

CITY OF OAKLAND

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# AGENDA REPORT

**TO:** Sabrina B. Landreth  
City Administrator

**FROM:** Gerry Garzón  
Director of Library Services

**SUBJECT:** Library Services and Programs for  
Teens

**DATE:** 4/8/2016

City Administrator Approval

Date:

4/12/16

## RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council Accept This Informational Report, "Library Services and Programs for Teens" From The Teen Services Division Of The Oakland Public Library.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Teen Services Division of the Oakland Public Library designs programs and services targeting youth between the ages of 12-18. 18 locations across the City of Oakland provide programming, recreational and curriculum support materials, as well as access to technology and free Internet access to youth.

## BACKGROUND/LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The Oakland Public Library has always served youth as evidenced by the establishment of the Children's Room in 1904 in the then new main library at 14th and Grove Streets. More recently, recognizing that teens have unique interests and needs that differ from children and adults, the Library began to offer services to teens with teen-specialist librarians and spaces designed by and for teens. The City authorized use of a \$108,000 gift "to improve library services for teenagers" in 2003 (Resolution No. 77996 C.M.S.) and added in 2004 "support teen programs" as a service objective of the dedicated library parcel tax, Measure Q (Resolution No. 78223 C.M.S.).

On February 23, 2016, the Library presented to the Life Enrichment Committee an Informational Report regarding a proposal to expand library services throughout the City Of Oakland through the use of pop-up mobile library services. The February 23, 2016 report addressed a Policy Directive contained in the FY 2015-17 Biennial Policy Budget (Resolution No. 85672 C.M.S.) to : "Expand Library Service: Starting July 1, 2016 - Branches to be prioritized by those serving disadvantaged youths and should be dispersed throughout the City." This report provides additional information about OPL's services to Teens.

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Life Enrichment Committee  
4/26/16

## **ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES**

The Teen Services Division of the Oakland Public Library designs programs and services targeting youth between the ages of 12-18 at 18 eighteen locations across the City of Oakland. The Teen Services Division is staffed with nine professional librarians and four paraprofessional staff in support of this service. Librarians with a youth services certification are assigned to work at established TeenZones, which are defined as larger recreational spaces for teens with free access to the Internet, computers, WiFi, printing, study, and program spaces, as well as curriculum support and recreational reading materials. The Oakland Public Library currently has six established TeenZones, soon to be seven:

- Rockridge Branch Library – Council District 1
- Main Library – Council District 2
- Asian Branch Library – Council District 2
- Chávez Branch Library – Council District 5
- Eastmont Branch Library – Council District 6
- 81st Avenue Branch Library – Council District 7
- Coming 2017: Dimond Branch Library - Council District 4

In fiscal year (FY) 2014-15, the Teen Services Division served 23,212 teens in programs alone. Previous years (FY2013-14) served 11,445 and (FY2012-13) 11,003, respectively. Although there are currently only six established TeenZones within the Oakland Public Library system, every branch is required to provide a distinct area of the library for teens (albeit often a smaller space), as well as age-appropriate recreational and curriculum support materials and monthly programming. Increase in program numbers over the last three years is due to monthly program requirements per branch of the Oakland Public Library, more centralized program coordination, science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), and curriculum support initiatives as well as support from key community partners. Supplemental financial support for many of these programs is provided by the Friends of the Oakland Public Library.

The Oakland Public Library also not only offers free access to educational and recreational safe spaces for youth, but career and college support through leadership and civic engagement programs, volunteer opportunities, SAT and ACT test prep, and close connections to Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) school staff across the City. Partnerships with classroom teachers have grown significantly over the last year. In FY2014-15, the Library had 4,522 students visit during class-sponsored trips, compared with 2,426 (FY2013-14) and 862 (FY2012-13).

