



Memorandum

TO: ALL CHILDREN ACHIEVE
COMMITTEE

FROM: Jane Light

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: 04-23-04

Approved

Date

SUBJECT: REPORT ON K-12 STUDENT USAGE AT THE CITY OF SAN JOSE/SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY JOINT LIBRARY

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee accept the Report on K-12 Student Usage at the City of San Jose/San Jose State University Joint Library.

BACKGROUND

Promoting the educational goals of children in grades K-12 is a primary service provided by San José Public Library. The Library aims to meet K-12 needs in many ways, such as by collecting materials that support California State Curricular needs, hosting class visits, offering developmentally appropriate programming, and planning and providing a reading program to maintain literacy skills over the summer.

The “main” library has always played a major role in aligning with the education system, particularly by developing a system resource collection shared by branches and by acting as a destination for schools wanting to visit a large metropolitan library facility with many unique resources and services.

In the past, because the old Martin Luther King, Jr. Library was located nearer to the business community than the residential community, it was difficult to attract children and families to library programs. However, the old library did host many class visits, most of which combined the visit to the Library with a visit to the Tech Museum or another downtown destination attractive to the educational community.

The move to a residential neighborhood has allowed the new Library to offer many more programs for children and families. Consequently, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of programs and class visits scheduled, with a corresponding increase in children served. This is shown below in a comparison of data between the old and the new Dr. King library buildings.

Programming

Before moving to the new King Library, the Youth Services unit offered one family storytime each week, one Parent/Child Internet class each quarter, and an occasional special program featuring a craft activity or professional performer. When the Library moved to its new location, the need to add additional programs to support increased community need became immediately evident, and the unit began offering daily programming in August 2003. A wide variety of family-oriented programming is offered, including, for example, bilingual storytimes, literacy-based craft programs, author visits, poetry readings, and computer classes for parents, children and teens. Meeting the need for increased programming in the new environment has resulted in an enormous increase in service:

	<u>Aug. 2002 – Mar. 2003</u>	<u>Aug. 2003 – Mar. 2004</u>	<u>% Increase</u>
Number of programs	45	233	418%
Attendance	851	7,186	744%

Furthermore, because King Library storytimes now appear on Civic Center Television, families throughout the City enjoy library programming from remote locations.

Class Visits

The Youth Services unit began offering class visits and tours in September 2003. Class visits are offered Tuesday through Friday, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 pm. The visits are designed to meet age-level curricular needs and may include tours of appropriate areas and collections, information about the library system, stories or booktalks, and an introduction to electronic resources. Many students who visit the Library fill out library card applications beforehand in order to receive their cards the day of the visit. The Library can demonstrate a marked increased in service to schools below:

	<u>Sept. 2002 – Mar. 2003</u>	<u>Sept. 2003 – Mar. 2004</u>	<u>% Increase</u>
Number of class visits	29	100	245%
Attendance	1,011	4,377	333%

The new facility includes a large technology lab that allows us to teach research skills to large groups of students. In November 2003, the Library partnered with Santa Clara University and Downtown College Prep to teach DCP students how to use databases and the Internet as research tools. SCU faculty developed a basic research framework for DCP's senior students. King Library Youth Services librarians then developed a hands-on research course based on topics chosen by the students themselves. Those YS librarians taught the course to DCP students on three separate occasions and will use the curriculum again with other high school classes working on research projects.

As previously mentioned, in the past many schools combined a visit to the Library with a visit to another nearby destination such as the Tech Museum, or Christmas in the Park. While that is still the case, teachers now voice a strong interest in introducing their students to the unique

public/academic library model, with the hopes that their students will be inspired to continue their studies past high school. This is what the Library hoped would happen, and has in fact happened, as a result of the University/Public Library collaboration. In February 2004, we received a letter from SJSU's Dean of the College of Applied Sciences and Arts, Michael M. Ego, to praise the Library's class visit format and presentation to 100 fifth grade students. The letter stated, in part:

“The library presentation provided the perfect combination of welcome, education and fun...After your session, the students were excited and ready for more new experiences. They were very enthused about reading and getting an education. Many students indicated that they wanted to come back and visit the library again and go to school at SJSU. This tour made the right impression.”

Educational Resource Center

The Educational Resource Center is a product of the collaboration between San Jose State University and the City of San Jose. It currently includes specialized collections of textbooks adopted by the California State Board of Education, lesson-planning curriculum materials, and award winning books. The ERC website, www.sjlibrary.org/research/erc, includes important information on many topics of interest to parents and teachers, such as how to become a teacher, advice for homeschooling parents, grade level standards, and local school standardized test results. This unique collection and website designed for educators and caregivers provides a vast array of curricular tools ultimately benefiting the students themselves.

ERC activities are supported and directed by the ERC Advisory Board, a broad-based diverse group committed to enhancing preK-12 education. It includes teachers, principals, school superintendents, and representatives from the SJSU College of Education, the County Office of Education, the University Library, and the Public Library. The Board's first project was to recognize award winning teachers and programs, starting with awards given in 2000. This information is showcased on the ERC website. Recently, the Advisory Board was asked to submit a grant proposal involving collaboration with the Tech Museum and/or the Children's Discovery Museum and centering on science and environmental studies.

In February 2004, the California School Library Association held their annual regional meeting in the ERC programming room. The Library's Youth Services Coordinator participated in a panel discussion on public and school library services; it is hoped that the program will be repeated at the CSLA Conference later this year.

LIBRARY OUTREACH

Youth Services regularly visit local community organizations and schools. The SJSU daycare facility was contacted before King Library opened, and their classes visit the Library every week. Library staff recruited students from Horace Mann Elementary School to participate in the Library's multicultural King Celebration in February. In addition, our teen council advisor has developed a relationship with San Jose's Youth Commission. A Youth Commissioner attends

monthly system teensReach meetings, and the Youth Commission has met at King Library on several occasions.

King Library Youth Services is also responsible for representing the library system at community events. The unit traditionally participates in the Book Circus, the Month of the Young Child Children's Faire, and District Council community events.

ANALYSIS

Class visits are an important way for the Library to connect with teachers, support classroom learning. However, space limitations and staffing constraints require us to book visits during a limited time period in order for us to provide visitors with a high quality experience. Unfortunately, there are more classes wanting tours than we are able to provide, and we are generally booked to capacity four to six weeks in advance.

Opportunities for collaboration with and through various SJSU departments abound, and we anticipate working with the science, library science, education, art, music, and drama departments in the coming months. Projects currently under discussion include developing a library component to enhance SJSU's annual summer "Youth and Science Program" and exploring library programming opportunities with SJSU music and drama departments.

We are very pleased by the increase in the level of services and use demonstrated above, and by the many positive comments the Library has received regarding children's programming at the new King Library. Unfortunately, further budget reductions will be reflected in reduced services throughout the Library, including those provided by Youth Services. Specifically, reductions may result in fewer storytimes, class visits and special programs. However, we believe these services will still remain at a higher level than provided at the former location.

JANE LIGHT
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