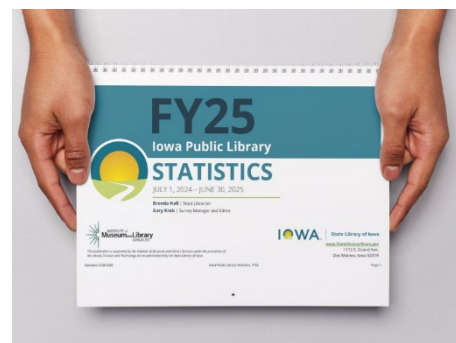
State Library updates on contracts include:

- **Bridges:** The State Library renewed the contract with OverDrive for FY27 to continue providing the platform and content for the statewide digital library consortium.
- **IA Shares Delivery Service:** The agreement with the AEAs for IA Shares delivery was finalized to cover FY27 service with an option to renew for FY28.
- **Data Collection Tool:** The State Library is working with DAS Procurement for a data collection tool that will be used with the Public Library Annual Survey and the Enrich Iowa Direct State Aid Report.
- **LSTA 5-Year Plan Evaluation:** A request has been submitted to DAS Procurement to start the process of finding a vendor.

FY25 Iowa Public Library Statistics

"Big Stats Book" Published

Following a delay due to the federal government last fall, the State Library published an updated edition of the "Big Stats Book" in June, containing information on library income, expenditures, collections, circulation, programs, staff, and more based on data submitted in the FY25 Public Library Annual Survey. The publication is available on the State Library website: [Iowa Library Statistics](#)



DAS Transition from Google to Microsoft

The Iowa Department of Administrative Services migrated to Microsoft 365 Enterprise on May 4. State Library staff emails changed to a new email domain of @das.iowa.gov for consistency with the rest of the agency. Emails sent to the old addresses will be forwarded to the new addresses through early November.

Website Accessibility: Compliance Deadline Extended

On April 20, the Department of Justice announced a one-year extension in the deadline for state and local governments to comply with new Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Libraries serving populations of 50,000 or more must now be compliant by April 24, 2027, while libraries serving 49,999 or fewer must be compliant by April 26, 2028.

PLOW Website Accessibility Worktimes

The State Library will soon wrap up a series of Website Accessibility Worktimes to support libraries using a PLOW website on the Concrete5 platform. Each session focused on a different topic related to website accessibility, including:

- April 28: Text (fonts, sizes, images of text)
- May 19: Color (contrast and dependence)
- June 9: Headings and document structure
- June 30: Hyperlinks
- July 21: Alternative text

Youth Services Updates

New Storytime Kits Celebrate Independence Day and America 250

The State Library added three new kits to the circulating STEM To Go and Storytime Kits offered for checkout to public libraries:

- **Stars, Stripes, and Stories: Celebrating the American Flag Kit** (Ages 4-8): This kit features stories about how we celebrate the Fourth of July and honor the American flag. A printable flag template allows kids to design their own flag. Younger children can move to patriotic action rhymes with scarves, and older kids can learn how to fold the American flag.
- **Happy Birthday, USA Kit** (Ages 3-8): This kit features stories and action rhymes about Fourth of July celebrations and parades and includes a printable red, white, and blue ice cream cone craft.
- **Red, White, and BOOM! Kit** (Ages 3-8): This kit includes stories about Fourth of July fireworks. Kids can move to action rhymes and bounce red, white, and blue beach balls as "fireworks" with a giant parachute!



The new USA-themed kits bring the total number of kits available to 101. The kits have proven very popular; since the beginning of 2026, the kits have had 105 checkouts to Iowa libraries.

'Plant a Seed, Read!' Summer Reading Underway; Youth Services Consultant Making Library Visits

Summer reading programs are in full swing at libraries across Iowa. The State Library provides access to a comprehensive Summer Library program for public libraries statewide through the national iREAD program. The 2026 theme is *Plant a Seed, Read*. State Library Youth Services Consultant Janeé Jackson-Doering has been visiting libraries in recent weeks to see their exciting programs firsthand; here's a selection of images from her travels:

Orange City Public Library's Touch a Tractor Storytime:



Sheldon Public Library's window display and visiting Beekeeper:



Sully Public Library offered a program for older children to paint pots to grow chia seeds in, while younger children played with a giant parachute:



Library Visits & Travel

IMLS Library Convening 250: Telling America's Story

I traveled to Cincinnati, Ohio June 22-24 to represent Iowa at the regional IMLS Library Convening 250: Telling America's Story. The goal of the convening was to inspire and empower librarians responsible for small and rural libraries to participate in telling both the national and local American story, reaching audiences who are often overlooked.

IMLS invited chiefs of each state library agency as well as librarians from small and rural libraries selected through Public Libraries Survey data. I was proud that 15 Iowa librarians representing all six of Iowa's library districts accepted the invitation to attend and represented small and rural libraries from across the state. To the right is a snapshot of the Iowa delegation; the libraries and staff members in attendance included:

- Kothe Memorial Library (Parkersburg), Julie Folken
- Eckels Memorial Library (Oakland), Kari Rose
- Columbus Junction Public Library, Amanda Grimm
- Lisbon Public Library, Elizabeth Hoover De Galvez
- Fisher-Whiting Memorial Library (Mapleton), Anni Paulsen
- Whiting Public Library, Dawn Teel
- Melbourne Public Library, Brittany Brewer
- Leonard A. Good Community Library (Ogden), Lori Reutter
- Ventura Public Library, Geri Delaney
- Leon Public Library, John Dunsdon
- Malvern Public Library, Lisa Formhals
- Rockwell Public Library, Caroline Mcmanigal
- Alta Community Library, Genevieve 'Gigi' Nelson
- Elkader Public Library, Samantha Schwarz



Submitted by Brenda Hall, State Librarian
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