### ***Supplemental Information on College/Career Support***

- The Library provides teen volunteer opportunities at all 18 locations. Teen volunteers contributed almost 11,000 volunteer hours to the library in FY2014-15. Teens often request recommendation letters to document their library volunteer experience and include these in college applications.
- For the last two summers (2014/2015), the Library has partnered with Youth Uprising to host nine summer interns in several branches. Two of these former interns are now employed with the library.
- Four library branches offer leadership opportunities and community service hours for Teen Advisory Board (TAB) members. TAB members are responsible for library and youth advocacy, as well as program planning in neighborhood branches.
- The Youth Leadership Council, a youth leadership program in existence for close to 15 years, is a stipend-based monthly program representing youth across communities in Oakland. Youth Leadership Council members regularly speak at City Council meetings as well as meet with Library Advisory Commission members to advocate for continued improvements to library services.
- The Ready, Set, Connect! program is a partnership program between Community Technology Network and the Oakland Public Library. It prepares youth between the ages of 16-24 from across Alameda County for a career in the technology industry. This eight-month program provides a quarterly stipend for participants, as well as a tablet or laptop upon graduation. Participants provide technology tutoring in branch computer labs, assisting over 1,200 patrons per year, often in a language other than English.
- The Oakland Youth Poet Laureate program, now in its fifth year, recruits Oakland students between the ages of 13-18 to represent the City of Oakland for one year as the Oakland Youth Poet Laureate. Participants receive a \$5000 college scholarship upon completion of the year as Laureate, and academic support from ScholarMatch throughout their entire college career. Our partner in this program is Youth Speaks, a premiere national arts organization.
- Fall 2016: The Library is in active partnership with OUSD to make available a universal public library card for all students, allowing for easier access to online and print resources for Oakland youth.

### ***Non-Traditional Library Services to Teens***

The Oakland Public Library strives to continually innovate and better meet community needs. Today's young people have a myriad of challenges not met with traditional library services, including hunger, poverty, and trauma. Oakland Public Library is leading the way nationally in the library profession to better meet the needs of young people in our community in the following areas:

- In FY2014-15, the Library received a Federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grant for \$90,000 (administered by the California State Library) to establish a series of hip hop therapy programs for young men of color between the ages of 12-19 in East and West Oakland. Partners in this initiative included the Oakland Parks and Recreation Department and Oakland non-profit, Beats Rhymes and Life. Hip hop therapy and music production workshops were offered at libraries and parks and recreation facilities twice a week for one year.
- In 2015, the Library partnered with Children's Empowerment, a sponsor of the U.S. Afterschool Food Service Program to serve free meals and snacks to youth under the age of 18 in five library locations across the City, often five days a week. Locations currently include the Rockridge, Chávez, Eastmont, 81st Avenue, and Main Library branches. Youth consistently receive between 1,600-2,000 meals and 250-350 snacks monthly during the entire school year.
- In 2016 the Library also received another LSTA grant to offer a "Skills for Teen Parents" workshop series at the Eastmont Branch Library. In partnership with Youth Uprising's Room to Bloom childcare center, the series offers workshops on infant car safety, CPR, money management, and family nutrition.
- In 2016 the Library approached Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth to partner with the Library in offering restorative justice training for staff at the Eastmont Branch Library, as well as community restorative circles for youth. The goal of this initiative is to mirror peer conflict resolution practices present on many of OUSD campuses. If found successful and sustainable in a library environment, this initiative may be implemented at other library locations in 2017.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There are no fiscal impacts associated with this report.

#### **PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST**

This item did not require any public outreach other than posting on the City's website.

#### **COORDINATION**

In the preparation of this staff report, staff coordinated with the City Administrator's Office, the Controller's Bureau, and the Office of the City Attorney.

**SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Economic:** There are no economic opportunities associated with this report.

**Environmental:** There are no environmental opportunities associated with this report.

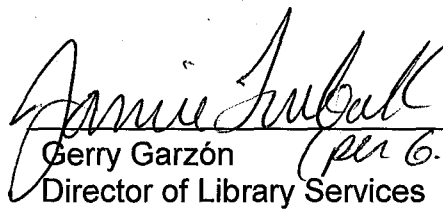
**Social Equity:** There are no social equity opportunities associated with this report.

**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Staff recommends that the City Council accept this informational report, "Library Services and Programs for Teens" from the Teen Services Division of the Oakland Public Library.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Lana Adlawan, Head of Teen Services, Oakland Public Library at (510) 238-7613

Respectfully submitted,

  
Gerry Garzón (per G. Garzon)  
Director of Library Services

Prepared by:  
Lana Adlawan  
Head of Teen Services  
Oakland Public Library

**Attachments (1): PowerPoint**

A: Library Services and Program for Teens